

each day and night of your lives.  
**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.**

Community

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

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

*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,



*All stand.*

Leader

Let us pray for the coming of the Kingdom,  
in the words our Lord taught us:

All

**“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,  
safeguarding us in the sanctuary of your love ...

Community

**... and sheltering us under the mantle of your care.**

Leader

O holy God, be a smooth path before us,  
a guiding star above us, a keen eye behind us,  
this day, this night, forever.

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.**

Help us do your will...

**... and bridle our own.**

Help us give you your due...

**... and put aside our entitlement.**

Help us travel your path...

**... and leave behind our own.**

Help us ponder Christ's death...

**... and find hope in our own.**

Help us meditate on Christ agony...

**... and strengthen our love for you.**

Help us carry Christ's cross...

**... and forget our own burdens.**

Help us embrace repentance...

Father, Son and Spirit,

pour down upon us from heaven

the rich blessing of your forgiveness.

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.**

Holy God,

Father, Son and Spirit,

pour down upon us from heaven

the rich blessing of your peace.

Peace between nations ...

**... peace between neighbors.**

Peace between kindred ...

**... peace between lovers.**

Peace between persons injured ...

**... peace between foes.**

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 ...

**... 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.**

The peace of the Father of Joy,

the peace of Christ the Lamb,

the peace of the Spirit of Grace, be with you.

**The peace of the Father of Joy,**

**of Christ the Lamb, and of the Spirit of Grace,**

**be with us all.**

Community

Leader

Community

Leader

Community

Leader

Community

Leader

All

Leader

Community

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. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam". Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when

The knee that is stiff, O healer, make pliant,  
the heart that is cold, make warm beneath your wing;  
guide the soul that is wandering from your path  
and it shall not die.

Each thing that is foul, may you cleanse,  
each thing that is hard, may you soften with your grace,  
each wound that is causing us pain,  
may you make whole.

Now to the Father who created each creature,  
now to the Son who paid ransom for his people,  
now to the Holy Spirit, comforter of might:  
shield and protect us from every wound.

**Encompass the beginning and the end of our race,  
give us courage to sing in glory,  
in peace, in rest, in reconciliation.**

Come share in the table of the Lord,  
source of love for those who cherish his kindness,  
source of solace for those who need his forgiveness,  
source of hope for those who fear his judgement.  
Come share in the table of the Lord.

**Where no tear shall be shed,  
where death comes no more. Amen.**

*The community shares the Eucharist in silence. Afterward, the table is cleared during the hymn. If there is no hymn, the members of the community use this time for private prayer.*

Hymn (optional)

*Then, the leader continues the service.*

## Prayers and Blessings

Leader

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

Community

**The three in one.**

and in each secret thought our minds get to weave,  
guide and protect us.

**Do not allow us to be tossed about by temptations  
and protect us from all evils that would do us harm.**

O Loving Christ, who was hanged upon a tree,  
each day and each night we remember your covenant;  
in our lying down and rising up, we yield ourselves to  
your cross,

in our lives and our deaths, we seek in you our peace.

Each day, may we remember the source of the mercies  
you bestowed on us, gently and generously;

each day, may we become fuller in love with you.

My brothers and sisters, with St. Paul, I say to  
you:

"I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you,  
that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed  
took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he  
broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this  
in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup  
also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in  
my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in  
remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread  
and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he  
comes." (1 Corinthians 11: 23-26)

O Gracious God, (*making the sign of the cross*)  
may your Spirit come upon us, and upon this bread and  
wine,

so that it might illumine our understanding, kindle our  
will, incite our love, strengthen our weakness, and enfold  
our desires.

**O Generous Lord,  
cleanse our hearts, make holy our souls,  
confirm our faith,  
keep safe our minds, encompass our bodies about  
so that in our own hearts, we may feel your presence.**

O Holy Spirit, of greatest power,  
come down upon us and subdue us;  
from your glorious mansion in the heavens.

Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the  
Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his  
sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I  
washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This  
man is not from God, for he does not observe the  
sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a  
sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So  
they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about  
him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a  
prophet."

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind  
and had received his sight until they called the parents of  
the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is  
this your son, who you say was born blind? How then  
does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that  
this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not  
know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who  
opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for  
himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of  
the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who  
confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the  
synagogue.

The gospel of Jesus Christ, source of strength,  
Source of salvation, source of healing grace.

**May it be a mantle to our bodies.**

Community

*A brief silence follows the reading, until the leader begins the psalm.*

Leader  
Psalm 33, Verses 1 through 22.

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous.

Praise befits the upright.

**Praise the Lord with the lyre;**

**make melody to him with the harp of ten strings.**

Sing to him a new song;

play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

**For the word of the Lord is upright,**

Community

Leader

Community

Community

Leader

Community

Leader

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 Eucharistic Prayer after the optional hymn.

Hymn (optional)

### Eucharistic Prayer

If the community wishes to share the Eucharist, the table is prepared during the hymn. If there is no hymn, the table should be prepared in silence — slowly and deliberately. Then, the leader begins the Eucharistic Prayer.

Leader

Thanks be to you, Holy Father of Glory,  
father-kind, ever-loving, ever-powerful,  
because of all the abundance, favor and deliverance  
that you bestow on us in our need.

Community

**May your name be praised forever,  
in the heavens above and here on earth.**

Whatever Providence befalls us as your children,  
in our portion, in our lot, in our path,  
give to us with it the riches of your hand  
and the joyous blessing of your mouth.

Community

**May your kingdom be seen to flourish  
through the joy of your people, always grateful.**

Leader

In the steep common path of our calling,  
be it easy or uneasy to our flesh,  
be it bright or dark for us to follow,  
your perfect guidance will be upon us.

Community

**Provide for us in all our needs,  
material and spiritual, this day and every day.**

Be a shield to us from the wiles of the deceiver,  
from the arch-destroyer with his arrows pursuing us,

**and all his work is done in faithfulness.**

He loves righteousness and justice;

**the earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.**

By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,

**and all their host by the breath of his mouth.**

He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle;

**he put the deeps in storehouses.**

Let all the earth fear the Lord;

**let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.**

For he spoke, and it came to be;

**he commanded, and it stood firm.**

The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;

**he frustrates the plans of the peoples.**

The counsel of the Lord stands forever,

**the thoughts of his heart to all generations.**

Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord,

**people whom he has chosen as his heritage.**

The Lord looks down from heaven;

he sees all humankind.

**From where he sits enthroned he watches**

**all the inhabitants of the earth —**

he who fashions the hearts of them all,

**and observes all their deeds.**

A king is not saved by his great army;

**a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.**

The war horse is a vain hope for victory,

**and by its great might it cannot save.**

Truly the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him,

on those who hope in his steadfast love,

**to deliver their soul from death,**

**and to keep them alive in famine.**

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.**

Leader

Community

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