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ANCIENT IRISH LITANY
OF THE
EVER BLESSED MOTHER OF GOD
IN THE
ORIGINAL IRISH.

Believed to have been in use in the Eighth Century. Lately recovered from oblivion.

WITH TRANSLATIONS IN ENGLISH AND LATIN.

HIS HOLINESS PIUS IX.,
OF BLESSED MEMORY, HAS GRANTED A SPECIAL INDULGENCE TO ALL THE FAITHFUL OF IRELAND WHO SHALL DEVOUTLY RECITE IT.

EDITED BY REV. JOHN GRENE, S.J., DUBLIN, IRELAND.

AND PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES AT THE DESIRE OF THE

REV. RICHARD J. WHYTE, S.J.,

WITH THE APPROBATION OF

HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL McCLOSKEY.

NEW YORK:
ROBERT CODDINGTON, PUBLISHER,
215 FOURTH AVENUE.

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N. B.—The type of the Original Irish used in this edition has been kindly furnished by the proprietors of the "Irish American," under the supervision of Patrick J. Meehan, Esq.

A. M. D. C.

ANCIENT IRISH LITANY

OF THE

Blessed Virgin.

*(Catholic University of Ireland Calendar
for 1867-8.)*

THE Rector of the University, having in the year 1862 supplicated our Most Holy Father, Pope Pius IX., that he would graciously attach Indulgences to the following Prayer, or Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which is believed to be as old, at least, as the middle of the Eighth Century, and which had been rescued from oblivion, a short time previously, by the late lamented Professor Eugene O'Curry, His Holiness issued the following Brief on the 5th September, 1862.

[TRANSLATION.]

PIUS PP. IX.

FOR A PERPETUAL RECORD.

Our beloved Son, Monsignor Bartholomew Woodlock, one of our Chamberlains of Honor, and Rector of the Catholic University in the City of Dublin, has lately caused to be laid before Us a certain Pious Prayer, or Form of Supplication, to the Honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the beginning of which is, in the English tongue—"O Great Mary! O Mary Greatest!"—in the Italian language, "O Maria, eccelsa Signora"; and has also caused it to be set forth to Us that it was lately recovered from oblivion by one of the Professors of the said University, and that it is the same which used to be recited in the Churches by the Irish faithful in their primitive language from the most remote period. But, now, Our aforesaid belov-

ed Son has caused Us to be informed that he himself, and very many others, have it extremely at heart that, with the view of increasing more and more, in the minds of Christ's faithful of Ireland, piety and devotion towards the Immaculate Mother of God, We should vouchsafe, of Our Apostolic favor, to unlock the heavenly treasures of Indulgences for the faithful who shall recite that prayer. We, who regard with fatherly charity and *special good will* all Christ's faithful of Ireland, from whom We have always had peculiar proofs of dutiful service towards this Holy See, have been pleased to meet the prayers they have addressed to Us, and to grant Indulgence as below.

Wherefore, unto all and singular the faithful of Christ of either sex, now or temporarily residing in Ireland, being at least contrite in heart, who shall on any day devoutly recite the aforesaid Prayer, translated into whatsoever language,

provided only the version be faithful, whereof We have ordered a copy, written in the English and Italian languages, to be kept in the Registry of the Briefs of Our Secretary's Office,

We, relying on the mercy of the Almighty God, and by the authority of His Apostles, the Blessed Peter and Paul, do remit, in the wonted form of the Church, on the day whereon they shall do this, One Hundred Days from penances enjoined, or otherwise in what manner soever due, of which relaxations of penances We grant also in the Lord the application, by way of suffrage, to the souls of Christ's faithful who shall have departed from this life united in charity to God. Anything making to the contrary notwithstanding. These presents to hold to all future times.

And We will have precisely the same confidence which would be accorded to these presents, if they were exhibited or shown, to be accorded to translations or

copies, even printed, of the present Letters, inscribed by the hand of some public notary, and furnished with the seal of a person placed in an ecclesiastical dignity.

Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, under the Ring of the Fisherman, 5th day of September, 1862, in the 17th year of Our Pontificate.

✠ B. CARD. BARBERINI.

Concordat cum Originali.

✠ E. McCABE,
Vic. Cap.

Of this Litany a learned and venerable Father, who has long been Professor of the Sacred Sciences in the Grand Séminaire at Montauban in France, thus writes :

“*Montauban, 3 Fevrier, 1879.*

“*Les antiques Litanies de la catho-*

lique Erin m'ont vivement intéressé. Voilà encore une des mille réponses aux ineptes sottises de l'hérésie ! (*Such as the theory of St. Patrick's being a Protestant, which is here alluded to.*)

“Ce monument est d'un grand prix. Nous en avons fait faire la traduction française ; elle sera utile à la piété des fidèles, et très-opportune dans la controverse *de cultu sanctorum*.

“DAMASE PUJOL, S.J.”

Fr. Whyte also writes :

“*New York, 19th Feb., 1879.*”

“This litany disposes well of the theory as to the early Protestantism of Ireland.

“When you send me a copy of the Gaelic original of the litany, I will take means to have it widely circulated. You must know that at this present moment we have in New York several large classes organized for the purpose of preserving and learning and spreading, as far as possible, the old Irish tongue. These classes are taught by competent men. I

mean to have the litany printed in Gaelic, and placed before these classes. It will thus be more acceptable and better appreciated.

“RICHARD J. WHYTE, S.J.”

Ancient Prayer

✠ TO ✠ THE ✠ BLESSED ✠ VIRGIN. ✠

(Translated from the Irish of the Eighth Century.)

O GREAT Mary,
Mary, greatest of Marys,
Most great of women,
Queen of the angels,
Mistress of the heavens,
Woman full and replete with the grace
of the Holy Spirit,
Blessed and most blessed,
Mother of eternal glory,
Mother of the heavenly and earthly
Church,
Mother of love and indulgence,
Mother of the golden light,
Honor of the sky,
Harbinger of peace,
Gate of heaven,
Golden casket,

Couch of love and mercy,
Temple of the Divinity,
Beauty of virgins,
Mistress of the tribes,
Fountain of the gardens,
Cleansing of sins,
Washing of souls,
Mother of orphans,
Breast of the infants,
Refuge of the wretched,
Star of the sea,
Handmaid of God,
Mother of Christ,
Abode of the Godhead,
Graceful as the dove,
Serene like the moon,
Resplendent like the sun,
Destruction of Eve's disgrace,
Regeneration of life,
Perfection of women,
Chief of the virgins,
Garden enclosed,
Fountain sealed,
Mother of God,

Perpetual Virgin,
Holy Virgin,
Prudent Virgin,
Serene Virgin,
Chaste Virgin,
Temple of the Living God,
Throne of the Eternal King,
Sanctuary of the Holy Spirit,
Virgin of the root of Jesse,
Cedar of Mount Lebanon,
Cypress of Mount Sion,
Crimson rose in the land of Jacob,
Fruitful like the olive,
Blooming like the palm,
Glorious son-bearer,
Light of Nazareth,
Glory of Jerusalem,
Beauty of the world,
Noblest born of the Christian people,
Queen of life,
Ladder of Heaven,

Hear the petition of the poor ; spurn
not the wounds and the groans of the
miserable.

Let our devotion and our sighs be carried through thee to the presence of the Creator, for we are not ourselves worthy of being heard because of our evil deserts.

O powerful Mistress of heaven and earth, wipe out our trespasses and our sins.

Destroy our wickedness and depravity.

Raise the fallen, the debilitated, and the fettered. Loose the condemned. Repair through thyself the transgressions of our immorality and our vices. Bestow upon us through thyself the blossoms and ornaments of good actions and virtues. Appease for us the Judge by thy prayers and thy supplications. Allow us not, for mercy's sake, to be carried off from thee among the spoils of our enemies. Allow not our souls to be condemned, but take us to thyself for ever under thy protection.

