

Leader

May the God of life encompass you,
protecting your form and your frame.
May the Christ of love encompass you,
shielding you from hatred and from harm.
May the spirit of grace encompass you,
guiding you towards goodness and away from ill.
The blessings of the Triune God surround you ...

Community
Leader

... **abiding in us forever and eternally. Amen.**

Praise to the Father,
praise to the Son,
praise to the Spirit.

Community
Leader

The three in one.
(making the sign of the cross)

The guarding of the God of life be on you,
the guarding of the loving Christ be on you,
the guarding of the Holy Spirit be on you,
aiding and enfolding you
each day and night of your lives.

Community

**May God, the three in one, encompass us all,
shielding us on sea and on land, in day and in night,
guarding each step and each path we travel. Amen.**

Hymn (optional)

The members of the community sit or kneel after the service concludes, as they prefer. Silence is observed to allow private prayer or meditation. Individuals should leave quietly as the Spirit moves them.



A Journey to the Land of the Saints

IV • The Paradise of Birds

The members of the community enter and pray in silence. After the community is fully assembled, the prelude should be presented.

Prelude

“The Paradise of Birds”
(from The Voyage of Saint Brendan, translated by John J. O’Meara)

Stopping to rest on Easter, Saint Brendan and his companions
come ashore on an island called The Paradise of Birds and join its
unique community of prayer and praise until Pentecost.

A period of silent meditation follows the reading before the leader begins the penitential prayers.

Penitential Prayers

A bell rings and the members of the community kneel. If anyone cannot kneel, they should remain seated with their head bowed.

Leader
All

We bend our knees
(making the sign of the cross)

**in the eye of the Father who created us,
in the eye of the Son who purchased us,
in the eye of the Spirit who cleansed us. Amen.**

All stand.

Leader

Lord Jesus Christ,
give us the grace of repentance;
give us the grace of earnestness;
give us the grace of submission.

Community

**Give us the strength and courage to confess our guilt
as earnestly as were this the moment of our death.**

Leader

Lord Jesus,
keep the eye of God between us and every other eye;
keep the purpose of God between us
and every other purpose;
keep the desire of God between us and every other desire;
and no mouth can curse us.

Community Leader	Lord Jesus, have mercy on us.	Lord Jesus, have mercy on us.
	Christ Jesus, keep your pain between us and every other pain; keep your love between us and every other love; keep your dearness between us and every other dearness; and no venom can wound us.	Christ Jesus, have mercy on us.
Community Leader	Christ Jesus, have mercy on us.	Christ Jesus, have mercy on us.
	Lord Jesus, keep the desire of God between us and every other desire; keep the might of God between us and every other might; keep the right of God between us and every other right; and no ill thing can touch us.	Lord Jesus, keep the desire of God between us and every other desire; keep the might of God between us and every other might; keep the right of God between us and every other right; and no ill thing can touch us.
Community Leader	Lord Jesus, have mercy on us.	Lord Jesus, have mercy on us.
	Lord Jesus, have mercy on us.	Lord Jesus, have mercy on us.
Community Leader	Lord Jesus Christ, with the Father who created us and the Spirit that cleansed us, Purify our hearts, make holy our souls and confirm our faith, keep safe our minds and compass our bodies all about. Enfold us...	Lord Jesus Christ, with the Father who created us and the Spirit that cleansed us, Purify our hearts, make holy our souls and confirm our faith, keep safe our minds and compass our bodies all about. Enfold us...
Community Leader	... and surround us.	... and surround us.
	Guide our speech...	Guide our speech...
Community Leader	... and our thoughts.	... and our thoughts.
	Guard us in our sleeping...	Guard us in our sleeping...
Community Leader	... and in our waking.	... and in our waking.
	Nurture us in our watching...	Nurture us in our watching...
Community Leader	... and in our hoping.	... and in our hoping.
	Shield us in our lives...	Shield us in our lives...
Community Leader	... and grant us peace in eternity.	... and grant us peace in eternity.
	Holy God, Father, Son and Spirit, pour down upon us from heaven the rich blessing of your forgiveness.	Holy God, Father, Son and Spirit, pour down upon us from heaven the rich blessing of your forgiveness.
Community Leader	Be patient with us and grant to us the fear of God, the love of God, and your affection so we may do your will on earth at all times ...	Be patient with us and grant to us the fear of God, the love of God, and your affection so we may do your will on earth at all times ...
	... as the angels and saints do in heaven.	... as the angels and saints do in heaven.
Community Leader	Holy God, Father, Son and Spirit,	Holy God, Father, Son and Spirit,

