Celtic Spirituality I



The Rev. Jennifer King Daugherty
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St. Patrick's Breastplate

I bind unto myself today
The strong name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same
The Three in One and One in Three.

I bind this today to me forever
By power of faith, Christ's incarnation;
His baptism in Jordan river,
His death on cross for my salvation;
His bursting from the spicèd tomb,
His riding up the heavenly way,
His coming at the day of doom
I bind unto myself today.

I bind unto myself today
The virtues of the star lit heaven,
The glorious sun's life-giving ray,
The whiteness of the moon at even,
The flashing of the lightning free,
The whirling wind's tempestuous shocks,
The stable earth, the deep salt sea
Around the old eternal rocks.

I bind unto myself today
The power of God to hold and lead,
His eye to watch, His might to stay,
His ear to hearken to my need.
The wisdom of my God to teach,
His hand to guide, His shield to ward;
The Word of God to give me speech,
His heavenly host to be my guard.

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

I bind unto myself the name,
The strong name of the Trinity,
By invocation of the same,
The Three in One and One in Three.
By whom all nature hath creation,
Eternal Father, Spirit, Word:
Praise to the Lord of my salvation,
Salvation is of Christ the Lord.

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Origins of Celtic Spirituality

- Tradition vs. defined culture or nation
- Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Isle of Mann, Cornwall, Brittany (France), parts of Spain and Portugal
- Pre-Christian + Christian
- At edge of the Roman Empire
- Distinctive language, poetry, prayers, art



Source: Celticleague.net

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Context



Inishbofin, Ireland

- Rural life
- Clan, kin, and kinship
- Oral culture
- Monastic influence
- Incorporated pre-Christian religious traditions



St. Brigid's Well, Kildare

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Particular Way of Seeing the World



Inishbofin, West Quarter

- Sacred essence of all things
- Spiritual and material worlds woven together
- Divine presence active and close at hand

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Celtic Spirituality



Nunnery, Iona

- Immediate sense of God's presence
- Creation as revelation
- Original blessing (vs. original sin)
- Great cloud of witnesses
- Darkness and light held together
- "Breathing together of all things"
- Expecting transformation

Behold the Lightener of the stars, on the crests of the clouds,
and the choralists of the sky lauding Him . . . "

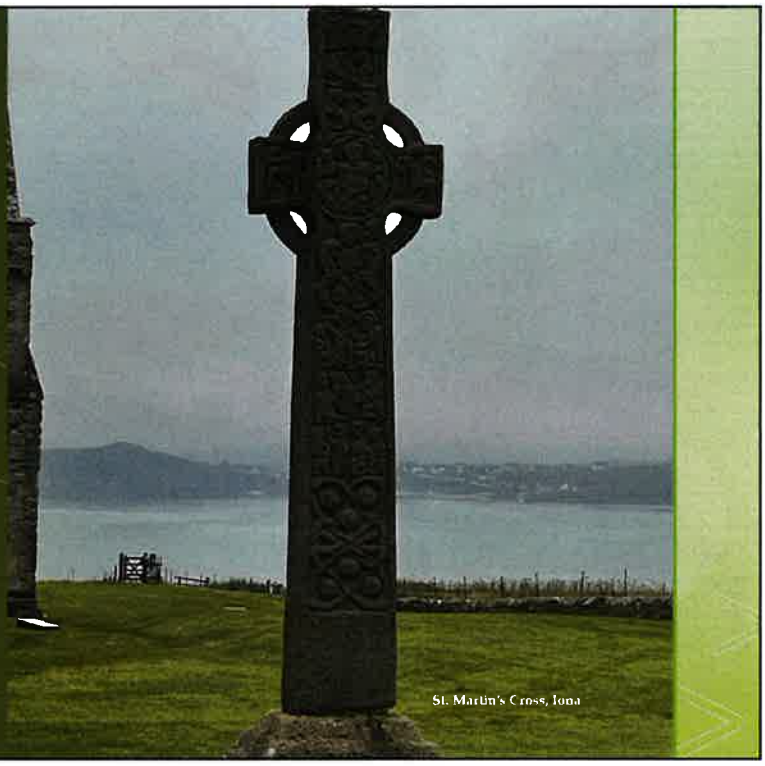
Carmina Gaedelica

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Discussion

What is familiar or resonates with your spirituality?

What puzzles you or doesn't match your experience?


St. Martin's Cross, Iona

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Prayer in the Celtic Tradition

- Prayer embedded in daily rhythms – regular thresholds
- Foundation: praise and thanksgiving
- Open eyes to see God in all things
- Memorization of prayers and short passages of scripture
- Work as silent meditation
- *Lorica* and *caim*


St. Oran's Chapel, Iona

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Some Celtic Prayers

Even as I clothe my body with wool
cover Thou my soul
with the shadow of Thy wing

The guarding of the God of life be upon me,
The guarding of the loving Christ be upon me,
The guarding of the Holy Spirit be upon me,
Each step of the way,
To aid and enfold me,
Each day and night of my life.