We, moreover, beseech and pray thee, O holy Mary, to obtain, through thy

potent supplication, before thy only Son, that is, Jesus Christ, the son of the living God, that God may defend us from all straits and temptations. Obtain also for us from the God of Creation the forgiveness and remission of all our sins and trespasses, and that we may receive from Him further, through thy intercession, the everlasting habitation of the heavenly kingdom, through all eternity, in the presence of the saints and the saintly virgins of the world; which may we deserve, may we enjoy, *in sæcula sæculorum*. Amen.

In compliance with wishes expressed by many persons, abroad as well as at home, especially in the United States, the original of the above litany is here subjoined.

Bryan O'Looney, Esq., M.R.I.A., worthy successor to the lamented O'Curry in the Celtic Chair of the Catholic Uni-

versity of Ireland, has kindly supplied that original from the *Leabhar Breac*.

Professor O'Looney writes :

“The grand old Litany of the Blessed Virgin now about to be reproduced is a good example of the forms of prayer peculiar to the early Irish Church, and a strong proof of the veneration in which our ancestors held the Blessed Mother. I concur in the views of my lamented predecessor, Eugene O'Curry, who says of this piece :

“ ‘ It is a beautiful and ancient litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, differing in many ways from her litany in other languages, and clearly showing that, although it may be an imitation, it is not a translation. I believe it to be as old, at least, as the middle of the eighth century. It consists of sixty invocations, beginning : “ O great Mary ! O Mary, greatest of all Marys ! O greatest of women ! O Queen of angels,” etc., and it concludes with a beautiful and eloquent entreaty that she will lay the unworthy prayers, sighs, and groans of us

sinner before her merciful Son, backed by her own all-powerful advocacy for the forgiveness of their sins.' So far O'Curry.

“The venerable manuscript known at present as the *Leabhar Breac*, in the library of the Royal Irish Academy—where this litany is preserved—and known in former days as the *Leabhar Mór Duna Doighre*—great Book of Dun Doighre, and Book of Clonsost (now Clonsast, in King's County, between Portarlinton and Clonbullogue)—contains a vast number of pieces of the same class which may be referred to the same period, and which claim the attention of every pious Catholic who may be interested in knowing the history and practices of the early Irish Church.”

Local traditions, collected on the spot by the illustrious John O'Donovan, M.R.I.A., in 1837, and recently by the kindness of Mr. Thomas Conway, who resides there, tell much of the former glories of Clonsast or Clonsost—of its

very ancient church, now in ruins—being one of seven founded by its patron, St. Broghan, or Brachan (perhaps a contraction for Berachan, writes J. O'D.), or Berchan. They tell of the Saint's Well—of the stone bearing the impress of his head—of the many pilgrims resorting to both for cures, especially of headache.

Clonsost was once a famous "*pattern*" site (24th and 29th June), abolished finally by the clergy on account of abuses, particularly faction-fights.

St. Broghan's feast fell on the 4th of December.

It is very probable that the above litany was used by St. Berchan's community about 725 A.D. at Clonsost. By them, too, was the *Leabhar Breac* first compiled as a devotional work. St. Berchan is commended in the "Donegal

Martyrology” as one of the four prophets of Ireland, ranking with SS. Colum-cille, Moling the Perfect, and Brennan (or Brendan) of Birr.

His monks were driven first from Clonsost, and then by the Danes from Dun Doighre, near Athlone, retiring subsequently to Scariff. (C17el Fec17.)

At the request of Religious Communities desirous of having this venerable litany sung, a Latin version has been prepared, that language being, in their judgment, more readily susceptible of musical adaptation.

