

Proerosia (“An Urban Proerosia”)

Honoring: Demeter and Kore

Date: 6 Pyanepsion (~late September) in Athens

Season: The beginning of the agricultural year—the time to plow and sow seed.

Region: Various including Eleusis near Athens

Items needed

- Bowl of water and stick (incense, punk, or natural) to light and douse
- Bowl of barley
- Offerings—for the Proerosia a drink called *kykeon*, typically made of barley, water and other ingredients, is an appropriate libation*. (For example, an ale or beer, alcoholic or not.)
- Basket of grain (barley and/or wheat) to symbolize the harvest to come
- Libation bowl
- Cup

Procession

Assemble and prepare to process to the altar.

We go to the holy place with reverence and love, to honor the gods.

Purification of participants

Light a stick and extinguish in the bowl of water, creating lustral water.

May all be made pure who wash in this water.

Pour water over the hands of each person so that they may rinse their face and hands in the lustral water.

Purification of space

Pass the bowl of barley among the participants so that each may take a handful of barley.

May all that is profane be gone from here!

Each person throws barley onto the altar; gently if indoors, with force if outside.

Invocation

We call to Demeter, mistress of the stone and sod,
granter of growth, provider of fruit and grain,
whose mercy and goodness are known the world over,
whose tales have been told many years, many seasons.
We call to fair Kore, daughter of the earth,
goddess born, goddess wed, holder of mysteries,
bearer of secrets, you who are seed and shoot,
flower and fruit, bright maid and gentle queen.
As the soil makes ready for the seed we call to you,
O goddesses, we ask your blessing on our work.

If ever we have honored you, poured out sweet wine
in reverence and love, O great ones, deathless ones,
hear now our prayers, grant now your blessings. Praise be to you!

Statement of purpose

In this time of gentle breezes and new-warmed soil, we gather to honor Demeter, great goddess of grain, and her daughter the maid Persephone in her name of Kore. We ask your blessing, goddesses, on the seed we shall sow this season, on the hopes we have for our efforts, on the plans we make for what will be.

Ritual body

Hold up basket of grain.

We pray to you, O goddesses whose might resides
within the great earth, to Demeter and to Kore,
we pray to you, we ask your favor! We hold
in our hands this grain, this promise of what may be.
Your gift it is to make things grow, to bless the seed
that the harvest may come; our work it is
to do our part, to make our plans with care,
to keenly watch each crop, each undertaking,
that all within our power may be done and well,
that our efforts may bear fruit. We ask your blessing,
great ones, praiseworthy ones, grant us vision and vigor
that we may do our work, grant us all good fortune.

Libations and offerings

Pour liquid offering into cup, hold up filled cup.

To noble Hestia, who ever comes first and last,
We offer this drink; all praise to you, O Hestia!

Pour out some drink into the libation bowl; hold up cup, refilling if necessary.

To Demeter by whose will we live and thrive,
We offer this drink; all praise to you, O Demeter!

Pour out some drink into the libation bowl; hold up cup, refilling if necessary.

To Kore whose journey tells an eternal tale,
We offer this drink; all praise to you, O Kore!

Pour out some drink into the libation bowl; hold up cup , refilling if necessary.

To noble Hestia, who ever comes last and first,
We offer this drink; all praise to you, O Hestia!

Pour out some drink into the libation bowl; hold up cup, refilling if necessary.

We share this drink among ourselves with love for the gods
and gratitude for all we have been given.

Pass the cup among the participants.

Thanks

We thank you, O gods, for your presence this day
as we celebrate your festival with reverence and joy.
We thank you, O gods, for your many blessings,
for the great gifts you grant to men and women.
With love and devotion we praise and honor you.

Close

We leave this holy place, with reverence and gratitude for all we have been given. The rite is ended.