

Danu

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* *“I am the force that turns the flower to the sun.”*

Name: Danu/ Anu / Danand / Dana

Properties: Mother Goddess, Fertility, Abundance & Protection

Associated Sites: Dá chich Anu (The Paps of Anu, Co. Kerry)

Husband: Bile The Sacred Tree

Descendants: The Tuatha Dé Danann

Many people believe that Danu's original name was Anu, and that she is the primary Earth Goddess; she embodies the earth, fertility, fruitfulness and well-being, and she represents all of our cycles: life, death, and rebirth, which is beautifully reflected in the cycles of the earth. (1) Danu is also closely associated with rivers and streams, and her name means "Waters of Heaven" in Sanskrit. According to *Celtic Myth and Magick*, by Edain McCoy, Danu/Dana was the first great mother Goddess of Ireland, and she was later renamed or absorbed by the goddess Brigid. Many pagans (especially Celtic pagans) believe she was the first mother; the goddess who birthed all of creation into being. Danu is closely associated with the Greek goddess Demeter, and the Welsh goddess, Modron.

The Tuatha Dé Danann, Danu's descendents, are a magical race of people who chose to go underground to another time and space called Tir-na-noghe, the "Land of Eternal Youth" (4); they have portals in which to return, located mostly in Ireland. Fairies are well known as part of the Tuatha Dé Danann. "Other members of the Tuatha Dé Danann include: Manannán, Brigid or Bride, and Macha, one face of the triple war-goddess, the Morrigan." (3) "Two round hills in Co. Kerry were once believed to her breasts, reflecting her function as a divine mother; the hills are known as "The Paps of Anu." She has a counterpart in the Welsh Goddess Don, the divine matriarch of the *Mabinogion*." (2) Unfortunately we do not have an abundance of information on Danu, but the point that she is the principal mother of the Celts is popular. The purpose of this research project is to help you to connect with Mother Danu and with those she holds dear.

River stones are well known stones to associate with Danu; however, while working with Mother Danu, I have found that the following stones resonate well with her: moss agate, moonstone, emerald, and amber. Her fairies (respectfully called "Good People" or "People of Peace") love quartz crystals with rainbows in them and quartz clusters. We can honor Danu by working with the Fae and with elementals. One of my favorite ways to do this is to create a space in front of a window for the fairies. You can provide them with crystals, shiny objects that hang from your window, butterfly or dragonfly art, colorful stones, and objects of nature, such as moss, pine cones, etc. Place these items as if you were creating an altar for playful souls. Below is a picture of my great room window as an example.



Studying Danu and finding opportunities to honor her led me outside many times. I found her in my trees, my plants, in the woods, and in feathers that were left as gifts to me. I realized that She is Earth, and She gave me a poem to share with you:

"The Calling of Danu"

I am the Great Mother.
Mother of Earth.
Mother of the Tuatha Dé Danann.
Mother of you.

Stop molding the earth to suit you.
Mold yourself to suit the earth.
Sink your toes into Me and feel My pulse.
Breathe with Me and seek My nourishment.

I will feed you, heal you, build you
Into what you want to be...
For you already are
My magnificent Daughter.

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Danu is loved and worshipped on both land and water. She brings the magic of the Fae into our lives and blesses us with creativity and abundance. She is the earth that nourishes us; she is the water that sustains us. She is the life force that animates our bodies and gives us breath. When we reconnect with Earth, we are also reconnected with Mother. With this in mind, the following is a ritual to honor Danu.

“Reconnecting with our Mother” – A ritual for Danu

Items needed:

Candles: I chose white for Danu’s maiden aspect, red for her mother aspect, and black for her crone aspect

Stones: River stones or any of the following: moss agate, moonstone, emerald, and amber.

Incense or Smudging tools for cleansing

Items collected from nature: pine cones, feathers, leaves, berries, flowers, etc. (earth aspect of mother)

Water in a bowl or chalice or shells (water aspect of Mother)

Water for drinking and a piece of fruit

Ritual:

Take a ritual salt bath to cleanse and prepare for ritual.

Use incense or smudging supplies to clean your ritual space.

Place water / shells and items from nature on your altar with stones and candles.

Light candles and call the circle.

Invocation:

Read “The Calling of Danu”.

Eat a piece of fruit. Then say, “The earth that nourishes me.”

Drink water. Then say, “The water that sustains me.”

Reflect on how Danu’s aspects of life, death, and rebirth affect her daughters. Think of ways to incorporate honoring her into your daily life.

Give gratitude to Danu for being the mother and provider of all things that nurture you.

Open the circle.

Ground

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(Provided by Sacred Source)

“Danu, mother, queen, life giver,
your sweetness is the salt kiss
where ocean meets land.
You are the wellspring of fertility,
Queen of all Sidhe,
shining jewel of Ireland.
I am enveloped in your mist,
your loving embrace,
a child come happily home.”
Katrin Auch

Sources:

1. <http://www.shee-eire.com/magic&mythology/Gods&Goddess/Tuatha-De-Danaan/Goddess/Danu/Factsheet1.htm>
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3. <http://www.thaliatook.com/AMGG/danu.html>
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5. McCoy, Edain, Celtic Myth and Magick: Harnessing the Power of the Gods and Goddesses. Llewellyn Publications, 1995.

*artwork by Thalia Took, author of The Goddess Oracle Deck

<http://www.thaliatook.com/AMGG/goddesses.html>

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