Community Leader	safeguarding us in the sanctuary of your love and sheltering us under the mantle of your care.
	O holy God, be a smooth path before us, a guiding star above us, a keen eye behind us, this day, this night, forever.	O holy God, be a smooth path before us, a guiding star above us, a keen eye behind us, this day, this night, forever.
Community Leader	We are weary and forlorn, O God, lead us to your house, to the peace of heaven.	We are weary and forlorn, O God, lead us to your house, to the peace of heaven.
	Lead us to your house, to the peace of heaven.	Lead us to your house, to the peace of heaven.
Community Leader	Help us do your will...	Help us do your will...
	... and bridle our own.	... and bridle our own.
Community Leader	Help us give you your due...	Help us give you your due...
	... and put aside our entitlement.	... and put aside our entitlement.
Community Leader	Help us travel your path...	Help us travel your path...
	... and leave behind our own.	... and leave behind our own.
Community Leader	Help us ponder Christ's death...	Help us ponder Christ's death...
	... and find hope in our own.	... and find hope in our own.
Community Leader	Help us meditate on Christ agony...	Help us meditate on Christ agony...
	... and strengthen our love for you.	... and strengthen our love for you.
Community Leader	Help us carry Christ's cross...	Help us carry Christ's cross...
	... and forget our own burdens.	... and forget our own burdens.
Community Leader	Help us embrace repentance...	Help us embrace repentance...
	... and accept your forgiveness.	... and accept your forgiveness.
Community Leader	O holy God, help us to control our tongues and our thoughts, so we may trust your wisdom, embrace Christ's redemptive love, and accept the Spirit's gentle graces.	O holy God, help us to control our tongues and our thoughts, so we may trust your wisdom, embrace Christ's redemptive love, and accept the Spirit's gentle graces.
	For we are weary and forlorn ...	For we are weary and forlorn ...
Community Leader	... and ask you lead us to your house, to the peace of heaven. Amen.	... and ask you lead us to your house, to the peace of heaven. Amen.
	In the silence of your heart, bring your special needs or concerns before God.	In the silence of your heart, bring your special needs or concerns before God.
Community Leader	If you wish us to join in your prayers for these needs, speak them aloud, saying when you are finished, "For this I pray."	If you wish us to join in your prayers for these needs, speak them aloud, saying when you are finished, "For this I pray."

Members of the community offer their particular prayers. The community's response to these individual petitions is:

May God's blessing be yours, and well may it befall you.

When these personal prayers are finished, the leader offers the final blessing.

Leader
Community
Leader
Community
Leader
Community

Our soul waits for the Lord;
he is our help and shield.
Our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his holy name.
Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us,
even as we hope in you.

There is a brief silence after the psalm before reading or presenting the audio version of the following reflection.

Reflection

“Accepting Forgiveness as a Loved Sinner”
by Timothy J. Ray

A period of silence is observed after the reflection for private meditation, with or without music. Afterward, the leader proceeds to the Prayers and Blessings after the optional hymn.

Hymn (optional)

Prayers and Blessings

Leader

Praise to the Father,
praise to the Son,
praise to the Spirit.
The three in one.

Community

All stand.

Leader

All

Let us pray for the coming of the Kingdom,
in the words our Lord taught us:
**“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not bring us to the time of trial,
but rescue us from the evil one.”**
(Matthew 6: 9-13)

Leader

Thanks be to you, Eternal Father,
for you have enwrapped our bodies and our souls,

Community
Leader

pour down upon us from heaven
the rich blessing of your peace.
Peace between nations ...

Community

... **peace between neighbors.**

Leader

Peace between kindred ...

Community

... **peace between lovers.**

Leader

Peace between persons injured ...

Community

... **peace between foes.**

Leader

Holy God,

Father, Son and Spirit,

help us to love and bless your creation,

all that we see, all that we hear, all that we touch.

Let us share your peace with our fellow creatures at all times,
living as signs of forgiveness and reconciliation on the earth ...

All

... **as the angels and saints do in heaven:**

without malice, without jealousy, without envy,

without fear, without terror of anyone under the sun.

And may the Father, the Son and the Spirit

kindle in our hearts the flame of love to our neighbors,

to our foes, to our friends, to our kindred all,

to the brave, to the knave, to the thrall.

Leader

The peace of the Father of Joy,
the peace of Christ the Lamb,
the peace of the Spirit of Grace, be with you.

Community

**The peace of the Father of Joy,
of Christ the Lamb, and of the Spirit of Grace,
be with us all.**

Leader

Let us share a sign of peace with those present here
as a testimony to the peace God offers to the world.

The members of the community share a sign of peace before sitting down. A brief period of silence follows before the reader begins the Word of God.

The Word of God

Reader

I set the teachings of Christ before you;

I set the guarding of God about you.

Community

May it possess us and protect us all.

Reader

A reading from the Gospel according to Saint John.

As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth.