Crinn for a Journey

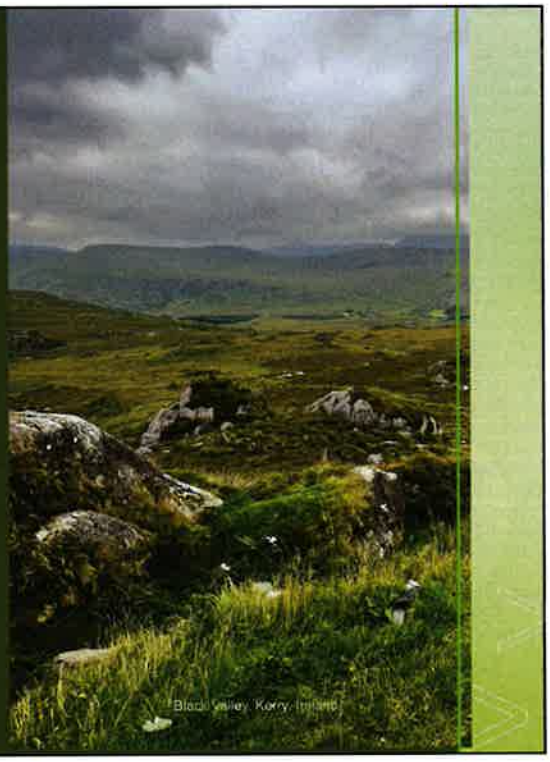
I arise today
through a mighty strength:
God's power to guide me,
God's might to uphold me,
God's eyes to watch over me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to give me speech,
God's hand to guard me,
God's way to lie before me,
God's shield to shelter me,
God's host to secure me.

Lorica of Brigid

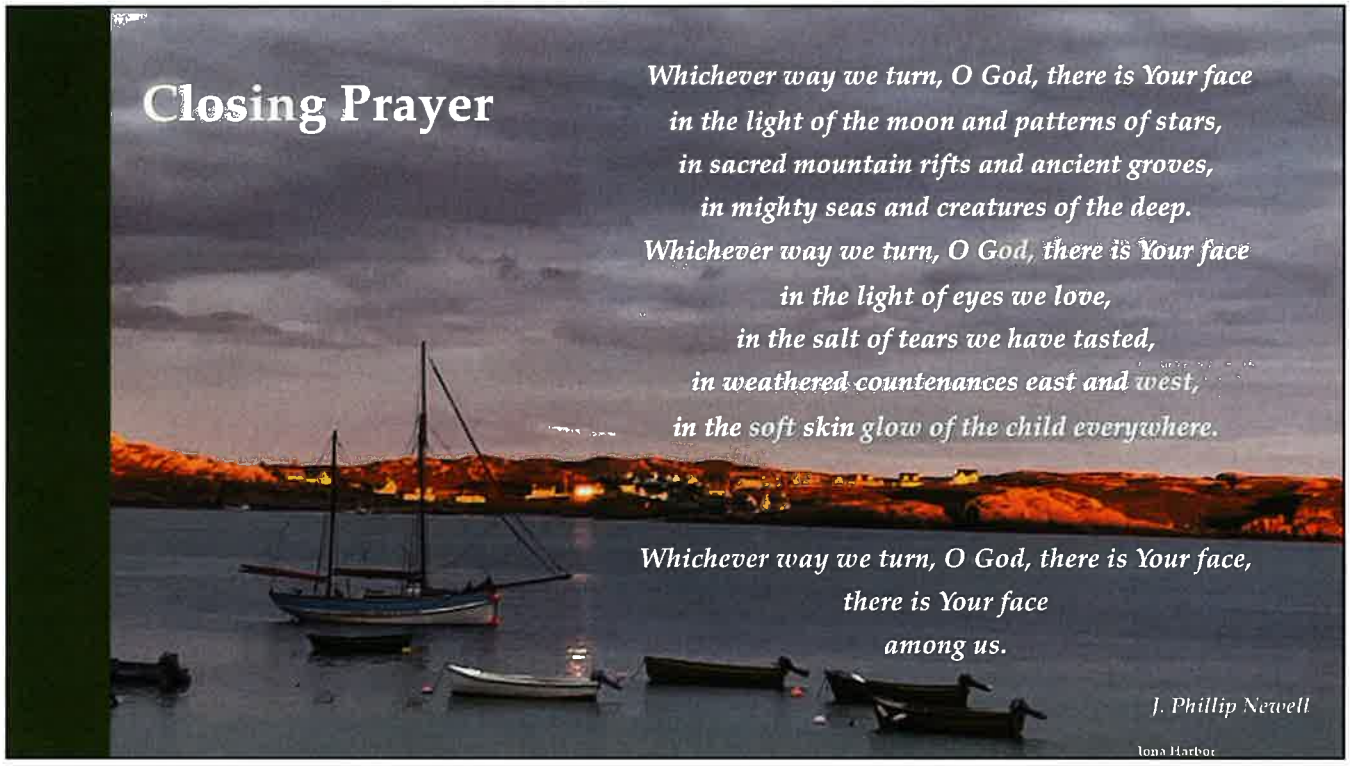
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Discussion

- What elements or experiences of creation speak to you of God?
- What thresholds do you encounter during your day?



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