



## A Journey to the Land of the Saints

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### X • Keep Us in the Nearness of Your Love ~ A Liturgy of Memories & Blessings

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

#### **Prelude**

“The Burial of Saint Brendan”

by Padraig Colum

Nearing death, Brendan knew his body would offer both spiritual and material gifts that some people would try to appropriate for their own benefit. In Padraic Colum’s “The Burial of Saint Brendan,” the saint seeks to ensure that — even in death — he will be able to glorify God for the good of all rather than profit the selfish few.

*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

All

*(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,

help us speak according to your justice,  
help us heed your laws and directives.  
Each day and night, help us know your chastening,  
so we may act justly toward you and toward others.  
Lord Jesus, have mercy on us.

Community  
Leader

**Lord Jesus, have mercy on us.**

Christ Jesus,  
help us count the causes of your mercy,  
help us praise the features of your goodness.  
Each day and night, help us know your kindness,  
so we may act tenderly toward you and toward others.  
Christ Jesus, have mercy on us.

Community  
Leader

**Christ Jesus, have mercy on us.**

Lord Jesus,  
help us know the depths of your love,  
help us live according to your wisdom.  
Each day and night, help us know your peace,  
so we may act humbly toward you and toward others.  
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	<b>... as the angels and saints do in heaven.</b>
Leader	Holy God, Father, Son and Spirit, pour down upon us from heaven the rich blessing of your peace. Peace between nations ...
Community	<b>... peace between neighbors.</b>
Leader	Peace between kindred ...
Community	<b>... peace between lovers.</b>
Leader	Peace between persons injured ...
Community	<b>... peace between foes.</b>
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	<b>... 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.</b>
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	<b>The peace of the Father of Joy, of Christ the Lamb, and of the Spirit of Grace, be with us all.</b>
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.

Jesus said:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

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 Psalm 62, Verses 1 through 12.

For God alone my soul waits in silence;

	from him comes my salvation.
Community	<b>He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall never be shaken.</b>
Leader	How long will you assail a person,
Community	<b>will you batter your victim, all of you, as you would a leaning wall, a tottering fence?</b>
Leader	Their only plan is to bring down a person of prominence. They take pleasure in falsehood;
Community	<b>they bless with their mouths, but inwardly they curse.</b>
Leader	For God alone my soul waits in silence,
Community	<b>for my hope is from him.</b>
Leader	He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
Community	<b>On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.</b>
Leader	Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him;
Community	<b>God is a refuge for us.</b>
Leader	Those of low estate are but a breath, those of high estate are a delusion;
Community	<b>in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than a breath.</b>
Leader	Put no confidence in extortion, and set no vain hopes on robbery;
Community	<b>if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.</b>
Leader	Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God,
Community	<b>and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord. For you repay to all according to their work.</b>

*The leader should invite the community to share reflections on their experiences during this sequence of prayer services by saying:*

Leader	At the end of any journey, especially a spiritual one, it is important to consider where you have been, what you have done and who you
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have met during your travels. So, take a moment to reflect on your time traveling with Brendan and his companions.

Then, if you have any thoughts or prayers you would like to share, perhaps an image or a particular moment from your prayers, please share them now as remembrances or prayerful desires for your companions. Please remember to be brief so everyone who desires will have an opportunity to speak.

*The members of the community share brief reflections or prayers from their experiences during the retreat. When appropriate, the leader ends these reflections by saying:*

Leader                      Let us reflect and pray in silence.

*A period of silence is observed 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.

Community                **The three in one.**

*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

We give you our whole soul, O God:  
our thoughts, our deeds, our words, our will,  
our understanding and our intellect.  
Everything we are sings your praises.

We give you worship with our whole lives.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We give you assent with our whole powers.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We give you praise with our whole tongues.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We give you honor with our whole utterances.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We give you reverence with our whole understanding.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We give you offering with our whole thoughts.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We give you praise with our whole being.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We give you love with our whole devotion.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We give you kneeling with our whole desires.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We give you love with our whole heart.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We give you affection with our whole sense.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We give you our existence with our whole mind.

Community

**Keep us in the nearness of your love.**

Leader

We beseech you, O God,  
keep us from all ill, hurt and harm,  
protect us from mischance, grief and despair,  
and guide us into the land of your peace.

Community

**Amen.**

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."

*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                      May the Father, Son and Spirit enfold you on every side,  
never forsaking or forgetting you,  
nor letting evil come near you,  
in each step of the journey before you.  
God the Father go with you at every pass,  
Christ our Lord be with you on every hill,  
The Spirit of Grace guide you across every stream.  
May the Triune God protect and keep you  
from every challenge and sorrow,  
from every evil and anguish ...

Community                **... offering a mantle for both our bodies and our souls. Amen.**

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

Community                **The three in one.**

Leader                      *(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.*