

Additional prayers from Ireland

Hymns and Blessings

(proposed by the ecumenical group in Ireland and published under their sole responsibility)

O King of the Friday (Ancient Irish Prayer)

Whose limbs were stretched on the Cross,
O Lord who did suffer
The bruises, the wounds, the loss,
We stretch ourselves
Beneath the shield of thy might,
Some fruit from the tree of thy pass
Fall on us this night!

Saint Patrick's Breastplate

I bind unto myself today
The strong name of the Trinity
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One and One in Three.

I bind this day to me forever,
By power of faith, Christ's incarnation,
His baptism in the Jordan River,
His cross of death for my salvation,
His bursting from the spiced tomb,
His riding up the heavenly way,
His coming at the day of doom,
I bind unto myself today.

I bind unto myself today the virtues of the
starlit heaven,
the glorious sun's life-giving ray, the
whiteness of the moon at even,
the flashing of the lightning free, the
whirling wind's tempestuous shocks,
the stable earth, the deep salt sea, around
the old eternal rocks.

I bind unto myself today
The power of God to hold and lead,

Love Divine, all Loves Excelling (Charles Wesley, 1747)

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;

His eye to watch, his might to stay,
His ear to hearken to my need,
The wisdom of my God to teach,
His hand to guide, his shield to ward,
The Word of God to give me speech,
His heavenly host to be my guard.

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

I bind unto myself the name,
The strong name of the Trinity
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One and One in Three,
Of whom all nature has creation,
Eternal Father, Spirit, Word.
Praise to the Lord of my salvation;
Salvation is of Christ the Lord!

Visit us with Thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit
Into ev'ry troubled breast;
Let us all in Thee inherit,

Let us find Thy promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.

Come, almighty to deliver,
Let us all Thy life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Nevermore Thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,

Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,
Glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish then Thy new creation;
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see Thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in Thee:
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise

A 15th Century Gaelic Blessing

God be in my head and in my understanding:
God be in my eyes and in my looking:
God be in my mouth and in my speaking:
God be in my heart and in my thinking:
God be at mine end and at my departing.

An Old Irish Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.
Amen.

Traditional Celtic hymn

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art;
Thou my best thought in the day and the
night,
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true
word,
I ever with thee, and thou with me, Lord;
Thou my redeemer, my love thou hast
won;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise,

Thou mine inheritance through all my
days;
Thou, and thou only the first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my treasure thou art!

High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright
sun,
Grant me its joys after vict'ry is won;
Christ of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

(words: Irish song (8th century), tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1905; versed by Eleanor H. Hull, 1912.)