Lucina

(Winter Solstice)

…And She births the spirit within us, bringing light and hope to us all…

This is the time of the Maiden’s spiritual birth. Having undergone death and separation from the upper world, she has met with the Crone and learned the mysteries of Immortality, Manifestation, and Dissolution. She welcomes the spirit of the child within her, even as she herself is reborn through recognition of her own immortality. In the heavens a precise shift of energy is occurring. The longest night of rime of darkness is succeeded by the lengthening days.

At Winter Solstice I celebrate the divine childself or infant year with a story of the moon giving birth to a star. The Moon Goddess decides she wants a child, and sends a legend to earth to let the people know. Her story, in the form of a wind, enters the poets of the world, who then sing it to everyone else. At mid-winter the people watch the full moon, as a shining star births out of her and dances across the sky. The star becomes the animals of the seasons—a dove, a lion, a snake, a deer, and finally a golden child who flies down to earth to teach us of love and the nature of things (See the five-0fold year, page 162.)

In this holy day I have kept many traditional practices that seem to me universal and of value to the health of our psyches. The major difference is that the Divine Child is female. In celebrating her we can celebrate and heal all the experiences of our own childhoods. As women we are in dire need of a metaphor of the yearly birth of our Selves.

This is a wonderful story to act out with children. The Solstice time is especially for them, for they represent the child in all of us, the Younger Self, that is forever innocent and new, spontaneous, trusting and full of wonder. Decorating a symbol, such as a tree, is entirely appropriate, being a very old pagan practice from long before the birth of Christ. And the exchanging of gifts is as old as our race- a natural gesture of love and appreciation for those special people in our lives. Thus is the longest night, a dark time in which to invoke the light. We hold to those we love and build great fires to invite the light and love of the sun’s return.

Gather indoors, where it is cozy. A space with a fireplace is preferable. Decorate the altar with evergreens and sparkly things. The altar, in fact, can be the fireplace or the solstice tree. Have lots of candles. Cook magical and festive food. Lots of hot and steamy dishes are good for the cold season. Have gifts for each participating child on or at the foot of the altar. Wear deeply warm and richly colored clothing-reds, blacks and royal blue, etc. Wear crystals and stars and silver sounding bells.

Join hands and form a circle. One person stays out and turns all the lights out, then begins lighting candles in the dark.

All chant as the light increases: Lucina, Amaterasu, Sola, Akewa, Inanna, (any goddesses you might know).

Invocation spoken by priestess:

The Divine Year has died and is now reborn

Miraculously the Golden Star Child returns

To embrace us all with Her innocence and love.

Each child is led to the center of the circle. All radiate love to her for a moment and shower praises, hugs and kisses. Each child is presented with a gift. Pass the rattle around the circle and tell your own stories of the solstice. Share stories, feelings, legends, experiences. Caroling, sing to your heart’s content. Give thanks, ground the energy, and open the circle. Feast and make merry!