

Patrick's heart must have been beating loud in his chest as his ship approached the shores of Ireland for the second time. He must have relived the memories of his capture and enslavement as a teenager. But he could not be stopped.

Patrick was, in fact, part of a broader movement by the church in Gaul (what today we call "France") and particularly by the church in Auxerre, a city in the centre of Gaul which had recently sent preachers to the Christians of Britain also.



### Christian Evangelisation

And so we read of new names in the history of Ireland: *Secundinus* in Meath, *Auxilius* and *Iserminus* in north Leinster, and Patrick's first successor as bishop in Armagh, *Benignus*. These foreign, Latin, names speak of the desire of the Christians in continental Europe that the Irish should be blessed with the Good News, just as they themselves had been blessed. And the Irish, especially when taught by Patrick, responded to this Good News with joy and fervour.

### His Humility

The other characteristic of Patrick, found in his "Confessions", was his humility. Even to the modern reader, Patrick's willingness to speak, without fear, of all the great things that God had done through him,

- his call to become a missionary.
- his recounting of the personal stories of his converts;
- the miracle he saw in his own release from slavery.

None of these would have been possible in a self-important man. But Patrick had the essence of authentic Christian virtue: a deep humility coupled with an unstoppable courage. And so we can see what gave him that success: he preached the Gospel, but he had first been completely changed by it. ■

### Summary

*The Irish, when taught by Patrick, responded to the Good News with joy and fervour.*

*Patrick had the essence of authentic Christian virtue, a deep humility coupled with an unstoppable courage.*

### Question

*How did the spread of Christianity in Ireland reflect similar patterns in Continental Europe?*

### Prayer

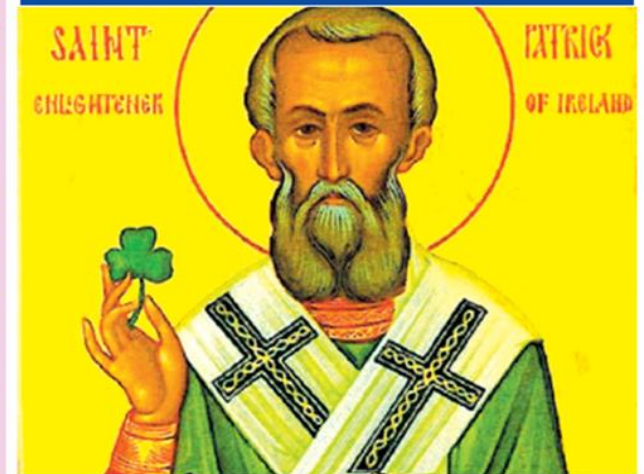
*Lord, may the faith in Ireland remain true to the faith planted by St Patrick.*



# SUNDAY LETTER

Series: The Saints; St Patrick, Year B; 17 March

## St Patrick



*If there's one line that shows what a brilliant missionary St Patrick was, it is found in his "Confessions",*  
*"When I baptised so many thousands of people."*

*Patrick was certainly one of the most effective missionaries of the Church's first 2000 years. Considering that Ireland, in his day, had only a small population, scattered among woods and bogs and without any cities, these thousands that he received into the Catholic faith must have been a game-changer in the entire culture of the Irish people. Patrick wrote at that time,*

*"I am very much a debtor to God, who has given me so much grace that many people should be reborn in God by means of me, and afterwards confirmed, and that clergy everywhere should be ordained for them, for a people recently come to belief, whom the Lord has taken up from the ends of the earth."*

When Patrick returned to Ireland, it was a green-field site, largely pagan. Nevertheless he managed to build up a fully-fledged Christian Church. How can we account for such success? As a self-defence against some unknown authority, the saint, late in life, laid out all that he had done in writing.

For the reader of St Patrick's "Confessions" (his spiritual autobiography) two characteristics are striking.

