

17 MARCH

- 1 Today is the feast of St Patrick, Patron of Ireland. We pray this day for all Irish people.
- 2 Patrick was born about the year 400AD - either near what is now the English/Scottish border (in what was then the Province of Britannia in the Roman Empire), or near the River Severn by the present English/Welsh border. Wherever he was born, he was captured by raiders, made a slave and taken to Ireland when he was about 16 years old. There he was forced to work in the fields, looking after sheep and pigs. He managed to escape in a ship which took him to France. Some time later he became a priest and then a bishop.
- 3 He returned to his birthplace and had a vivid dream or a vision, calling him to return to Ireland and take the Gospel to the people there.
- 4 It was as a young man (and whilst he was a captive) that he had much time to think and reflect, and he grew in his relationship with God. Spending days and nights in the open countryside, looking after the animals, he became more and more aware that God was there with him. Patrick learned to live in the Presence of God.
- 6 Let's pause for a moment and remember that we are in God's presence at this time.
(pause...)
- 7 We'll use one of St Patrick's prayers:
Let us pray:
**Christ be with me and within me.
Christ be behind me and before me.
Christ be beside me
to comfort and restore me.
Christ be below and above me
in peace and in danger.**

**Christ be within the hearts
of all who love me.
Christ be in the words
of friend and stranger.**

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:

www.prayingeachday.org