THE ORIGINAL IRISH

- a Wuinne mór,
a Wuinne ir mó dona Wuinnib,
a No-mór na m-ban,
a Níáan na n-ainzel,
a Bantígeirna ind nínne,
a ben lan ocur fon-lan ó naic in Spinnra
Nóin.
a bendacta ocur a no-bendacta,
a Wactair na glóinne ruáinne,
a Wactair na h-eclairre neimda ocur talman-
da,
a Wactair na baide ocur ind lozáid,
a Wactair na rollrí fonnordai,
a Ónoir ind eceoir,
a Camairca na reáinne,
a Dornur nínne,
a Comra óndai,

- a Leba na bájde ocur na trídcajne,
 a Čempajl na diadačta.
 a Waŕre na η-óž,
 a bančizerna na cihud.
 a Čopajni na lubžonit,
 a Šlanad na peccad,
 a Nize na η-anmand,
 a Wačajni na η-dšlljučta,
 a Čšc na nójden,
 a Čomdižnad na truaž,
 a Rédla na maŕa,
 a Čumal Dé,
 a Wačajni Čriřt,
 a Aŕnherajd in čoihdeš,
 a Čručac maŕi čolum,
 a Ščernažd maŕi éřca,
 a Čožajde maŕi žnéřn.
 a Šřcon ařčirre Eua,
 a Ačnužéd na bečad,

- a Wäıre na m-banrcál,
- a Čend na η-óž,
- a Lubžonc fon-ıaca,
- a Fın čopun zıarrazžče,
- a Wáčajı Dó,
- a Óıž řučajı,
- a Óıž noemı,
- a Óıž čneban,
- a Óıž řočıajıđ,
- a Óıž ženıııajıde,
- a Čempajı Dó bı,
- a Rıž-řıııde ıı ııž řučajı,
- a Šanctajı ıı Spııııta Nójı,
- a Óıž do ııem Jere,
- a Čečen řlébı Leban,
- a Čupııııc řlébı Sřojı,
- a Róř čoncaııdaı b-řenajı Jacoıı,
- a Toıııčec ııajı ola čııııđ,
- a blaıčıııııžčec ııajı řajııı,

a Զեյբ-Բրեժայճ Յլորձայ,
 a Տոլրի Նարաբեժ,
 a Տոլրի Երուսաղեմ,
 a Զայրի ին ծոմայն,
 a Տոճեղ ին թոբայլ Երիսթայճե,
 a Քիճան ին Բեժա,
 a Արած զիյե,

Ելրտ շայճե դա յ-Բոճտ, դա Երիյեյիճ Եղեժա
 աԿար օրդաժայ դա Երուսաճ.

Երեժար աբ յ-Եւթրաճտ աԿար աբ յ-Օճրաժա
 Երեմուտրա յ Ե-Բրաժդայրե ին Եւսլեման, Օրի յի
 Բիս լինձ Բեյն աբ յ-Երեժտ Երե դաբ յ-Երոճայրիլ-
 Լիւժ.

Ա Եանդիճերդա ճւմաճտաճ զիյե աԿար Եալիան
 Եսլեճ աբ Երեժա աԿար աբ Բեժայ.

Տեբր աբ Եւլ աԿար աբ ԵօրԲայճ.

Եճայլ յա Եւրեմեժա յդա յ-Երեյլեյն աԿար դա
 ԵեղճալԵայ, Եայճեյիճ յա Եօրեժա, Լեբրայճ Երե-
 մուտրա Երեբրա աբ յ-ԵօԲեբ աԿար աբ յ-Եւալաճ.

Շիծնայսս ծայրոյ, Երեմուտրա Բլաճա Բարս Եւմ-
 Ըայճե զա թօշոյնի Բար զա Դալաճ, Բեճնայճ
 Ըայրոյ յո յ-Բրեճեմայր Օ՛՛ շայծի՛ն Բար Օ՛՛ յո-
 Բիծի՛ն, զաճ Բար Լեյճ Բար Երոճայրե Դ Երեյճ
 Բար Բար զայրոյն, զա Լեյճ Բար զ-Բար Օ՛՛ Ըօերաճ,
 Բար զար շեյն ճուճ Բեյն ճայճ Բար Ըօ Ըոմ-
 Բարս.

