

## Resources for St. Patrick's Day



### 'God is Family, So are we'

Saint John Paul II once said that "Love is never defeated, and the history of Ireland proves it."

One of the most heartening things about St. Patrick's Day is the sense of family and community that prevails around this feast day. Seeing families spend time together in celebratory mode is heartening. The excitement and anticipation that runs in communities and families on this day as they prepare to either participate in or host a parade in honour of Ireland's patron saint palpable. It is the ultimate celebration of our heritage and our faith.



St. Patrick spent much of his life away from his family. During his captivity and subsequent slavery, he turned to his faith to console him in the midst of loneliness and fear. He chose to surround himself with God.

When he finally managed to escape slavery and to return home to his birth family in Britain, he felt the urge to return to Ireland as a missionary. His prayer had led him to accept Ireland as his home and his relationship with God had formed a new vision of family around him.

Through our celebrations this day, we don't just remember the historical figure of Patrick, but the man who was central to creating the Christian family here on the Island of Ireland, whose love for God and love for our country was not defeated despite his many trials and imprisonments.

With a world that is forever presenting challenges to us as Christians, we draw from the story of St. Patrick as a source of strength, wisdom, perseverance and love.



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World Meeting of Families 2018 Limited by Guarantee - Company No. 590403, Registered Charity No. 20152701.

Registered office: Holy Cross Diocesan Centre, Clonliffe Rd., Dublin 3, Ireland, Eircode D03 P2E7.

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## Prayer of the Faithful:



1. *“As a young boy, St. Patrick was kidnapped, by Irish pirates and sold into slavery in Ireland.”*

We pray for all who are imprisoned or face a life of slavery. May we grow more aware of the suffering children, women and men who are victims of human trafficking in our world.

***A Thiarna éist linn***

***Le Chéile: A Thiarna bí ceansa agus éist linn***

2. *“Patrick worked as a herdsman on Mount Slemish in Co. Antrim.”*

We pray for all Shepherds of the Faith. Especially our religion teachers, chaplains, bishops, clergy, laity and all who minister in various ways our parishes and schools. That they will be supported, encouraged and respected in their roles.

***A Thiarna éist linn***

***Le Chéile: A Thiarna bí ceansa agus éist linn***

3. *“Patrick escaped back to his family on a boat bound for Britain”*

We pray for all who seek refuge and have risked life and limb in search of a more secure future for their families. May all who are far from their place of birth find in our Church a home where no one is a stranger.

***A Thiarna éist linn***

***Le Chéile: A Thiarna bí ceansa agus éist linn***

4. *“There he had a dream that the Irish were calling him back to Ireland to tell them about God. This inspired him to return to Ireland as a Missionary priest”*

For all Irish persons living abroad. May they be rewarded for their strength and courage to follow their dreams like Patrick did. We pray also that they will remember their family and loved ones here in Ireland and that their spiritual connection to their native homeland will continue to prosper and grow.

***A Thiarna éist linn***

***Le Chéile: A Thiarna bí ceansa agus éist linn***

5. “St. Patrick travelled the country baptising people and establishing monasteries, schools and churches as he went.”

For all who strive amidst much adversity to hand on the faith within their families and communities. We pray especially for parents, grandparents and God parents who encourage and support children of every age on their faith journey. May St. Patrick reward them for their efforts.

***A Thiarna éist linn***

***Le Chéile: A Thiarna bí ceansa agus éist linn***

6. “For over twenty years he travelled the length and breadth of the island.”

We pray for the travelling community. As we celebrate our Irish identity, culture and traditions on this day, may we also respect and learn from other minority cultures on our Island and become a living example of God’s love and friendship towards one another.

***A Thiarna éist linn***

***Le Chéile: A Thiarna bí ceansa agus éist linn***

7. “Upon his death, St. Patrick left behind an ordered church, the see of Armagh, and an island of believers in Christ. Today’s date – 17<sup>th</sup> March – has been commemorated as St Patrick’s Day ever since.”

Lord, your three days in the tomb and your resurrection gives hope to all who grieve. May the love and peace of Christ console them in their despair. May the dead whom they mourn be granted eternal rest and may their good deeds and memories live on in their families.

