

Archbishop Martin's Saint Patrick's Day message from New York

Source: Irish Catholic Media Office

Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland writes:

I am sending my Saint Patrick's Day message for the Jubilee Year 2025 from Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York where I have travelled on a "pilgrimage of hope".

Our patron, Saint Patrick, lived his life as a "pilgrim of hope". Despite being trafficked into slavery in Ireland as a young teenager, with all the pain, loneliness and isolation that that brought, Patrick dared to hope in God.

Later in life he heard the "voice of the Irish" calling him back to the land of his captivity, and he answered by returning to our shores as a missionary disciple of hope in the Risen Lord.

During my Pilgrimage for Hope here in New York, I have met hundreds of Irish-American families, including many in the parish community of Saint Barnabas in the Bronx. The people who came here in the 1800s not only constructed railroads and bridges, but they also built a strongly connected community which remains proud to this day of its strong Irish links.

Yesterday I prayed at the Irish hunger memorial, a famine-time cottage which has been shipped over from Mayo to Manhattan and reconstructed brick by brick within sight of Ellis Island. It is a poignant reminder of the countless Irish people who left their homeland during that awful time. Although many left with little more than the clothes on their backs, still, in their hearts, they carried the priceless treasures of faith and hope.

The hope the Irish carried was much more than human optimism. It was a hope forged in adversity and rooted in the same strong faith which centuries beforehand had inspired Saint Patrick to keep going, trusting in God.

Their Hope was not just a feeling. It was Christian Hope, which is a way of living, being and acting that looks beyond personal challenges, trusting in God. Christian Hope confronts the difficulties of this life with belief in the resurrection and with eyes fixed on eternal life in our heavenly homeland. Hope is a challenge to action for peace, justice and solidarity with others who are struggling, especially the poor and the

marginalised.

No wonder so many Irish people, and their descendants, helped to build the great city of New York, as leaders in their parishes and communities, in business, education, healthcare, law and emergency services. All ten of the Archbishops of New York since 1850 were either born in Ireland, or had Irish parents or grandparents.

A very moving and prayerful moment in my pilgrimage of hope has been my visit with young people from Saint Paul's High School, Bessbrook, to the "Ground Zero" 9/11 memorial. I was also deeply moved to pray at the station of New York City Fire Department Rescue 3 remembering the many firefighters who lost their lives on 9/11, including many who were Irish-American.

The theme of peace has been forefront in my mind during this pilgrimage of hope, and I was honoured to be given a tour of the Disarmament exhibition at the United Nations building. I also travelled to the Capitol Hill building in Washington DC to reflect on the unfinished work of peace and reconciliation in Ireland with my good friend Archbishop John McDowell, the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh.

As sons and daughters of Saint Patrick, somewhere deep inside all of us, the voice of God challenges us to be pilgrims of hope in this troubled world. Like Saint Patrick we are to make a difference: to be fearless ambassadors of Hope and charity; energetic peacemakers; compassionate carers for the sick and the lonely; faithful stewards of God's creation; generous helpers of the poor and the marginalised, and welcoming friends for those who, like Patrick and so many of our Irish ancestors, are forcibly displaced from their homeland.

Peace, reconciliation and hope are central to the message of Saint Patrick for us all in this Jubilee Year. Guím idirghuí Naomh Pádraig ar ár lucht imirce scaite ar fud na cruinne. Ba dheoraí Naomh Pádraig é féin tráth. Tuigeann sé ar n'uaigneas agus ar m'briseadh chroí. Guím beannacht, ráth agus séan ár bPatrúin oraibh uilig, inniu agus i gcónaí.

Watch the message

here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZcSluHmDu4Q Sent from my iPad