### His Courage

Why would this man, a civilised and privileged Roman citizen, want to come back to a barbarian people where he had once been enslaved and was likely to be imprisoned again? In fact, he was twice re-captured and imprisoned again, but released – whether by ransom or by grace.



**Our Mother of Divine Grace Church, Ballygall  
(1964 – 2024, 60 years as a Parish)**

*Part of the Glasnevin Partnership of Parishes*

**(Ballygall, Ballymun Rd, Corpus Christi, Glasnevin & Iona Rd)**

**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent**

**Feast of Saint Patrick 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

Parish Website [www.ballygallparish.ie](http://www.ballygallparish.ie) Email [ballygallparish@outlook.com](mailto:ballygallparish@outlook.com)

Registered Charity RCN 20016166

**Parish Team**

Fr. Joseph Ryan Co-P.P: Ph 8573776 Fr. Harry Gaynor Co-P.P: Ph 8342248

Fr. Paul St. John PC: Ph 086 2250689 Office 01 8369291

<b>Mass Intentions Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March to Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>				
<b>Monday</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>Bank Holiday – No 7.25am Mass</b> Paddy Dowdall, deceased members of the Dowdall & Ryan Families.		
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>7.25</b>	Molly Doyle	<b>10.00</b>	Funeral mass – Veronica Brennan.
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>7.25</b>	Thomas Doyle	<b>10.00</b>	Available
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>7.25</b>	Millie Arnold	<b>10.00</b>	Mollie Delahoyde
<b>Friday</b>	<b>7.25</b>	Joan Doyle Emmerson	<b>10.00</b>	Ellie Montgomery, Noeleen Bogue & Deceased family.
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>10.00</b>	Noel Oates, Fr. Bernard Oates & dec'd parents.	<b>Confessions Available after 10.00 mass</b>	
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Months Mind Remembrance Mass</b> Margie Walsh, Kathleen Hogan, Maureen O'Reilly, Bill (William) Whelan, Paul Mulcahy, Úna Vivian, Tom Bowe & Eimear McBride. John Maleady and Brian Woods.		
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10.00</b>	John Byrne		
	<b>11.30</b>	Mary & Philip O'Connell, Ann Dunphy, Christopher McGovern, Una Leahy, Margaret Downey, Fran Smyth, Noel O'Malley, Mary Reid, Mel Woods, Bernadette Reid, Armando Cirillo & deceased family members.		

**Recently Deceased.**

We remember in our prayers, Brian Gorman, Mary Gahan, Brendan O'Keeffe & Veronica Brennan. May they rest in eternal peace.

**Monday is a bank holiday, there will be 10.00am mass here in Ballygall. We invite and welcome members of our neighbouring parishes to this mass as we represent our grouping of Parishes by celebrating Mass on this Bank holiday.**

**Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**

After 10am Mass here on Thursday Mornings, until 11.30.

The Blessed Sacrament will be on the Altar for Adoration. This takes place in the Oratory.

Adoration in Our lady of Victories Church, every Monday during lent 12.00pm to 9.00pm



**Parish Clean Up – Save the Date**

**Saturday March 23<sup>rd</sup> after 10.00am Mass.**

We will get the Church Grounds ready for our Easter Celebrations. All help will be greatly appreciated.



**Lenten Penance Service**

With the Franciscan Fathers.

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March @ 7.30pm

**Volunteer Weekend**

Many thanks to all our volunteers who gave of their time at the weekend masses last week and also to the new volunteers for offering to help in the parish.

**Good Friday**

**Way of the Cross Walk  
March 29<sup>th</sup>**

(Organised by the Glasnevin Partnership of Parishes).

Stations of the Cross and Veneration.

Starting at 11.15am

Mother of Divine Grace Church on to

St Mobhi, Church of Ireland, Glasnevin,

Finishing at

Holy Faith Convent, Glasnevin.

(12.30pm approx.).

All are welcome.

Light refreshments afterwards.