
The Lorica of Saint Patrick

An article for the *Cathedral Times* by the Very Rev. Sam Candler

This has become a week to remember Saint Patrick! There sure are some fun ways to celebrate the folk stories about him. However, if you are beyond simply drinking green beer to remember Patrick, I offer you these words, a prayer attributed to him. In the Irish tradition, a "lorica" is a "protection prayer." This familiar version was translated by Cecil Frances Alexander (who also wrote "All Things Bright and Beautiful!")

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

I bind unto myself the power
of the great love of cherubim;
the sweet "Well done" in judgement hour;
the service of the seraphim;
confessors' faith, apostles' word,
the patriarchs' prayers, the prophets' scrolls;
all good deeds done unto the Lord,
and purity of virgin souls.

I bind unto myself today
the virtues of the starlit 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.
Of whom all nature hath creation,
eternal Father, Spirit, Word:
praise to the Lord of my salvation,
salvation is of Christ the Lord.

(attributed to Saint Patrick, died circa 461 A.D.)

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sam Candler". The signature is written in black ink and has a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler
Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip