

Christ is Risen: Alleluia. For our prayers for this Easter day I want to share with you a legend and the lovely prayer associated with it: and also an Easter sermon from round about the same period, some 1500 years ago. The legend is about the Deer's Cry — and that's another name for the prayer also known as the Breastplate of St Patrick. I'm not sure if the legend about the Deer's Cry is the same occasion as the story of Patrick lighting the Easter fire on the royal hill of Tara in defiance of the high king's prohibition: I seem to remember hearing it both as that occasion, and without any reference to the Easter fire and proclamation. But that's for later: listen first with me to an Easter sermon of St John Chrysostom, one of the great preachers of the Eastern church based in the then-imperial capital, Constantinople

☺☺ MP 723 appendix

For prayer in music today, "The Deer's Cry", a setting by Stanford, sung by the choir of St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin

## MUSIC

The story is told that St Patrick and his companions were on their way to light the Paschal fire on the Hill of Tara. The High King had forbidden any fires to be lit that night celebrate the Christian festival of the risen Christ: and he'd set his armed men to capture and kill Patrick's group. They set an ambush in a wood they expected them to pass through. But all they saw was a small herd of deer passing by... and as they passed they cried as deer do — it was Patrick & his followers, singing a prayer of praise, the Deer's Cry:

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