

# Imbolc

(circa February 2<sup>nd</sup>)

Imbolc (pronounced “Immolc”) is the Pagan festival of Light. It is held around February 2<sup>nd</sup> although some prefer to celebrate it around the first Full Moon following that day. This is because it celebrates the life that is being awakened within the womb of the Great Mother. This life is only possible because of the return of the Light of the God, the sun, or Son. When the moon is full, it reflects the Light of the sun all through the darkness of night. The Goddess and the God during this time are perfectly united. Thus, new life grows from within the earth and the first stirrings of the seeds within the earth are brought to our attention.

This is a time of promise. It is a time to become aware of how much more light we have in the day. This fact is unavoidable and therefore brings to consciousness the other facts of the cycles of the wheel. The covering of snow will soon be melted away and the flowers will spring up from within the earth once again. Birds will return from their winter vacation and we will hear their mating songs again. It may still be very cold outside and the ground may be covered in snow, but we do have proof that spring is on its way.

It is at this time that we can ponder our lives and ask ourselves questions about what we want in our lives. What is it we are seeking? What are some new undertakings that we would like to step into? Is there anything that we would like to let go of? This may be something that was quite appropriate to who we once were, but now is outmoded for the self we are now becoming. Now would be a more appropriate time to truly embrace our New Year's resolutions.

Activities that can be shared by the entire family are things like creating a Light garden. This is easily accomplished. You need a cake pan, potting soil, birthday or tea candles, paper and a pen. Put the soil into the cake pan till it is filled to the top. Each person can write down on a small piece of paper something that they would like to achieve during the next cycle of the year. Bury the piece of paper in the soil and then light a candle on the surface of the soil. Birthday candles can be stuck into the soil, and tea candles can be placed on top. Once the garden is lit up, sit quietly and allow the Light to emanate throughout the room. Allow the candles to burn themselves out (do not blow them out unless there is a

problematic candle). The “seeds” that have been planted can also be worked into the soil of the garden or flowerbed in the spring.

You can also light a candle and incense and walk it clockwise through every room of your home saying as you do: By all that’s right, and blood of Kin, we welcome the Light and let it in!

It has been said that it is always better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. I would agree. It is also good to create your own candles at this time of year. Perhaps you would like to think ahead about the kinds of ceremonies that will be conducted throughout the coming year and create a candle for each.

Music is the great awakener and can move the soul to harmonize with the Creator. If you are musical, play your instrument, for yourself and for someone else. If you are not musical, play some beautiful and relaxing music as background, especially during mealtime as it helps with digestion.

It is also good to walk outside, deeply breathing in the fresh air of the season. If you can, make a peace spiral in the snow and walk it several times, enjoying the energy of the spiral and the connection to the earth.

Wonderful foods for the season are things that hold special surprises within. Dark bran muffins with jelly fillings, treat filled brownies, individual pies with fruit fillings, traditional pastries with onion and potato fillings, or pizza pockets with lots of healthy vegetables and cheese. Whatever it is, the little ones will like it more if you can open it up and see the surprise within. Adults may also enjoy Swiss ham and chicken pockets inside a breaded crust. Baked potatoes that can be opened up are also great. For snacks one can utilize all sorts of nuts that can be opened and enjoyed. Popcorn is also appropriate in that it completely transforms from one physical form to another with the application of heat (a result of the element of Light being applied to a seed).

Imbolc is a time to look within and to truly appreciate the wonderful gifts we have lying just below the surface waiting for the proper time to emerge. Whatever activity you choose to participate in at this time, may it bring to you an increased sense of peace and of the Light within!

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