

St. Patrick's Day Parish Resources

Insert for the Parish Bulletin or Newsletter

As we celebrate St. Patrick's Day, our thoughts turn to those who have emigrated from our shores.

We remember and pray for all Irish people overseas- those who are recently departed and those who left our shores many years ago. We ask you to remember in a special way those emigrants whose journey has been a difficult one and may need that extra bit of help and support. In addition to practical assistance, emigrants need spiritual and emotional support. We remember those who work tirelessly to assist Irish emigrants of all generations, particularly the Irish chaplaincies in the United States and the U.K.

We also pray those who have been touched by the sense of loss that comes with a loved one emigrating, that they will find strength and comfort as they cope with the pain of separation.

Prayers for Emigrants

A Prayer for Emigrants

Bless all those who have left our country and now live in other lands.

Give them a strong faith so that they will always put their trust in you and make you known by the example of their lives.

Console those who are lonely because they are separated from those they love.

Help all missionaries who are working far from home to make your love known.

Bless our people overseas who are sick or in prison.

We pray for foreigners living in our country that they may experience our hospitality.

Grant your eternal welcome to our emigrants who have died and to all the dead.

Amen

Prayer of St Brendan

Help me to journey beyond the familiar and into the unknown.

Give me the faith to leave old ways and break fresh ground with You.

Christ of the mysteries, I trust You to be stronger than each storm within me.

I will trust in the darkness and know that my times, even now, are in Your hand.

Tune my spirit to the music of heaven, and somehow, make my obedience count for You.

Amen



Irish Episcopal Council for Emigrants

Columba Centre, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. Tel: 01-5053155 Fax: 01-6016401, Email: emigrants@iecon.ie

For our Loved ones Far away

St Colmcille,
Who suffered pain and grief of exile,
Watch over the children of Ireland,
Scattered throughout the world.
Obtain for them solace and courage,
And keep them true to God
In every trial and temptation!
Amen
(Prayers of an Irish Mother)

A Prayer for Our Irish Emigrants

Lord,
Some may know the bleakness of life,
Its capacity to disappoint,
The waning of energy or health.
Yet they have a place in the soul which time cannot
touch,
A Wisdom and beauty from lives deeply inhabited.
May all of them know the warmth of their soul,
The natural shelter around their lives.
In dignity and freedom may they return home to
themselves.
Amen

Communion Reflection

The following may be used to conclude as a Communion Reflection

Prayer of 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.

Prayer of the Faithful 1

Celebrant: On this feast of our National Apostle let us call on God our Father to hear and answer our petitions.

1. That the leaders of our church in Ireland may have the humility courage and wisdom of St. Patrick.
Lord, hear us.

2. That a spirit of peace and friendship may flourish between all the people on our island.
Lord, hear us.

3. That those in government may be guided by the highest and noblest ideals of truth, integrity, justice and service.
Lord, hear us.

4. That all who are connected to Ireland by ancestral heritage may hold fast to the faith of their forebears and live lives guided by Gospel values.
Lord, hear us.

5. We pray for Irish people all over the world, that they may enjoy God's favour. We remember especially those who are lonely and those who cannot return home.
Lord, hear us.

6. We pray for families, who are without a loved one through emigration.
Lord, hear us.

7. That those who have come from abroad to make a new life among us may find a warm and generous welcome. May we be open to the richness of experience that they can bring to our land.
Lord, hear us.

Celebrant: God of all nations we rejoice today in St. Patrick who first brought the Gospel to our shores, Keep us true to that faith and answer our petitions this day.

We ask this through Christ Our Lord....

Prayer of the Faithful 2

Introduction (By the presider)

Let us bring our petitions before God, confident that our prayers are always heard.

Intercessions (announced by the deacon, cantor or another person)

1. We pray for our political leaders and legislators, that the transforming power of the Spirit will help them make decisions that create an inclusive and just society for all people.
Lord, hear us.
2. We pray that young people, inspired by the example of St Patrick, May courageously take up the missionary challenges of our age as joyful witnesses of the gospel. That they may be guided and protected from the dangers that are ever present in our world today, may they be given the courage and strength to make the right decisions as they journey through life.
Lord, hear us.
3. We pray for countries all over the world that are places of conflict and war. May their leaders seek dialogue rather than arms, recognise the miracle of each human life and turn their minds and hearts to peace.
Lord, hear us.
4. We pray that those who have travelled from other lands to make Ireland their home may be warmly welcomed into our communities and may enrich us with their presence and their gifts.
Lord, hear us.
5. We pray for the people of Ireland. May our faith be renewed and new life breathed into us. May we treasure the gift of faith given to us by St Patrick. May those who have left our shores to preach the good news of the Gospel be guided and blessed; may they find peace and know the value of their labour and the satisfaction in knowing they glorify you in sharing your word.
Lord, hear us.
6. We pray for all who have died. May those we love who have died be blessed and granted peace and eternal rest in your presence. We remember especially people who died alone or away from family and friends and Irish people who died abroad in tragic circumstances. May their families be comforted and reunited together in your love forever.
Lord, hear us.

