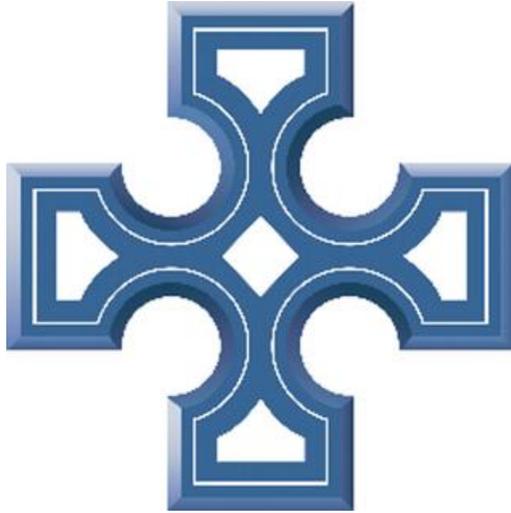


Free to shape our own future



***A Service of the Word
to mark 150 years
since the disestablishment of the
Church of Ireland***

Preparation

GREETING

Grace, mercy and peace
from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you all
and also with you.

Opening Hymn: CH 528 *“The Church’s one foundation”*
or **T&P 85** *“Lift the banner, Church of Erin”*
or another suitable hymn

SENTENCES OF SCRIPTURE

Through Christ let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God,
that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

Hebrews 13: 15

O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known his deeds
among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praises to him: tell of all his
marvellous works.

Psalms 105: 1, 2

INTRODUCTION

The minister may introduce the liturgy in these or other suitable words. The section headed “The Preamble and Declaration” may be omitted or summarised.

Today we remember some important events in the life of the Church of Ireland — an act which disestablished the church in 1869 and made it independent of the Church of England, followed by the adoption of its constitution by a general convention in 1870. We thank God for what has been achieved over the last one hundred and fifty years and we look forward in faith to what God has in store for the Church of Ireland. We pray that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it may continue to witness to God’s saving power in Ireland and play a valuable role within the Anglican Communion and in the Universal Church.

In 1869, the Westminster Parliament passed an Irish Church Act which put an end to the establishment of the Church of Ireland and provided for the dissolution of the union between the Churches of England and Ireland from 1st January 1871.

The Act enabled the holding of general synods or conventions with powers to frame constitutions and regulations for the general management and good government of the Church of Ireland and property and affairs thereof. It also envisaged the creation of a body to hold property on behalf of the Church of Ireland (now referred to as the Representative Church Body).

Disestablishment terminated both state support and parliament's role in the governance of the Church of Ireland and took into government ownership much church property. Church of Ireland representation in the House of Lords also ceased.

THE PREAMBLE AND DECLARATION

A general convention was held in 1870 at which a Constitution was adopted. The Preamble and Declaration read as follows:

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
Amen: Whereas it hath been determined by the Legislature that on and after the 1st day of January, 1871, the Church of Ireland shall cease to be established by law; and that the ecclesiastical law of Ireland shall cease to exist as law save as provided in the "Irish Church Act, 1869", and it hath thus become necessary that the Church of Ireland should provide for its own regulation:
We, the archbishops and bishops of this the Ancient Catholic and Apostolic Church of Ireland, together with the representatives of the clergy and laity of the same, in General Convention assembled in Dublin in the year of our Lord God one thousand eight hundred and seventy, before entering on this work, do solemnly declare as follows:

I

1. The Church of Ireland doth, as heretofore, accept and unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as given by inspiration of God, and containing all things necessary to salvation; and doth continue to profess the faith of Christ as professed by the Primitive Church.

2. The Church of Ireland will continue to minister the doctrine, and sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded; and will maintain inviolate the three orders of bishops, priests or presbyters, and deacons in the sacred ministry.

3. The Church of Ireland, as a reformed and Protestant Church, doth hereby reaffirm its constant witness against all those innovations in doctrine and worship, whereby the Primitive Faith hath been from time to time defaced or overlaid, and which at the Reformation this Church did disown and reject.

II

The Church of Ireland doth receive and approve The Book of the Articles of Religion, commonly called the Thirty-nine Articles, received and approved by the archbishops and bishops and the rest of the clergy of Ireland in the synod holden in Dublin, A.D. 1634; also, The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, according to the use of the Church of Ireland; and the Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, as approved and adopted by the synod holden in Dublin, A.D. 1662, and hitherto in use in this Church. And this Church will continue to use the same, subject to such alterations only as may be made therein from time to time by the lawful authority of the Church.

III

The Church of Ireland will maintain communion with the sister Church of England, and with all other Christian Churches agreeing

in the principles of this Declaration; and will set forward, so far as in it lieth, quietness, peace, and love, among all Christian people.

IV

The Church of Ireland, deriving its authority from Christ, Who is the Head over all things to the Church, doth declare that a General Synod of the Church of Ireland, consisting of the archbishops and bishops, and of representatives of the clergy and laity, shall have chief legislative power therein, and such administrative power as may be necessary for the Church, and consistent with its episcopal constitution.

PENITENCE

God our Father, we come to you in sorrow for our sins.

Lord, you are gracious and compassionate,
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

You are loving to all,
and your mercy is over all your kingdom.
Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Your faithful servants bless your name,
and speak of the glory of your kingdom.
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

The priest pronounces the absolution:

May the Father of all mercies cleanse you from your sins,
and restore you in his image
to the praise and glory of his name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Hymn of Praise: 318 *“Father, Lord of all creation”*
or **T&P 15** *“Bless the Lord, O my soul”*
or another suitable hymn

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Collect of the Day is followed by this prayer:

O almighty God,
who in thy providence didst choose thy servant Patrick
to be the apostle of the Irish people,
that he might bring those
who were wandering in darkness and error
to the true light and knowledge of thee;
Grant us so to walk in that light,
that we may come at last to the light of everlasting life;
through the merits of Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord. **Amen.**

Ministry of the Word

The children may leave the service for Sunday School (or equivalent). Their leaders are encouraged to include an activity which compares life now with 150 years ago, e.g., clothes, food, housing, transport, school, work, and church.

