

**VI.**

I invoke today all these virtues  
Against every hostile merciless power  
Which may assail my body and my soul,  
Against the incantations of false prophets,  
Against the black laws of heathenism,  
Against the false laws of heresy,  
Against the deceits of idolatry,  
Against the spells of women, and smiths, and druids,  
Against every knowledge that blinds the soul of man.

**VII.**

Christ protect me today  
Against poison, against burning,  
against drowning, against wounding,  
That I may receive an abundant reward.

**VIII.**

Christ with me, Christ before me,  
Christ behind me, Christ within me,  
Christ under me, Christ above me,  
Christ at my right, Christ at my left,  
Christ in lying down, Christ in sitting, Christ in rising up.

**IX.**

Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,  
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks to me,  
Christ in every eye that sees me,  
Christ in every ear that hears me.

**X.**

I bind to myself today  
The strong power of an invocation of the Trinity,  
The faith of the Trinity in Unity,  
The Creator of the Universe.

**XI.**

Salvation is of the Lord,  
Salvation is of the Lord,  
Salvation is of Christ;  
May thy salvation, O Lord, be with us forever.

## The Lorica, or Breastplate of Saint Patrick



**Lorica, a Latin word, originally signified a piece of protective armor, a breastplate. This particular lorica has often been called the *Breastplate of St. Patrick.***

# The Lorica, or Breastplate of Saint Patrick

In *The Irish Liber Hymnorum*, J. H. Bernard, D.D., and R. Atkinson, LL.D., Vols. I and II, London, 1898. Henry Bradshaw Society. The Lorica is an ancient Gaelic prayer which has been attributed to St. Patrick. It is an invocation of the Holy Trinity, and was usually recited in the morning. In the early Irish Church loricæ were numerous; some were written in Gaelic and some in Latin. Lorica, a Latin word, originally signified a piece of protective armor, a breastplate. This particular lorica has often been called the *Breastplate of St. Patrick*. Lorica-prayers were recited to obtain divine protection against evils, physical or spiritual, especially against the powers of darkness. The loricæ replaced heathen incantations, when the Irish embraced Christianity.

The *Lorica* of St. Patrick in its present form was written down most probably in the ninth century. Experts in the Gaelic language, however, feel that its syntax, metrical forms, and sentiments argue to a far older composition, possibly of the sixth century, or even earlier. In the Ireland of those days an oral composition could have been made, which might not have been committed to the written page until some centuries later.

## The Legacy of Saint Patrick

Noted scholar and foremost modern Patrician authority, Dr. Ludwig Bieler, includes the *Lorica* in his excellent volume, *The Works of St. Patrick*. While admitting that St. Patrick's authorship cannot be proved, Dr. Bieler also states that the possibility of St. Patrick's authorship should not be rationally disavowed because the *Lorica* is one of the earliest implementations of the legacy of St. Patrick. "The Lorica," is contained on page 76 in *The Works of St. Patrick*, St. Secundinus' Hymn on St. Patrick. The Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland; Longmans, Green and Company, London, 1953.

### I.

I bind to myself today  
The strong power of an invocation of the Trinity,  
The faith of the Trinity in Unity,  
The Creator of the Universe.

### II.

I bind to myself today  
The might of the Incarnation of Christ with that of His Baptism,  
The might of His Crucifixion with that of His Burial,  
The might of His Resurrection with that of His Ascension,  
The might of His Coming on the Judgment Day.

### III.

I bind to myself today  
The power in the love of the Seraphim,  
In the obedience of the Angels,  
In the ministration of the Archangels,  
In the hope of Resurrection unto reward,  
In the prayers of the Patriarchs,  
In the predictions of the Prophets,  
In the preaching of the Apostles,  
In the faith of the Confessors,  
In the purity of the holy Virgins,  
In the deeds of Righteous men.

### IV.

I bind to myself today  
The power of Heaven,  
The brightness of the Sun,  
The whiteness of Snow,  
The splendor of Fire,  
The speed of Lightning,  
The swiftness of Wind,  
The depth of the Sea,  
The stability of the Earth,  
The firmness of Rocks.

### V.

I bind to myself today  
God's Power to pilot me,  
God's Might to uphold me,  
God's Wisdom to teach me,  
God's Eye to watch over me,  
God's Ear to hear me,  
God's Word to give me speech,  
God's Hand to guide me,  
God's Way to lie before me,  
God's Shield to shelter me,  
God's Host to secure me:  
Against the snares of demons,  
Against the seductions of vices,  
Against the lusts of nature,  
Against everyone who meditates injury to me  
Whether far or near,  
Whether few or with many.