Քրիստ Բար շայծարոյն Բեճ Երա, Բ զօեյն
 Քարս, Երաճ զօր յարճ Բար ճ-օեյն Քար, Եճոյ,
 Բար Երա Երիճ, զաճ Օ՛՛ Բի, Երա Բ զ-Ըարոյն Օ՛՛ Ը
 զա Բ-Բար ճարճայն Բար Բարճի՛ն. Բար
 Երաճ ճարոյն Օ՛՛ Օ՛՛ զա զ-Ըար ճօ Բարճարոյն Բար
 Բար ճարճ Բար Ըար ճար ճար ճար ճար ճար ճար
 Բար Երաճ, Բար ճօ Բարճար ճարճար ճար
 Երա Երաճար ճար ճար ճար ճար ճար ճար ճար
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 ճարճարճար, յո ճար ճար ճարճար.
 Ամեյն.

✠ LATIN • VERSION ✠

Maria magna,
Maria inter Marias maxima,
Maxima in mulieribus,
Regina Angelorum,
Domina cœlorum,
Mulier plena Spiritus Sancti gratia,
Beata et beatissima,
Mater æternæ gloriæ,
Mater Ecclesiæ cœlestis et terrestris,
Mater amoris et clementiæ,
Mater lucis aureæ,
Decus cœli,
Prœnuntia pacis,
Janua cœli,
Arca aurea,
Throne amoris et misericordiæ,
Sacrarium Deitatis,
Decor virginum,
Domina tribuum,
Fons hortorum,
Purgatio delictorum,

Ablutio animarum,
Mater orphanorum,
Nutrix lactentium,
Refugium miserorum,
Stella maris,
Ancilla Dei,
Mater Christi,
Sedes Divinitatis,
Formosa ut columba,
Pulchra ut luna,
Electa ut Sol,
Deletio ignominiae Evæ,
Reparatio vitæ,
Perfectio mulierum,
Primaria inter virgines,
Horte concluse,
Fons signate,
Mater Dei,
Virgo perpetua,
Virgo sancta,
Virgo prudens,
Virgo benigna,
Virgo casta,
Templum Dei viventis,

Solium regis æterni,
Habitaculum Spiritus Sancti,
Virgo de radice Jesse,
Cedre Libani,
Cypresse Montis Sion,
Rosa purpurea terræ Jacob,
Ferax ut oliva,
Florens ut palma,
Puerpera inclyta,
Lux Nazareth,
Gloria Jerusalem,
Ornamentum mundi,
Nobilissima in Christi populo,
Regina vitæ,
Scala cœli.

Imprimatur :

✠ EDVAIDUS,

Archiepiscopus Dublinensis.

xiv Sept., 1879.

The foregoing has also the approval of

His Eminence Cardinal FRANZELIN.

✠ The Most Reverend Dr. MACHALE.

✠ The Most Reverend Dr. CROKE.

✠ The Most Reverend Dr. LEAHY.

✠ The Most Reverend Dr. BUTLER.

✠ The Most Reverend Dr. DUGGAN.

✠ The Most Reverend Dr. MORAN.

✠ The Most Reverend Dr. WOODLOCK.

✠ The Most Reverend Dr. LYNCH.

The Very Reverend Dr. WHITEHEAD.

The Very Reverend THOMAS S. PRES-
TON, V.G., New York, U. S. A.

(From His Eminence Cardinal Franzelin.)

“ Legi non sine animi mei Sølatio, et fere dixerim admiratione, devotissimas antiquæ Hiberniæ supplicationes ad Beatam Virginem, quas mihi pro Tua erga me humanitate mittere voluisti, in Anglicam et Latinam linguam translatas. . . .

“ J. B. CARD. FRANZELIN.

“ Romæ, 1 Octobris, 1879.”

