

CELTIC EVENING PRAYER

FOR

IMBOLLC



WE GIVE THANKS

Spring, with her colour, warmth and scent:
season of budding, rebirth, intent.
Year by year, God sends the Spring:
promise and pardon mingling.
With Christ eternal from the Cross:
bounty bestows from utter loss.

**The broken, cold and stagnant earth:
awakes with miracles of birth
and spirits broken, contrite, cold:
are healed with blessings manifold.
Beauty is free to walk abroad:
and spread the glory of the Lord.**

IMBOLC

The ancient Celtic season of Imbolc, beginning on 1st February, marks the start of Spring. In our worship, we reflect on the cyclical nature of life, both physical and spiritual and our trust that all life is held in God's hands.



READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE

Song of Solomon 2 : 10-13

My beloved speaks to me and says, 'Arise, make haste, my love, my dove, my beautiful one and come away. For the winter is now past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth. The fig tree puts forth its figs and the vines are in blossom.'

Luke 12 : 22-31

Then Jesus said to his disciples: 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you - you of little faith! And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.'

REFLECTION

Easter always falls in Imbolc. Within the events of Christ's Passion, we see reflected all four seasons : the hope and joy of summer in his triumphal entry into Jerusalem; the autumn in the diminishing enthusiasm of the Jews and the coming of the end of Jesus' earthly ministry and, of course, the winter of his crucifixion and death. But it is in the hope of spring that we live – in his glorious resurrection to eternal life. This hope is expressed beautifully by Cardinal John Henry Newman :



‘The sun sinks to rise again; the day is swallowed up in the gloom of the night, to be born out of it, as fresh as if it had never been quenched. Spring passes into summer, and through summer and autumn into winter, only the more surely, by its own ultimate return, to triumph over that grave, towards which it resolutely hastened from its first hour. We mourn over the blossoms of May, because they are to wither; but we know, withal, that May is one day to have its revenge upon November, by the revolution of that solemn circle which never stops—which teaches us in our height of hope, ever to be sober, and in our depth of desolation, never to despair.’ July 13, 1852 : Cardinal John Henry Newman

WE PRAY

Fresh shoots and buds of promise
be glad for the God of life.
First ears of corn and winged arrivals
be glad for the God of life.
Frolicking lambs and industrious bees
be glad for the God of life.
Amen.



Creator God,
As the earth once again turns to face the sun,
we rejoice in this season of Spring.
We give thanks that each day grows longer in light
and that everywhere, we see signs of new growth.
The face of nature laughs in the Springtime;
her breath is fresh and her eyes are clearest blue.
The call of the birds is wild and free,
waterfalls splash with joy.
Meadows light up with the colours of flowers,
the breeze is nature's harp, playing a song of love
and the world is in love with its Creator.
Glad bringer of brightness,
Spring's blessing, rainbow's embrace:
teach our hearts to open as the buds
and welcome your grace.
Teach us to dance with the playful clouds
And laugh with sun's smile on our face.
Amen.



PRAYERS FOR OUR WORLD

Loving Lord,
we remember with gratitude the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ
and the new life he offers to all.
We pray this new life into those places and situations
that are frozen over with bleakness and despair.
We pray for the green shoots of hope in the midst of this pandemic.
Giving thanks for the vaccines, we remember all who have fallen ill, those who
will lose their lives and the many families who mourn.
Lord of Life **Hear us and bless us.**
We remember those who have lost livelihoods and homes, those who have lost
connection with family and friends, the many who feel isolated and alone. We
pray protection and strength for all medical staff and carers, for all key workers
and volunteers. Lord of Life ... **Hear us and bless us.**
We pray for all young people who are trying to continue their education at home
and for those who are struggling to cope. Help the many who are suffering
mental ill health. Into the darkness of anxiety and depression, bring
understanding and hope. Lord of Life .., **Hear us and bless us.**
We pray for your Church throughout the world as it continues to carry your truth
through ever-changing and uncertain times. We pray especially for our churches

here in Mount's Bay that the light of your love may shine ever more brightly in this place. Thank you for the technology that allows us to be together in new and creative ways. Be with us in the challenges ahead and bless our worshipping community, wherever we come before you. Lord of Life...**Hear us and bless us.**

Counting our many blessings, we pray for people throughout the world for whom conflict, famine and disease are a daily reality.

Lord of Life ... **Hear us and bless us**

We pray for all who are suffering in body, mind or spirit. In a moment of silence, we name before you those we carry on our hearts today Bless them and the hands that care for them and everything that is being done for their recovery.

Lord of Life ... **Hear us and bless us.**

We remember before you those whose earthly journey is over. Those to whom you gave breath and whom you receive into eternal peace. In a moment of silence, we remember our loved ones for whom we keep a light in our heart...

Lord of Life ..**Hear us and bless us.**

Lord, you are the light that no darkness can extinguish. Flood our hearts with that light, we pray. Accept our imperfect discipleship and our prayers and shine through us into the need of the world. These prayers we offer in the name of our

Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(The New Zealand Prayer Book)

Eternal Spirit,

Earth-maker, Pain Bearer, Life-Giver,

Source of all that is and that shall be;

Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe;

The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world;

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings;

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom

sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trial too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,

now and forever.

Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

We rejoice today in the verdure of the fertile earth;
we rejoice today in the promise of the rising seed.

I will go forth to sow my seeds
in the name of God whose growth it needs;
and every seed that lies
beneath cold Winter's eyes,
shall take root in God's way.

Kissed by the winds that lightly run,
the new blades shall leap to greet the sun.

May this season of new life and birth fill our hearts with gladness.

We ask for the grace, O God, to live in a new way.

Grant us fresh dreams and new visions.

May we taste more deeply the joys of being alive.

This we ask in the name of the One who is our Eternal Spring:
the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

BLESSING

God of the seasons,
bless the sun that is above us,
the earth that is beneath us,
the Spring that is around us,
the hope that we nurture,
your image deep within us.

We bless each another,
that the beauty of this world and the love that created it
be expressed through our lives and be a blessing to others.

And until we meet again, keep us, we pray,
in the palm of your hand.

Amen.

