

Saint Patrick

Saint Patrick is Ireland's patron saint and is known for introducing Christianity to Ireland. Saint Patrick is thought to have been born in Wales in the 5th century. He was kidnapped by Irish pirates and brought to Ireland as a slave when he was sixteen but he managed to escape after six years in slavery and returned to his family.

Saint Patrick became a Christian priest and returned to Ireland to teach people about Christianity. He converted thousands of Irish people to Christianity, even though it was a dangerous thing for him to do.

Saint Patrick is also said to have driven the snakes out of Ireland, however, this is unlikely to be true as there is no proof that snakes have ever lived in Ireland. It is more likely that this was a made up story of how Saint Patrick had driven evil (represented by the snake) out of Ireland.

Saint Patrick preached and worked for Christianity for forty years.



He worked miracles and wrote about his love of God. Saint Patrick had a hard life; he was very poor, he was beaten and chained. Saint Patrick died on the 17th of March, 461, and that is why we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day on this day. Saint Patrick's grave is in Down Cathedral, where it is said he is buried.



St Patrick was known for using the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity to Irish people, the three parts of the shamrock representing The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.



Questions

1. What country was Saint Patrick born in?


2. What did Saint Patrick use shamrocks for?

3. Saint Patrick's life was very hard. Why was this?

4. When do we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day? Why do we celebrate it on this date?

5. What memories do you have of Saint Patrick's Day?

6. Draw and label parts of the shamrock, according to Saint Patrick.



7. Draw a timeline of St Patrick's life. Include where he was born, his capture and slavery, his studies and his work in Ireland.



Answers

1. What country was Saint Patrick born in?
Saint Patrick was born in Wales.
2. What did Saint Patrick use shamrocks for?
**Saint Patrick used the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity
- The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.**
3. Saint Patrick's life was very hard. Why was this?
Saint Patrick was very poor, he was repeatedly beaten and chained.
4. When do we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day? Why do we celebrate it on this date?
Pupils' answer will vary.
5. What memories do you have of Saint Patrick's Day?
Pupils' answers will vary.
6. Draw and label parts of the shamrock, according to Saint Patrick.
Pupils should label a shamrock as The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.
7. Draw a timeline of St Patrick's life. Include where he was born, his capture and slavery, his studies and his work in Ireland.
Pupils' responses will vary.

Saint Patrick

Saint Patrick is Ireland's patron saint, known for introducing Christianity to Ireland. Saint Patrick was probably born in the 5th century to wealthy Roman citizens living in Britain. Scholars think that he lived in either Wales or Scotland. Even though his father was connected with the church, Patrick wasn't particularly religious at this time.

When he was sixteen, he was captured by Irish pirates and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped after six years in slavery. On his escape, he managed to persuade a ship's captain to take him away from Ireland. Saint Patrick wrote that this time of slavery was essential to his faith.

After studying in abbeys around Europe, Saint Patrick became a Christian priest and returned to Ireland in order to convert people to Christianity. At the time, the people of Ireland were mainly pagan, worshipping many gods – their priests were known as 'druids'.

Many of the druids tried to have him killed, but Saint Patrick was not put off his mission to spread Christianity – he felt that God would protect him. His famous prayer, 'Saint Patrick's Breastplate', describes his belief in God's protection. According to the legend, Saint Patrick met a chieftain of a druid tribe, who tried to kill him. After intervention from God, Patrick converted the chieftain to Christianity and went on to convert the people of Ireland. He converted thousands and began building churches across the country.

Saint Patrick was known for using the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity to Irish people: the three parts of the shamrock representing The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.

Saint Patrick has never been officially canonised as a saint. Canonisation only began around the 12th Century and since he was already known as a saint, there was no need to go through the process.



He is also said to have driven the snakes out of Ireland, however, this is unlikely to be true as there is no evidence that snakes existed in Ireland. More likely is that the snake is a representation of evil.

Saint Patrick preached all over Ireland for forty years. He worked miracles and wrote about his love of God. Most of his life was full hardship: he was very poor, he was beaten repeatedly and chained. Saint Patrick died on the 17th of March, 461, and that is why we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day on this day. Saint Patrick's grave is marked with a granite stone in Down Cathedral, where it is said he is buried.