The Psalm: Psalm 34: 1-8 (or the appointed Lectionary Psalm)

I will bless the Lord at all times; •
his praise shall ever be in my mouth.

My soul shall glory in the Lord; •
let the humble hear and be glad.

O magnify the Lord with me; •
let us exalt his name together.

I sought the Lord and he answered me •
and delivered me from all my fears.

Look upon him and be radiant •
and your faces shall not be ashamed.

**This poor soul cried, and the Lord heard me •
and saved me from all my troubles.**

The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him •
and delivers them.

**O taste and see that the Lord is gracious; •
blessed is the one who trusts in him.**

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be for ever. Amen.*

The First Reading: 1 Peter 2: 1-10 (or an appointed Lectionary Reading)

Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture:

'See, I am laying in Zion a stone,

 a cornerstone chosen and precious;

and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'

To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

'The stone that the builders rejected

 has become the very head of the corner',

and

'A stone that makes them stumble,

 and a rock that makes them fall.'

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn: CH 492 "Ye servants of God, your master proclaim"
or **T&P 152** "This little light of mine"
or another suitable hymn

**The Second Reading: Matthew 28: 16-20 (or an appointed
Lectionary Reading)**

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE SERMON

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The following affirmation of faith may be used (and may be sung to any 87 87 or 87 87D tune) or another suitable affirmation:

**We believe in God the Father,
God almighty, by whose plan
earth and heaven sprang to being,
all created things began.**

**We believe in Christ the Saviour,
Son of God in human frame,
virgin-born, the child of Mary
upon whom the Spirit came.**

**Christ, who on the cross forsaken,
like a lamb to slaughter led,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
he descended to the dead.**

**We believe in Jesus risen,
heaven's king to rule and reign,
to the Father's side ascended
till as judge he comes again.**

**We believe in God the Spirit;
in one Church, below, above:
saints of God in one communion,
one in holiness and love.
So by faith, our sins forgiven,
Christ our Saviour, Lord and friend,
we shall rise with him in glory
to the life that knows no end.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*One of the following forms of prayers may be used or other
suitable prayers:*

Almighty God, we give you thanks and praise for the life of faith in
the weave of the world, for the flame of courage in the heart of the
migrant and for the colour of creation in the exuberance of nature.
Father, give us grace **as we pray to you in faith.**

As your children, we seek to be your servants on earth committed
to the dignity of all creation, loving our neighbours as we love you
and as you equip us to love ourselves.
Son, give us grace **as we pray to you in hope.**

Give us hearts to find you, minds to question you and hearts do your work of mission and ministry, of justice and healing within and without the church.

Holy Spirit, give us grace **as we pray to you in love.**

Commission afresh the Church of Ireland in a time of renewed response to an ever-changing world. Keep us true to our calling, free to shape our own future, respectful of our inherited traditions as we celebrate with others one hundred and fifty years of Disestablishment and beyond.

Holy Trinity, give us grace **as we pray to you in faith, in hope and in love.**

This we ask in the truth that sets us free and in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

or

Almighty and merciful God,
who in days of old gave to this land the blessing of your holy Church;

Withdraw not, we pray, your favour from us,
but so correct what is amiss,
and supply what is lacking,
that we may more and more bring forth fruit to your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour,
the Prince of Peace;

Give us grace seriously to take to heart the great dangers
we are in by our unhappy divisions.

Take away all hatred and prejudice,
and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord:
that, as there is but one Body, and one Spirit,
and one hope of our calling, one Lord,
one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all,

so we may henceforth be all of one heart, and of one soul,
united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity,
and may with one mind and one mouth glorify you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Go before us, Lord, in all our doings, with your most gracious
favour,
and further us with your continual help;
that in all our works begun, continued and ended in you,
we may glorify your holy name,
and finally by your mercy attain everlasting life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

God the Holy Spirit,
come in power and bring new life to the Church;
renew us in love and service,
and enable us to be faithful to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING

*The following forms of prayers may be used or other suitable
prayers:*

The Lord has blessed those who have been members of the Church
of Ireland over the last one hundred and fifty years. As we look
back with thanksgiving and look forward in hope, let us dedicate
ourselves to his service.

Loving God, who guided our ancestors,
we offer you our thanks
for all those who have served
and worked in this branch of Christ's Church
during the last one hundred and fifty years.
May we continue to see, by faith,
the needs of those around us
and the needs of those who shall come after us,
and do all that is possible to witness in word and deed

to the riches of life with Christ.
In Jesus name we pray. **Amen.**

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made. We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

With thanksgiving for the past,
with joy in the present,
and with hope for the future
we celebrate 150 years of disestablishment.
Amen.

THE PEACE

You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.
The Spirit of truth abides with you and he will be in you.
If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

John 8: 32; John 14: 17; Galatians 5: 25

The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathering up all our prayer and praise into one,
as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Going Out as God's People

Benediction Hymn: CH 361 *"Now thank we all our God"*
or **T&P 158** *"We shall go out with hope of resurrection"*
or another suitable hymn

BLESSING

God,
who in days of old gave to this land
the benediction of his holy Church,
fill you with his grace to walk faithfully in the steps of the saints
and to bring forth fruit to his glory:
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
in the name of Christ. Amen.