

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT: ST PATRICK'S DAY

'Whoever serves me must follow me, says the Lord; and where I am there also will my servant be.'

(John 12:26)

Newsletter Insert

Beannachtaí Lá Fhéile Phádraig ó gach duine i Trócaire! Today is a day for celebrating our roots, our history and, for many people, celebrating with our family. In Malawi, Malita is also proud to be part of a strong community. Despite the challenges they face, the community works hard to build a better future for their children through education, savings and loans initiatives and village gatherings. Trócaire is supporting communities in Malawi and around the world to provide basic needs so that families can thrive and enjoy life. To learn more, go to: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>



'The problem of water is partly an educational and cultural issue, since there is little awareness of the seriousness of such behaviour within a context of great inequality.'

(*Laudato Si'*, 30)



Patrick at school, Malawi.
Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire

Sacred Space

St Patrick was a man of mission. Add a globe or a map of the world to your sacred space. You could also add a list of people who left your parish as missionaries to bring faith and justice to the world.



Prayer of the Faithful

- 1) Loving Father, on this feast day, we pray for the young siblings on this year's Trócaire box, who are named Patrick and Patricia. May St Patrick guide and protect them, and all who share his name.
- 2) Loving Father, we pray for all who share the Good News around the world in word and action. Like St Patrick may we listen to God in nature and find ways to share our faith through the beauty of God's creation.



Music

'Unless a Grain of Wheat' by Bernadette Farrell
'We Walk by Faith' by Marty Haugen
'Living Water' by Ronan McDonagh



This Week

St Patrick's Day is a special day for Ireland and people connected with Ireland. Could you tell someone about the work of Trócaire today?



GOSPEL REFLECTIONS BY FR PAUL THORNTON

John 12:20-33

The friendship between Jesus and the family of Martha, Mary and Lazarus is very strong. Through his relationship with them Jesus teaches many things about conversion and the spiritual journey. It is Martha who goes out to meet Jesus, while Mary remains sitting in the house. It is Martha who makes the statement of faith, 'I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you' (John 11:22). Jesus goes on to say, 'Your brother will rise again' (John 11:24) followed by, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me, even though they die they will live ... do you believe this?' (John 11:25-26). It is Martha, whose faith and trust in Jesus has grown since their earlier meeting, who says in front of the crowd, 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world' (John 11:27).

In her words and in his actions Jesus' resurrection is foretold and the conversion of many takes place. What gives this meeting so much power is that it is a raw, unvarnished meeting of friends. They know each other, they share their lives together, they have a great love for one another.

When we face the sickness and death of loved ones, there is no place to hide. In his emotion at the tomb of Lazarus we see the reality of Jesus, who feels our pain and takes that pain to himself. When we cry out to him, our prayer is heard.

Heartfelt prayer is heard from mothers like Malita, who prays every day that she can provide for her family despite the challenges they face due to a lack of clean water. When Cyclone Freddy hit Malawi in 2023, it severely damaged Malita's family home. All of her hard work and her plans for her family's welfare were washed away with the soil. Malita is such a loving mother, who does everything that she can for her children. She has a strong and determined spirit, rooted in her faith. With the other women and elders of her village she welcomes the opportunity to develop their farms, improve their water supply and work together to change their lives and the lives of their children.

Read more about Malita's story and find homily notes at: <https://www.trocaire.org/our-work/working-in-ireland/parishes/>

Take Action Day of Celebration – World Water Day

World Water Day occurs every year on 22 March. In 2024 this falls on a Friday just before the Easter break. Use this day to celebrate all things water in your parish. The following are just some suggestions for integrating water issues into your parish for the day. We would encourage you to join with your local school, youth club and community groups for these activities.

- A Pledge Waterfall: Create a waterfall of pledges in a public area. Each water droplet coming down the waterfall can be an individual pledge.
- Organise a river or beach ritual using this Trócaire resource: <https://www.trocaire.org/documents/trocaire-river-ritual-season-of-creation/>

- Do a water liturgy review. How many times during our Catholic celebrations do we use water? One example is during baptism; can you find more, especially as we enter Holy Week?
- Join the Trócaire volunteer programme: <https://www.trocaire.org/join-us/volunteer/>
- Fundraise for Trócaire: <https://www.trocaire.org/ways-to-help/fundraise/community-fundraising/>



Patrick uses the water pump at Puteya Primary School.
Photo credit: Muiru Mbuthia, Trócaire