

Worship for personal use Sunday 9th August 2020

Our worship today contains 4 elements: PRAISE (thank you), CONFESSION (sorry), GOD'S WORD (the bible) and RESPONSE (so what now?)

GREAT CREATOR GOD AS WE WORSHIP YOU TODAY OUR
HEARTS ARE FILLED WITH AWE.

We see your glory in the night sky, the moon, the stars shining on,
century after century. We see your glory in the land around our feet,
beauty and abundance to sustain life. We see your glory in all people,
humankind made in your own image. WE WORSHIP YOU.

JESUS CHRIST OUR REDEEMER, AS WE WORSHIP YOU TODAY
OUR HEARTS ARE FILLED WITH PRAISE.

You are the timeless word of God through whom all things were created.
You are the incarnate word of God, demonstrating life in all its fullness,
the eternal word of God, present now and for ever. WE WORSHIP YOU.

HOLY SPIRIT, ENERGY OF GOD, AS WE WORSHIP YOU TODAY
OUR HEARTS ARE FILLED WITH WONDER.

We feel you sweeping across the earth now, as you first stirred the
church at Pentecost. We feel you connecting our worldwide family now,
as we are joined with one another. WE WORSHIP YOU.

Hymn Singing the Faith 17...With gladness we worship, rejoice as we
sing. (H&P 19) or We are here to praise you MP 717

Reading: John 16 v 12-16 Jesus is talking to his disciples about his
forthcoming death (" you will not see me") and the post-resurrection
appearances and promise of the Spirit who will "guide you into all truth".
Spend a few moments quietly reflecting on where you have not lived
within God's truth...and ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen your walk with
Jesus.

We return to the greatness of God with some thoughts on the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

- (1) GOD THE CREATING FATHER: the power of heaven, the light of the sun, the brightness of the moon, the splendour of fire, the flashing of lightening, the swiftness of the wind, the depth of the sea, the stability of the earth, the compactness of rocks.
- (2) THE VIRTUE OF CHRIST, HIS SON: the incarnation of Christ and his baptism, the virtue of his crucifixion and burial, the virtue of his resurrection and ascension, the virtue of his coming on the judgement day.
- (3) THE HOLY SPIRIT: GOD EVERYWHERE AND ALWAYS PRESENT FOR ME. power to guide me, might to uphold me, wisdom to teach me, eye to watch over me, ear to hear me, word to give me speech, hand to guide me, shield to shelter me.

Why do we need this ever present God?

The virtues of Christ (point 2, above) are invoked against every hostile, merciless power which may assail my body and soul. His power is needed against the snares of demons, the seduction of vices and the lusts of nature. Against everyone who mediates injury to me. Against the incantations of false prophets, the black laws of heathenism, the false laws of heresy and the deceits of idolatory.

There is a lot about “me” in the above thoughts but I stand in a very long line of witnesses: the obedience of the angels, the prayers of the Patriarchs, the predictions of the Prophets, the preaching of the Apostles and the faith of the Confessors.

If some of the language sounds old fashioned it is because the words have all been taken from a 1500 year old prayer; St Patrick’s Breastplate.

Patrick wasn’t Irish.. born in 386 AD, he was the son of a deacon and the grandson of a priest. Kidnapped by Irish pirates at the age of 16 he was sold as a slave and spent 6 years ‘enforced’ time tending animals as a shepherd. This gave him’ thinking time’; and he discovered Christ.

*The prodigal son came to his senses whilst tending pigs!

He ran away from his enslavement, found a ship going to England, was reunited with his family and trained for the priesthood in France before being sent to Ireland. For 30 years he was the Primate of all Ireland, challenging the pagan druids with their black magic and occult practices. He saw hundreds of churches built and baptised tens of thousands into the Christian faith; he was a church planter!

It is thought unlikely that Patrick wrote the Breastplate prayer but he did write his stunning life story (conversion and testimony) so look up [www. St Patrick confessio](http://www.StPatrickconfessio.com).

Hymn Hymns and Psalms 695 'I bind unto myself today' is a 19th century translation of St Patrick's Breastplate. Or MP 699 Thou, Whose almighty word.

Reading: Ephesians 6 v 10-18

Paul (the one – time active persecutor of Christians, turned dynamic preacher) knew that military uniform served a very practical purpose.

He used their uniform items (personal protective equipment) to illustrate the new 'might power ' of God. Here is the 'Street' Bible version ..you may well want to look up your own text.

FIRSTLY THE DEFENSIVE ITEMS:

“ Before I sign off, your Boss is strong, so channel that, if you still want to be standing when the Devil's emptied both barrels at you. then get your battle kit on. Know your enemy: it's not people you're fighting; it's the dark spiritual forces that run the evil systems from their hellish HQ.

So you'll need your battle kit to keep you on your feet. Face the onslaught with your Truth Belt fully stocked, with your bullet-proof vest of Right Lifestyle fixed on tight, with your boots being ready to stomp on injustice and escort peace in. Activate your Personal protective Force Field so you'll stay totally convinced of what you're fighting for, even when the evil one's scudding you with missiles. And your headgear's essential, so get your helmet on. With its breathing apparatus to protect you from chemical warfare, and its radio contact with HQ- absolutely essential.”

SECONDLY THE ATTACK ITEMS:

“But it isn’t just about defence; it’s about hitting the enemy where it hurts. What else but the very best weapon, as used by God’s Spirit himself: Words.

Not just any words; we’re on Info Overload already. No. God’s words, from the Sacred Instruction Manual. And keep communication lines with God open 24/7; have his spirit on the conference-call facility permanently. And keep sharp. No point having all this equipment and being dopey or drugged up. Keep on at God for the rest of the crew’s benefit.”

SO?.....SO WHAT??.....SO WHAT IS OUR RESPONSE???

*Look back at the words of Jesus and Paul in the first century AD.

Jesus promising the Spirit to guide us into all truth and Paul’s list of defence and attack items in our spiritual life.

*Then reflect on the Breastplate Prayer written at the time of St Patrick (400 and something AD). It emphasises the presence of God, the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*We live in a troubled world: China /Hong Kong... Black Lives Matter...

....The health and economic impact of Coronavirus worldwide. We pray for good leadership on so many levels throughout the world.

Pray that Christ may use you to offer words of help and comfort this week.

From St Patrick’s Breastplate, as you sit at home today:

“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 and in danger. Christ in hearts of all that love me. Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.”

Hymn: Singing the Faith 8: God with us (tune ‘Ode to Joy’). Sing out!!!
Or MP 557 Praise God from whom all blessings flow