

NAOMH PADRAIG

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“Christ be with me. Christ be before me. Christ be after me. Christ within me. Christ beneath me. Christ above me. Christ at my right hand. Christ at my left.”

Patron Saint of Ireland

Many stories pave the way for us to celebrate the legacy of Saints, and one such story is the life of Naomh Padraig. We celebrate St. Patrick’s Day on March 17th each year in the United States, Ireland, and many countries around the world. His story is somewhat of a blur; history conflicts when he was born, and when he died. Despite which years are true, his legacy remains alive. While shamrocks, lepricons, and buckets of gold at the end of a rainbow decorate the holiday, they have nothing to do with the man.



Fantasy comes alive in the real person named Naomh Padraig. He lived in Great Britain in the fifth century. One day he was seized by Irish raiders who forced his enslavement in Ireland. After six years, the slave escaped his Irish captors. Padraig returned home to Britain and entered into the church’s service. Following in the footsteps of his male ancestry, he became a deacon. After becoming ordained as a Bishop, his ambition was fulfilled through missionary work.

Where did he go? He ended up ministering his previous captors in the North and West part of Ireland. Padraig, (or Patrick) and his fellow righteous clergy successfully

established an Irish monastery system. Their aspirations fell short of the diocesan model they hoped for, (meaning they never reached priestly status). Padraig's work in Northern Ireland from 428 onwards rewarded him celebrity status. By the 700's he was posthumously (post-HU-mous-ly, meaning after his death) revered as Ireland's patron Saint.

God had need of and used Padraig richly. Luke 19:34 shows us that Jesus had need of a colt. This was the colt which Jesus rode going to and through Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Did the colt think the crowd was honoring him when they shouted, "Hosanna!"? (Luke 19:35-40). Regardless of what Jesus' colt thought on Palm Sunday,, the Lord rewarded Padraig's service to God's kingdom with this yearly holiday.

People of Irish descent proudly declare their ancestry—sporting green clothes in honor of St. Patrick on March 17th. What is your favorite green clothing?

Take Home Nugget

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated as both a liturgical and non-liturgical holiday. Liturgical (li-TUR-ji-cal) means relating to religious worship service—especially Holy Communion's remembrance of Jesus' sacrifice. This solemn holy day of obligation has grown into a festival commemorating Ireland.

*St. Patrick taught us humility and service to others—
Even those who forced him as a slave.
Christ around me, help my brothers,
Keep us strong and keep us brave.*

J.D. Griffith