

The Ballad of Father Mathew

By Cliff Wedgebury

On an autumn morn a legend was born
In the castle at Thomastown:
A good-hearted man, touched by God's plan,
To spread the Good News round.

As a Capuchin his quest began
To assist all those in need,
With a helping hand, to understand
The hunger of those who plead.

Chorus:

Here goes in the name of God.
Here goes in the name of the Lord.
Let's fight the addiction of drink
With His loving and powerful Word.

A crusade was planned, where every one
Would take a solemn pledge
To abstain from drink, to stop and think
And step back from the edge –

Of that dark abyss where helplessness
And suffering was born;
Where, bereft of prudent reason,
The weak were left forlorn. *(Chorus)*

In the footsteps of St. Francis,
Committed to the poor,
Comfort he gave, the dying a grave,
When cholera knocked at the door –

Of the city he loved and was to prove,
Through devoted service and time,
As potato blight scoured the land,
He fed the hungry lines. *(Chorus)*

"Here goes," he said, as he took the pledge,
And thousands followed the cause,
As he travelled around from town to town,
Without a rest or pause.

Across the Irish Sea he sailed,
And journeyed far and wide,
To England and America
On a Temperance Crusade. *(Chorus)*



He gave the enslaved help to be brave,
From the addictive curse of drink;
The dispossessed and powerless
The courage to stop and think.

As they walked the road with a heavy
load,
Shackled by chains that bind,
Where the bottle was king and meant
everything,
He gave them peace of mind. *(Chorus)*

He passed away on a winter's day,
His life's work at an end–
This Irish son whose fame lives on
A brave priest and true friend.

As the river flows, so his legend grows
Within our memory,
Our help and guide like the constant
tide,
Father Mathew by the Lee.

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tide,
Father Mathew by the Lee.