***A Thiarna éist linn***

***Le Chéile: A Thiarna bí ceansa agus éist linn***

## Prayers & Reflections



### Paidir Naomh Padraig

Críost liom, Críost romham.  
Críost in mo dhiaidh, Críost istigh ionam.  
Críost fúm, Críost ós mo chionn.  
Críost ar mo láimh dheas, Críost ar mo láimh chlé.  
Críost mar a luífidh me, Críost mar a suífidh me.  
Críost mar a seasfaidh me,  
Críost i gcroí gach duine atá ag cuimhneamh orm,  
Críost i mbéal gach duine a labhraíonn liom,  
Críost i ngach súil a fheachann orm,  
Críost i ngach cluais a éisteann liom.  
Críost liom, Críost liom, Críost liom.

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### Patrick's Creed:

#### *A Proclamation of the Faith in the Triune God*

There is no other God, nor will there ever be, nor was there ever, except God the Father. He is the one who has not begotten, the one without a beginning, the one from whom all beginnings come, the one who holds all things in being; this is our teaching.

And his son, Jesus Christ, whom we testify has always been, since before the beginning of this age, with the Father in a spiritual way. He was begotten in an indescribable way before every beginning. Everything we can see, and everything beyond our sight, was made through him. He became a human being; and having overcome death, was welcomed to the heavens by the Father. The Father gave him all power over every being, both heavenly and earthly and beneath the earth.

Let every tongue confess that Jesus Christ, in whom we believe and whom we await to come back to us in the near future, is Lord and God. He is judge of the living and of the dead; he rewards every person according to their deeds;

He has generously poured on us the Holy Spirit, the gift of promise of immortality, who makes believers and those who listen to be children of God and co-heirs with Christ. This is the one we acknowledge and adore – one God in a trinity of the sacred name.

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“The joyful heart sees and reads the world with a sense of freedom and graciousness.” —John O’ Donohue

## Extracts from Patrick's own writings:

See [www.confessio.ie](http://www.confessio.ie)

1 My name is Patrick. I am a simple country person. I was taken prisoner. I was about sixteen at the time. At that time, I did not know the true God. I was taken into captivity in Ireland, along with thousands of others. 2 It was there that the Lord protected me and consoled me as a father does for his child, long before I knew him.

I am Patrick, a refugee. I was like a stone lying deep in the mud. Then he who is powerful came and, in his mercy, pulled me out, and lifted me up. That is why I must shout aloud to the Lord for such great good deeds of his.

16. After I arrived in Ireland, I tended sheep every day. More and more the love of God increased, and my sense of awe before God. Faith grew, and my spirit was moved, so that in one day I would pray up to one hundred times. I remained in the woods and on the mountain, and I would rise to pray before dawn in snow and ice and rain. As I realise now, the spirit was burning in me at that time.

24. One night – I do not know, God knows, whether it was within me or beside me – I heard authoritative words which I could hear but not understand, until at the end of the speech it became clear: “The one who gave his life for you, he it is who speaks in you”; and I awoke full of joy.

25. Another time, I saw in me one who was praying. It was as if I were inside my body, and I heard above me, that is, above my inner self. He prayed strongly, with sighs. I was amazed and astonished and pondered who it was who prayed in me; but at the end of the prayer, it was clear that it was the Spirit. At this I awoke, and I remembered the apostle saying: “The Spirit helps the weaknesses of our prayer; for we do know what it is we should pray, but the very Spirit pleads for us with unspeakable sighs, which cannot be expressed in words

30. For that reason, I give thanks to the one who strengthened me in all things.

33. [...] I must take care not to hide the gift of God which he has generously given us in the land of my captivity. It was then that I looked for him with all my strength, and there I found him, and he protected me from all evils – this is what I believe – on account of his Spirit living and working in me to this very day.[...] In a vision in the night... the voice of the Irish people.... called out “We beg you, holy boy, to come and walk again among us.” This touched my heart deeply.

Is it just from myself how I now love the people who at one time took me as a slave? In my human nature I was born free. Now, in Christ, I am a servant of a foreign people, for the sake of the indescribable glory of eternal life which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God gave me such great grace, that through me, many people should be born again in God and brought to full life.

41 How has this happened in Ireland? Never before did they know of God. But now, they have become children of God. I have cast myself into the hands of almighty God, he knows the depths of my heart! For him I perform the work of an ambassador. God chose me for this task so that I would be one of his very least important servants.

I am bound in the Spirit, and I fear to lose the work which Christ the Lord told me to come here for, namely to be with these people for the rest of my life. May the Lord will it, and protect me from every wrong path, so that I do not sin before him.

62 I pray for those who believe in and have reverence for God. Some of them may come upon this writing which Patrick, a sinner without learning, wrote in Ireland.