

Solemnity of St Patrick - March 17 2023

Acknowledgment of Land, Seas, Skies and Waterways

We acknowledge the First Nations peoples as the first inhabitants of the nation and the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work. We pay our respect to the Elders past, present, and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of First Nations peoples across the nation. We acknowledge the deep spiritual attachment and relationship of First Nations peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

Context- St Patrick of Ireland

St Patrick is widely celebrated around the world and is associated with all things Irish. However, Patrick himself was not Irish and was a migrant to the island nation. He was born in Roman Britain and his first foray into Ireland was as a slave. Kidnapped at the age of sixteen by Irish pirates, he spent six years working as a herdsman and living in abysmal conditions. During this time, he opened his heart to God and by the time he escaped to France he was much more accepting of God. Patrick entered a monastery in France and one night had a dream that the Irish people were calling him to come back. He was ordained Bishop of Ireland before he returned, and he worked tirelessly to bring Jesus to the largely pagan nation. He is often pictured with a shamrock as he was known to use the three leaves and one stem of it to teach about the Holy Trinity. As a result of his efforts, St Patrick is regarded as one of the most influential missionaries in the Church and his influence was so deeply felt that centuries later he remains a cultural icon for Ireland and its people.



Figure 1 Patrick going to Tara. Chapter v. St. Patrick in Ireland [Commons Wikimedia](#)

Scripture: Luke 10:1-2

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

Your peace will rest upon him.

The Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out ahead of him, in pairs, to all the towns and places he himself was to visit. He said to them, 'The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so as the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest. Start off now, but remember, I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.'

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ



Jesus sends out His disciples two by two. Source: <https://holynameofmarypt.com/en/post/luke10-1-12/>

Reflection by Kirby Will Project Officer Identity and Outreach.

In this short scripture passage, we are reminded that there are few labourers in the harvest of the Lord, a point Saint Patrick knew all too well. As he worked tirelessly to preach and teach to the pagans of Ireland, he had very few support staff and often faced hostility as Jesus cautioned his disciples in the scripture. Nevertheless, Patrick persevered in his mission to turn hearts to God.

The pagan beliefs of the early Irish, serve as a reminder of human tendency to cling to worldly things; however, as Saint Patrick sought to teach the Irish, worldly things cannot forgive your transgressions nor teach you how to love and serve others. He was steadfast in his teaching and began to see the fruits of his work in the conversion of the hearts of the pagans.

It is apt that the Church's celebration of Saint Patrick should fall in Lent as we ourselves are encountering a period of conversion of heart. May we use the example of Saint Patrick to remind us that worldly things are not the source of hope in this world as we continue on our Lenten journey of penance so that we may be ready to go and labour in the harvest.

Prayer

Christ with me,
Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
Christ in me,
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ on my right,
Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down,
Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

-St Patrick's Breastplate: Prayer for Protection. Read a longer version of this prayer [here](#).

Call to Action:

- Pray the longer version of St Patrick's Breastplate together as a family.
- Get crafty and create a [Trinity Shamrock](#).
- Discuss ways each member of your family could contribute as labourers in the Lord's harvest.



Figure 2 Saint Patrick takes God's message across Ireland on foot. Photograph. Britannica ImageQuest, Encyclopædia Britannica, 25 May 2016. quest.eb.com/images/108_1095051. Accessed 6 Apr 2023.

