



A Journey to the Land of the Saints

V • The Community of Ailbe

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

Prelude

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

Leaving the Paradise of Birds, Saint Brendan and his companions wander on the ocean for many months before landing on another island where they are welcomed by the Community of Saint Ailbe.

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.

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

Community

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.
Lord Jesus, have mercy on us.

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

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

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.

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.

Community Leader	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.	
	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, have mercy on us.	
Community Leader	Lord Jesus, have mercy on 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.	
	Guide our speech...	
Community Leader	... and our thoughts.	
	Guard us in our sleeping...	
Community Leader	... and in our waking.	
	Nurture us in our watching...	
Community Leader	... and in our hoping.	
	Shield us in our lives...	
Community Leader	... and grant us peace in eternity.	
	Holy God, 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 ...	
Community Leader	... as the angels and saints do in heaven.	
	Holy God, Father, Son and Spirit, pour down upon us from heaven	

Community Leader	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.	
Community Leader	Help us do your will...	
	... and bridle our own.	
Community Leader	Help us give you your due...	
	... and put aside our entitlement.	
Community Leader	Help us travel your path...	
	... and leave behind our own.	
Community Leader	Help us ponder Christ's death...	
	... and find hope in our own.	
Community Leader	Help us meditate on Christ agony...	
	... and strengthen our love for you.	
Community Leader	Help us carry Christ's cross...	
	... and forget our own burdens.	
Community Leader	Help us embrace repentance...	
	... 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. For we are weary and forlorn ...	
	... and ask you lead us to your house, to the peace of heaven. Amen.	
Community Leader	In the silence of your heart, bring your special needs or concerns before God. If you wish us to join in your prayers for these needs, speak them aloud, saying when you are finished, "For this I pray."	

<p><i>Members of the community offer their particular prayers. The community's response to these individual petitions is:</i></p>		
<p><i>When these personal prayers are finished, the leader offers the final blessing.</i></p>		
Community Leader	<p><i>May God's blessing be yours, and well may it befall you.</i></p>	
	<p>May the God of life encompass you, protecting your form and your frame. May the Christ of love encompass you,</p>	

Leader
Bless the Lord, all his works,
in all places of his dominion.
Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Community

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

Reflection
“Living as Citizens of Heaven”
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
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.”**

All

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

Community
Leader

Community
Leader
... **peace between neighbors.**
Peace between kindred ...

Community
Leader
... **peace between lovers.**
Peace between persons injured ...

Community
Leader
... **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.

All
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.**

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.
May it possess us and protect us all.

Community

Reader
A reading from the Gospel according to Saint John.

Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming

toward him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?” He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, “Six months’ wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.” One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?” Jesus said, “Make the people sit down.” Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, “Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.” so they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, “This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.”

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. But he said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.” Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

The next day the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?” Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.”

Jesus [then] said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”

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

Community

May it be a mantle to our bodies.

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

Leader

Psalms 103, Verses 1 through 22.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,

and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

**Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and do not forget all his benefits —**
who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
**who redeems your life from the Pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,**
who satisfies you with good as long as you live
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.

The Lord works vindication

and justice for all who are oppressed.

He made known his ways to Moses,

his acts to the people of Israel.

The Lord is merciful and gracious,

slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

He will not always accuse,

nor will he keep his anger forever.

He does not deal with us according to our sins,

nor repay us according to our iniquities.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,

so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;

as far as the east is from the west,

so far he removes our transgressions from us.

As a father has compassion for his children,

so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.

**For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.**

As for mortals, their days are like grass;

they flourish like a flower of the field;

for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,

and its place knows it no more.

But the steadfast love of the Lord

is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him,

and his righteousness to children’s children,

to those who keep his covenant

and remember to do his commandments.

The Lord has established his throne in the heavens,

and his kingdom rules over all.

Bless the Lord, O you his angels,

you mighty ones who do his bidding,

obedient to his spoken word.

Bless the Lord, all his hosts,

his ministers that do his will.