

## DAY THREE READING AND PRAYERS

### Morning Reading

*Scripture Text: Mark 9:25-29; Luke 5:16; Acts 13:2*

“After I arrived in Ireland, I tended sheep every day, and I prayed frequently during the day. More and more the love of God increased, and my sense of awe before God. Faith grew, and my spirit was moved, so that in one day I would pray up to one hundred times, and at night perhaps the same. I even remained in the woods and on the mountain, and I would rise to pray before dawn in snow and ice and rain. I never felt the worse for it, and I never felt lazy — as I realize now, the spirit was burning in me at that time.

“It was there one night in my sleep that I heard a voice saying to me: “You have fasted well. Very soon you will return to your native country.” Again after a short while, I heard a someone saying to me: ‘Look — your ship is ready.’ It was not nearby, but a good two hundred miles away. I had never been to the place, nor did I know anyone there. So I ran away then, and left the man with whom I had been for six years. It was in the strength of God that I went — God who turned the direction of my life to good; I feared nothing while I was on the journey to that ship.”

*Confession 16, 17*

## Morning Prayer

Compared to Patrick and, doubtless, many other believers who are living or have died, I am prayerless. Why am I content with merely human results, and prone to distraction and bodily desires? Wrest me from myself for your sake, God. Help me to prioritize prayer and to not neglect fasting. The most I 'fast' are the hours before breakfast — when I am sleeping! Forgive me and your people, Lord. May all the leaders of Central show us the way in prayer by your grace to them and in them. First and foremost, may we pray for your kingdom, power, and glory.

## Noon Reading

The day I arrived, the ship was about to leave the place. I said I needed to set sail with them, but the captain was not at all pleased. He replied unpleasantly and angrily: 'Don't you dare try to come with us.' When I heard that, I left them and went back to the hut where I had lodgings. I began to pray while I was going; and before I even finished the prayer, I heard one of them shout aloud at me: 'Come quickly — those men are calling you!' I turned back right away, and they began to say to me: 'Come — we'll trust you. Prove you're our friend in any way you wish.' That day, I refused to suck their breasts, because of my reverence for God.<sup>1</sup> They were pagans, and I hoped they might come to faith in Jesus Christ. This is how I got to go with them, and we set sail right away. *Confession* 18

## Noon Prayer

Father, you have guided my steps and have answered me when I called upon you, even when I seemed at a dead end. You looked with favor upon Patrick's repentance and faithfulness, and provided him an escape from his period of suffering. Hear the prayers of your afflicted servants, Lord. Heal them, deliver them, exonerate them, and in your delivery of us all may we depend only on you.

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<sup>1</sup> The practice of symbolically coming under the protection of another by sucking the breast was known in North Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt, Turkey, Armenia, the Caucasus region and Albania, as well as Ireland.

## Evening Reading

*Scripture Text: 1 Kings 17:13-16*

“After three days we made it to land, and then for twenty-eight days we travelled through a wilderness. Food ran out, and great hunger came over them. The captain turned to me and said: ‘What about this, Christian? You tell us that your God is great and all-powerful — why can’t you pray for us, since we’re in a bad state with hunger? There’s no sign of us finding a human being anywhere!’ Then I said to them with some confidence: ‘Turn in faith with all your hearts to the Lord my God, because nothing is impossible for him, so that he may put food in your way — even enough to make you fully satisfied! He has an abundance everywhere.’ With the help of God, this is actually what happened! A herd of pigs appeared in the way before our eyes! They killed many of them and there they remained for two nights, and were fully restored, and the dogs too were filled. Many of them had grown weak and left half-alive by the way. After this, they gave the greatest of thanks to God, and I was honored in their eyes. From this day on, they had plenty of food. They also found some wild honey, and offered some of it to me. However, one of them said: ‘This honey must have been offered in sacrifice to a god.’ Thanks be to God, from then on I tasted none of it.

## Evening Prayer

You are a good Father who, not in my imagination, has answered my prayers. You are the Living God who is attuned to pleas for help. I trust you. Let me not be put

to shame. When people in distress prevail upon me, answer my prayers on their behalf so that they will know for themselves that you are a listening God who loves them. Sensitize me to opportunities, increase my faith. May peoples praise and thank you, and in their estimation may your own people be honored for your sake. May your Spirit be in me my prompter, petitioner, and power.