

Driving Saint Patrick: The charioteer who saved the Irish saint



My good friend Tim sends the Gospel Reflection from Notre Dame University to me each morning. He is a grad and one of the biggest fans that the Fighting Irish have ever had. Each morning I enjoy reading this reflection on the day's Gospel reading, as well as their prayer and saint of the day. This morning I read about lesser-known Saint Odran (Odhrán), the first Christian martyr from Ireland.

Serving as Saint Patrick's charioteer, Odran heard rumor of a plan to kill the Irish bishop. He persuaded Patrick, who was not aware of the death threat, to take the reins of the chariot. Due to Odran's selfless sacrifice in switching places, the spear that was intended for Patrick struck and killed him instead. Patrick's life was preserved and he continued his missionary travels spreading the Gospel through Ireland.

You can read an account of St. Odran's life and death from "Lives of the Irish Saints" [here](#).

Prayer to St. Odran

Blessed Saint Odran, faithful and loyal to God and man! You whose name is almost forgotten by those who owe you an everlasting debt of gratitude, accept our poor thanksgiving, offered in the name of all Ireland, for your noble sacrifice of your life

to save that of Ireland's Apostle. You had toiled in his service long and devotedly; you had learned what priceless service he could render to God and the Irish land, and when the moment came when he or you should die by pagan hands, quickly and resolutely you laid down your life that your master might live and labor for the Divine Master of all.

By your crown of martyrdom so gloriously won, by your centuries of endless peace and joy, we beseech you to look down on the toiling sons of Ireland and on those who try to guide them to their eternal rest. Look down on us all, O blessed Saint, for the love of him whose heart burned with love for Ireland, and pray that the blessing of the Triune God-Father, Son and Holy Spirit-may descend on us and remain with us forever. Amen.

— “St. Anthony's Treasury - A Manual of Devotions”