

Ritual: Age of Reason Ritual for A Young Person

Child is tied to their parents by a red cord. They stand on the outskirts of the ritual space

The rest of the folk are gathered at the ritual space and form circle with a gap to allow entry at the north east "corner".

Clergy sets up the sacred space following COoR or whatever variation is preferred by the parents.

Clergy addresses parents from within the circle: "You come to this circle with your child, to present them as their own person, in their own right. What is the name of your child?"

Parents: "Full Name"

Priestess moves out of the ritual space and hands the parents a pair of scissors.

Clergy: "Parents must let their child go, in order for them to grow into an adult. They must give them the freedom and responsibility of independence, allow them to make mistakes, and learn from them on their own. Like a tree that has been staked and supported during its tender years, so the bonds that support them must be cut in order for them to become strong in their own right.

Clergy: (*Addressing Child*) (Child), a child must also cut their bonds, to show they are ready to take the first step, to take charge of their life and accept the freedom and responsibility

of independence. Remember, the bonds of love will remain, but the relationship changes. It changes from one of nurturing and protection to one of acceptance and counsel."

Parents and child cut the bonds between them.

Clergy: (*now addresses child directly, and the parents stand behind them*) "(Child), you have reached the age where you can make your own decisions and your own judgements on things. So I ask you, do you want to proceed with this ritual, and honour your passage into personhood?"

Child:

Clergy: "Then step forward into the circle."

Clergy: "As you take your first step on this journey, it's important for you to understand all the love and support that brought you to this place. Your parents have a gift for you, which represents that."

Parents present Child with a gift that represents the child's importance in their life. They explain its meaning. They may also want to give their child praise and love at this point.

Parents then complete the circle. Child comes to the middle with the clergy.

(everyone can be seated at this point)

Clergy: “You did some work, to prepare for this moment. This work was designed to make you ready for this next stage in your life. One of the tasks was to keep a diary. Were you able to do that? What did you learn about yourself from this experience?” *(Child will respond and there will be some interaction between them as the clergy questions him further).*

Clergy: “Your other work involved learning about the 9 noble virtues. These virtues can help guide you in your life, especially when you have to make hard decisions or are being challenged with difficulty. Tell us about:

“Fidelity? Why is it important? How do you apply it in your life? Do you have an example?”

“What about Self-Reliance? Is it important? How do you apply it in your life? Do you have an example of when you were self-reliant?”

“Finally, what about the virtue of Truth? What makes truth important? Do you have an example of a time when being truthful was hard, but the right thing to do?”

Once Child has finished, Clergy turns to the assembled group:

Priestess: “Are there any here who would speak to (Child)’s character and his readiness to enter personhood?”

(People step forward to speak on (Child)’s behalf)

Clergy (to Child): “Through these tests and your words, as well as the words of your family and friends, you have shown yourself to be an intelligent, thoughtful, capable person, an individual of reason and discernment. You have passed your tests, and shown us that you have the abilities to truly start your journey toward adulthood.”

“Before you move further on your journey, we will add to your own gifts with a few of our own.”

“When you start a new part or chapter of your life, it’s customary to start it with new clothing- *(parents bring forward new clothes to change in, which they do now)*

“(Child), even though you stand before us as your own individual, with your own thoughts, feelings and experiences to guide you in your journey, every person here is offering their support and guidance. They are here for you. Don’t forget that you are never alone. To remind you of that, each person here will give you a bead that you can make into a necklace- whenever you wear it or see, you will remember today and the people who love you.”

Each person will approach Child, say a few words and give them a bead.

Clergy will give them a pouch to put their beads, which they can then carry.

Priestess: “(Child), you also have the support and guidance of those spirits that you cannot see, but are always with you. I will call upon them now to bestow their blessings to you:

“I call upon the nurturing spirits of (Child), known and unknown, those who feed (Child)’s body, mind and soul. Make your presence felt in their life, fill their world with equal parts abundance and gratitude, let them know no hunger or want. Show yourselves to them in the kindness of strangers and the company of family and friends.”

“I call upon the guardian spirits of (Child), known and unknown, those who keep (Child) from harm and steer them from danger. Make your presence felt in their life, let them feel the comfort of your shield, and the strength of your courage. Show yourselves to them in times of need, and remain ever watchful.”

“I call upon the teacher spirits of (Child), known and unknown, those who guide and conspire to make (Child) wiser and stronger. Make your presence felt in their life, let them feel your guiding hand on their path, and let them know certainty and rightness in their actions. Show yourselves to them in the beauty of the world around us, in the earth and the sky and everyplace between.

So be it.”

Priestess guides Child to the altar, where three runes have been placed: “(Child)- we are almost done our ritual. You only have one more thing to do. (gesture to altar). You have shown us that you are ready to make your own decisions about important things. Let this be the first important decision you make. Before you are three runes, each with their own blessing attached. The rune you choose will be the blessing you receive, a blessing which will mark and guide you on the first part of this new journey.”

Explain each rune, and the blessing attached.

Child chooses their rune.

Priestess: “It is a good choice!”

Priestess: “In stepping toward adulthood, there are choices you will have to make, and there are also responsibilities you will have to bear. Your (designated parent/god-parent/grandparent) has a gift for you, which represents your new responsibility, to yourself and to those around you.”

Person presents child with a knife/other object with significance, and explains importance.

Priestess: “Before we end the ritual, there is a final word. Although you are now a person in your own right, with the abilities to plot your own course, you are still young, not yet an adult. There is still time for you play! So have fun! Be a kid! There is lots of time in your future to take on responsibilities

and obligations of adult life. As a reminder of that, here is a silly gift." *(Clergy gives them a toy)*

"To end our ritual, we give thanks. We thank the Gods for watching over and guiding (Child) to this point. We thank (Child)'s parents, for their dedication and love, which has made Child into such a wonderful person. We thank (Child)'s friends and family, who will always support and cherish them. We give thanks for this day, during which we have done good works.

Clergy closes down ritual following COoR or whatever way is preferred by parents.

Now let's go together from this place in love, and celebrate (Child) and their new path!"