

Ritual for the Festival of Imbolc

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The final day of July marks the eve of Imbolc – the Pagan Festival of Lights known to Christians as Candlemas. The older Pagan names were Imbolc and Oimeic, 'Imbolc' meaning 'in the belly' (of the Mother). In the womb of Mother Earth, hidden from our sight but sensed by intuitive vision, there are stirrings. The seed that was planted at the winter solstice in June is quickening and spring is just around the corner. 'Oimeic' means 'milk of ewes', for it is also lambing season.

To celebrate the gradual return of the light, light a blue candle and place it in the main room of your house. Blue represents peace, wisdom, communication, truth, patience, health and calm. Fill a small bowl with water and add a pinch of salt for protection and purification. Follow this with a few drops of your favourite essential oil – something calming like lavender is a good choice. Tie together small bundles of herbs and starting at the front door of your home, dip the bundle of herbs in the water and gently wipe them over the door frame. Continue to do this to all doorways and windows in the house visualising the protection and peace spreading from the front door to the rest of your home. When you have finished, leave the bowl of water out overnight to anchor the protection and let the bundle of herbs dry before burning it with your blue candle.

It is nourishing to spend as much time as possible on and after Imbolc with your family enjoying the peace and comfort of a safe, warm and loving home.