



A Lesson on English

Volume 3, Issue 3



March 2009

International Leadership Institute

ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN THE US: A DAY WHEN EVERYONE'S IRISH!

by Sara Tusek

<http://www.saintpatricksdaysparade.com/>

Along with St. Nicholas and St. Valentine, the secular world celebrates the life of one of Catholicism's great saints: St. Patrick.

And, as in the case of Christmas (St. Nicholas' Day) and Valentine's Day, the celebration on St. Patrick's Day (March 17) involves parties, fun and food. The centerpiece of the day is the traditional St. Patrick's Day parade.

The most famous ones are in New York City, Boston and Chicago (where, traditionally, they dye the river green!), but hundreds of other cities join in the festivities with a good old-fashioned American parade, complete with floats, marching bands and large groups of firefighters and police

(traditional Irish occupations in the US).

While other countries also have St. Patrick's Day parades, the American parades are special, in that they honor an ethnic group that has not always been respected in the United States. Irish immigrants had to prove their worth as workers against prejudice among many Americans.

By one account, the Irish Society of Boston organized what was not only the first Saint Patrick's Day Parade in the colonies, but also the first recorded Saint Patrick's Day Parade in the world on 17 March, 1737.

This parade in Boston involved Irish immigrant workers marching to make a political statement about how they were not happy with their low social status and their inability to obtain jobs in America.

The first celebration of Saint Patrick's Day in New York City was held at the Crown and Thistle Tavern in 1766, the parades were held as political and social statements because the Irish immigrants were being treated unfairly.

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Please see the 10.06 issue of *continuous conversion* for a more thorough discussion on St. Patrick's life and accomplishments.

St. Patrick lore:

"Christ in every eye that sees me. Christ in every ear that hears me." St. Patrick

Why a shamrock? St. Patrick used the shamrock to explain the Trinity, and it has been associated with him and the Irish since that time.

Why do we honor St. Patrick? St. Patrick was a humble, pious, gentle man, whose love and total devotion to and trust in God provides a shining example to Christians. He feared nothing, not even death, so complete was his trust in God, and in the importance of his mission.



<http://www.chicagosparade.com/>

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"A Lesson on English" is a series of short lessons created for people who want to become fluent in conversational English. The lessons are practical and useful for students learning English in a traditional classroom setting or on their own.

A Lesson on English



ST. PATRICK

[HTTP://WWW.CATHOLIC.ORG/SAINTS/SAINT.PHP?SAINT_ID=89](http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php? saint_id=89)

St. Patrick is one of the world's most popular saints; there are many legends and stories of St. Patrick. He was the apostle of Ireland, yet he was born at Kilpatrick, near Dumbarton, in Scotland.

Patrick was born around 385 in Scotland; his parents were Calpurnius and Conchessa, who were Romans living in Britain, in charge of the colonies.

As a boy of fourteen or so, he was captured during a raiding party and taken to Ireland as a slave to herd and tend sheep. Ireland at this time was a land of Druids and pagans. He learned the language and practices of the people who held him.

During his captivity, Patrick turned to God in prayer. He wrote this passage about his time in captivity:

"The love of God and his fear grew in me more and more, as did the faith, and my soul was roused, so that, in

a single day, I have said as many as a hundred prayers and in the night, nearly the same. I prayed in the woods and on the mountain, even before dawn. I felt no hurt from the snow or ice or rain."

Patrick's captivity lasted until he was twenty, when he escaped after having a dream from God in which he was told to leave Ireland by going to the coast. There he found some sailors who took him back to Britain, where he reunited with his family.

Later, he had another dream in which the people of Ireland were calling out to him "We beg you, holy youth, to come and walk among us once more."

Patrick began his studies for the priesthood. He was ordained by St. Germanus, the Bishop of Auxerre, whom he had studied under for years.

Later, Patrick was ordained a bishop, and was sent to take the Gospel to

Ireland. He arrived in Ireland March 25, 433, at Slane. One legend says that he met a chieftain of one of the tribes, who tried to kill Patrick. Patrick converted Dichu (the chieftain) after he was unable to move his arm until he became friendly to Patrick.

Kings, their families, and entire kingdoms converted to Christianity when hearing Patrick's message, as he began preaching the Gospel throughout Ireland. He and his disciples preached and converted thousands and began building churches all over the country.

Among Patrick's many disciples were Beningnus, Auxilius, Iserninus, and Fiac, (all later canonized as well).

Patrick preached in Ireland for 40 years. He worked many miracles and wrote of his love for God. After years of living in poverty, traveling and enduring much suffering he died March 17, 461, at Saul, where he had built the first church.