

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

For we have sinned against you.

Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

And grant us your salvation.

May almighty God have mercy on us.... **Amen.**



OPENING PRAYER

Lord, through the work of Saint Patrick in Ireland we have come to acknowledge the mystery of the one true God and give thanks for our salvation in Christ; grant by his prayers that we who celebrate this festival may keep alive the fire of faith he kindled.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING *Jeremiah 31:31-34*

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah

See, the days are coming - it is the Lord who speaks - when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah, but not a covenant like the one I made with their ancestors on the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant of mine, so I had to show them who was master. It is the Lord who speaks. No, this is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel when those days arrive - it is the Lord who speaks. Deep within them I will plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. There will be no further need for neighbour to try to teach neighbour, or brother to say to brother, 'Learn to know the Lord!' No, they will all know me, the least no less than the greatest - it is the Lord who speaks - since I will forgive their iniquity and never call their sin to mind.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God

RESPONSORIAL PSALM *PS. 50:3-4.12-15*

R. A pure heart create for me, O God.

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.

In your compassion blot out my offence.

O wash me more and more from my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. **(R)**

2. A pure heart create for me, O God, put a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your holy spirit. **(R)**

3. Give me again the joy of your help;

with a spirit of fervour sustain me, that I may teach transgressors your ways and sinners may return to you. **(R)**

SECOND READING *Hebrews 5: 7-9*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

During his life on earth, Christ offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had

the power to save him out of death, and he submitted so humbly that his prayer was heard. Although he was Son, he learnt to obey through suffering; but having been made perfect, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God! If a man serves me, says the Lord, he must follow me; wherever I am, my servant will be there too. Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!

GOSPEL *John 12:20 - 30*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. These approached Philip, who came from Bethsaida in Galilee, and put this request to him, 'Sir we should like to see Jesus.' Philip went to tell Andrew, and Andrew and Philip together went to tell Jesus. Jesus replied to them:

'Now the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you most solemnly, unless a wheat grain falls on the ground and dies, it remains only a single grain; but if it dies, it yields a rich harvest. Anyone who loves his life loses it; anyone who hates his life in this world will keep it for the eternal life. If a man serves me, he must follow me, wherever I am, my servant will be there too. If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him. Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say: Father, save me from this hour? But it was for this very reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name!'

A voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.'

People standing by, who heard this, said it was a clap of thunder; others said, 'It was an angel speaking to him.' Jesus answered,

'It was not for my sake that this voice came, but for yours. Now sentence is being passed on this world; now the prince of this world is to be overthrown. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men to myself.'

By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

All bow for following two lines: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God,



the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord, accept this pure sacrifice which, through the labours of Saint Patrick, your grateful people make to the glory of your name. We ask you this through Christ our Lord.

AFTER THE CONSECRATION

The mystery of faith.

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Many will come from east and west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the kingdom of heaven, says the Lord.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Strengthen us, O Lord, by this sacrament so that we may profess the faith taught by Saint Patrick, and to proclaim it in our way of living. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May God the Father, who called us together to celebrate this feast of Saint Patrick, bless you, protect you and keep you faithful. Amen.

May Christ the Lord, the High King of Heaven, be near you at all times and shield you from evil. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit, who is the source of all holiness, make you rich in the love of God's people. Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, X and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain for ever. Amen.

In peace. Thanks be to God.

focus on sunday

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT 17th March 2024
ST. PATRICK, BISHOP, PRINCIPAL PATRON OF IRELAND

Jesus was destined to die so that we would have life.
We must die to sin, die to our selfish ways,
if we are to be alive to Christ and alive for his kingdom.



We can think maybe that Patrick has been presented very often as rather illiterate, an unintelligent but holy man. Much connected with holy wells. And mixed up with legends. His confessions show us a man who knew well his theology, and the fathers of the church.

There was darkness and doubt in his spiritual life like any person of prayer. He was ejected by fellow bishops for some sin of his youth. His legacy is that he brought Christ to Ireland. And despite all the lovely messages from the President and politicians, his main motive in coming to Ireland was to bring Christ to Ireland. He was trafficked, he was migrant and with him, but we miss the point if we don't see him as bringing Christ to Ireland, the Gospel of Christ. His memory is marked by churches and street names, and townlands, everywhere - only Mary and James of Compostella beat him on churches! He leaves also a legacy with his wellknown prayer:

Prayer for the Faithful by Saint Patrick

May the Strength of God guide us.
May the Power of God preserve us.
May the Wisdom of God instruct us.
May the Hand of God protect us.
May the Way of God direct us.
May the Shield of God defend us.
May the Angels of God guard us.
- Against the snares of the evil one.

May Christ be with us!
May Christ be before us!
May Christ be in us,
Christ be over all!
May Thy Grace, Lord,
Always be ours,
This day, O Lord, and forevermore.
Amen.

Donal Neary SJ, Editor Sacred Heart Messenger