(From the Most Rev. Dr. MacHale, Archbishop of Tuam.)

“ ST. JARLATH’S, TUAM,
“ Oct. 3d, 1879.

“ I cordially approve of the publication of the Litany of the ever Blessed Virgin, extracted from the *Leabhar Breac*, and of its circulation among the descendants of those for whose use it was originally composed.

“ No more conclusive evidence of the tender devotion of the early children of St. Patrick to the Mother of God, and of their appreciation of the wonderful privileges bestowed upon her by the Almighty, can be desired than what is conveyed in the simple lan-

guage of filial tenderness employed in this Ancient Litany. . . .

(Signed),

“✠ JOHN,
“ *Archbishop of Tuam.*”

(From the Most Rev. Dr. Croke, Archbishop of Cashel and Emly.)

“ I thank you for the copy of the Old Irish Litany. It will, I am sure, be received well, and recited everywhere with fervor by our good Irish people. . . .”

(From the Most Rev. Dr. Leahy, Bishop of Dro-more.)

“ I beg to thank you for the copy which you sent of the Ancient Irish Litany in honor of the Blessed Virgin.

“ I highly approve of it. . . .”

*(From the Most Rev. Dr. Butler, Bishop of Lime-
rick.)*

“ I have no hesitation in giving my very hearty

approval to O'Curry's Irish Litany, and its English and Latin translations, and recommending it warmly to the people of this diocese. . . ."

(From the Most Rev. Dr. Duggan, Bishop of Clonfert.)

"It will be a great pleasure for me to aid in the circulation of the Ancient Irish Litany of the Blessed Virgin. I am sure Irish Catholics, at home and abroad, will eagerly welcome its appearance in its present authenticated form. . . ."

(From the Most Rev. Dr. Moran, Bishop of Ossory.)

"I am much obliged for the little brochure, with the Irish Litany, which is a very old friend of mine. . . ."

"I write solely thro' love for the good cause in which we all labor. . . ."

(From the Most Rev. Dr. Woodlock, Bishop of Ardagh.)

"Many thanks for the Irish Litany in its new much improved form. With all my heart I wish

cess to the zealous efforts made to spread this touching monument of the love of our fathers for the Immaculate Mother of God. . . .”

(From the Most Rev. Dr. Lynch, Coad., Kildare and Leighlin.)

“I am truly delighted with the Litanies of our Blessed Lady. What must be the original, when the translations are so simple, sublime, and soul-stirring. I hope that before long these heavenly inspired praises of our beloved Mother will find their way into our Catholic prayer-books. . . .”

(From the Very Rev. Dr. Whitehead, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth.)

“In my humble judgment the good work here undertaken will have the wholesome results anticipated from it. I trust that all concerned in it will receive here and hereafter ample rewards for their zealous labors. . . .”

J. M. J.

Intentions

OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER.

Divine Heart of Jesus, I offer you, in union with the Immaculate Heart of Mary, all my thoughts, words, and actions of this day, for all the intentions for which you offer yourself at each moment on the altar to God your Father, and for all the intentions of the Apostleship of Prayer.

Indulgences

APPLICABLE TO THE DEAD.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto thine (300 days' indulgence).

Sweet Hearts of Jesus and Mary, be my refuge (100 days' indulgence).

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be everywhere loved (100 days' indulgence).

Praised, adored, and glorified at all moments be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, now and for evermore (300 days' indulgence).

My Jesus, mercy (100 days' indulgence).

Praised and adored without ceasing be the Most Holy Sacrament; and blessed for ever be the Purity and Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (100 days' indulgence).

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, pray for us (100 days' indulgence).

Seven Mementos of St. Teresa.

1. Let nothing trouble you.
2. Let nothing frighten you.
3. All things pass away.
4. God only is immutable.
5. Patience overcomes all difficulties.
6. Those who possess God want nothing.
7. God alone suffices.

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ever Blessed Mother of God