Conclusion (by the presider)

Heavenly Father, we thank you for our faith and the life and example of St Patrick. Hear the prayers we now make, in the name of Jesus, your Son, who is Lord forever and ever. Amen

Homily Notes

We come together today to pray for those close to us who have emigrated – be they newly departed or those who emigrated many years ago. While their absence has left a void in our lives, may we draw strength and comfort from one another. There is an old Irish proverb which holds “Ar scath a cheile a mhaireas na daoine.” – translated it means: —It is in the shelter of each other that the people live.

Our National Patron, Saint Patrick shared something in common with many of the great prophets in Sacred Scripture. Abraham, Elijah, Moses and Saint Paul all experienced revelations of God’s mysterious and unfathomable love while on journeys. Today, we pray for all who travel in search of hope and blessing. We think particularly of our own people who have found new lives in distant lands. May they, like so many people in Scripture, and in the previous generations before them, discover the rich mystery of God’s salvific purpose and know the peace and support that Saint Patrick found for his life. May they be sustained and nourished and may they enrich those they come in contact with. We also thank God for the blessings that are bestowed on our land by the presence of so many people from the many countries, backgrounds and traditions that we are privileged to witness in everyday life but more particularly when we worship together.

As we come together to pray for our relatives and friends who have emigrated, let us reflect on some of the journeys people take.

We know that many of today's emigrants are, in some ways, better equipped than those of previous generations, with the technological advances in recent times. Also, comparatively speaking, travel is more affordable than in years gone by.

However, it would be incorrect to think that such technological advances could in some way address the needs of the whole person. A person’s faith can take on a special role when living far from home. It provides a wonderful opportunity for migrants to come together with others to worship, it creates a strong bond and a supportive network to soften the isolation of emigration. While their circumstances and locations may change, God’s love is a constant for them to hold on to.

Also, we must never lose sight of, or forget, those emigrants whose journey has been a difficult one. For a multitude of reasons, some Irish emigrants today can still find themselves isolated, vulnerable and alone. Mindful of their generosity to their homeland in years past, it is right that we, as a State, a Church and a people, look to support them and to travel with them on all stages of their emigrant journey. In the words of his Holy Father, Pope Francis, (in his message for the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees on the 24th September 2023): “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me (Mt 25:35-36). These words are a constant admonition to see in the migrant not simply a brother or sister in difficulty, but Christ himself, who knocks at our door.”

May the teaching and example of St Paul, a great and humble Apostle and a migrant, an evangelizer of peoples and cultures, spur us to understand that the exercise of charity is the culmination and synthesis of the whole of Christian life.

When one of our family members emigrate, it can be difficult for those of us left behind. It is at times like this we are reminded of the importance of family. We pray that despite the distances, we can share in our loved one’s journey and that the strong bonds of family will be nurtured and maintained.

Interesting Facts and Statistics on Emigration

- The Central Statistics Office (CSO) published the annual Population and Migration. Estimates for April 2023;
 - ◆ 64,000 emigrated in the year to April 2023, compared with 56,100 in the same period of 2022. This was one of the highest figures of recent years
 - ◆ Of the 64,000 who emigrated, 30,500 were Irish citizens
 - ◆ In the last eight years 231,500 Irish citizens emigrated
 - ◆ The UK remains the most popular destination for Irish emigrants
 - ◆ Close to one third of emigrants are aged 15-24 years old
 - According to the 2021 census in the UK, there were more than 500,000 people living in England and Wales who were born on the island of Ireland.
 - ◆ As a proportion of the total 2021 population of England & Wales, those born in Ireland represent 0.9%.
 - ◆ Over 40 percent of the residents of England and Wales born in the Republic of Ireland arrived before 1971. Many of them are now in need of support.
 - It is estimated that over 6 million Irish people have emigrated to the United States since 1820.
 - Today one sixth of US citizens (43 million) identify their national background as Irish.
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