Questions

1. Give two reasons why Saint Patrick is connected with Ireland.

2. Why is the shamrock often associated with Saint Patrick?

3. Saint Patrick is often said to have driven the snakes out of Ireland. What is the likely truth of this story?

4. Saint Patrick's life was very hard. Why was this?

5. When do we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day? Why do we celebrate it on this date?

6. Is Saint Patrick a saint? Explain your answer.

7. What memories do you have of Saint Patrick's Day?

8. Use your dictionary to find the meanings of these words:

Canonise: _____ Representation: _____

9. Create a timeline of the life of Saint Patrick.

Answers

1. Why is Saint Patrick connected with Ireland?
St Patrick was brought to Ireland as a slave, returned as a priest and brought Christianity to Ireland. He is the patron saint of Ireland.
2. Why is the shamrock often associated with Saint Patrick?
St Patrick used the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity - The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.
3. Saint Patrick is often said to have driven the snakes out of Ireland. What is the likely truth of this story?
This is unlikely to be true as there is no evidence that snakes existed in Ireland. More likely is that the snake is a representation of evil.
4. Saint Patrick's life was very hard. Why was this?
Saint Patrick was very poor: he was repeatedly beaten and was chained.
5. When do we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day? Why do we celebrate it on this date?
Pupils' answers will vary.
6. Is Saint Patrick a saint? Explain your answer.
Saint Patrick is a saint because he was already known as one before saints became canonised. However, he has not been canonised.
7. What memories do you have of Saint Patrick's Day?
Pupils' responses will vary.
8. Use your dictionary to find the meanings of these words.
Pupils' answer will vary depending on dictionary used.
9. Create a visual timeline of the life of Saint Patrick.
Pupils' responses will vary.

Saint Patrick

Saint Patrick is Ireland's patron saint, known for introducing Christianity to Ireland. Saint Patrick was probably born in the 5th century to wealthy Roman citizens living in Britain. His father was a political figure and a deacon of the church – so Patrick was brought up in a well-to-do family. Scholars are split on precisely where he lived but Wales or Scotland are likely locations. Despite his father (and grandfather) being connected with the church, Patrick wasn't particularly religious at this time.

When he was sixteen, he was captured by Irish pirates and brought to Ireland as a slave but escaped after six years and this was a major turning point in his life. Patrick wrote that this time of slavery was essential to his future faith. On his escape from slavery, he managed to persuade a ship's captain to take him away from Ireland.

After a long period of study at various abbeys in Europe, Saint Patrick became a Christian priest and returned to Ireland as a missionary in order to convert people to Christianity. He described a vision of a man appearing in his dreams, urging him to return to Ireland and be among the Irish people. At the time, the people of Ireland followed Celtic paganism, worshipping many gods – their priests were known as 'druids'.



Much of the opposition to Saint Patrick in Ireland was from these druids. Many of them tried to have him killed, but Saint Patrick was not deterred from his mission to spread Christianity – he felt that God would protect him. His famous prayer, 'I Arise Today' or 'Saint Patrick's Breastplate', describes this confidence in God's protection. According to the legend, Saint Patrick met a chieftain of a druid tribe, who tried to kill him.

Saint Patrick carried an ash walking stick when preaching. When he stopped on his journeys through Britain, he pushed the stick into the ground. Legend has it that one time he did this, he talked for so long that the wood took root in the ground and grew into a tree – this place is Aspatria, in Cumbria, England.

After intervention from God, Patrick converted the chieftain and went on to spread the Gospel in Ireland. He converted thousands of Irish people and began building churches across the country.

Saint Patrick was known for using the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity to Irish people, the three parts of the shamrock representing The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit. He is also reputed to have driven the snakes out of Ireland, however, this is unlikely to be true as there is no evidence that snakes ever existed in Ireland. It is more likely that the snake is a metaphor for evil.



Saint Patrick preached all over Ireland for forty years. He worked miracles and wrote about his love of God. Most of his life was full hardship: he was very poor, he was beaten repeatedly and chained. Saint Patrick died on the 17th of March, 461, and that is why we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day on this day. Saint Patrick's grave is marked with a granite stone in Down Cathedral, where he is said to be buried.

Although revered as the patron saint of Ireland as early as the 7th Century, Saint Patrick has never been officially canonised as a saint. Formal canonisation only began around the 12th Century and since he was already proclaimed as a Saint, there was no need to go through the process.

Questions

1. Give two reasons why Saint Patrick is connected with Ireland.

2. Why do you think Patrick chose the shamrock to represent God?

3. Saint Patrick is often said to have driven the snakes out of Ireland. Why do you think this myth continues?

4. Find two or more words or phrases in the text that show we are unsure of Saint Patrick's biography.

5. When do we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day? Why do we celebrate it on this date?

6. What memories do you have associated with Saint Patrick's Day?

7. Use your dictionary to find the meanings of these words:

Reputed: _____ Canonise: _____

Metaphor: _____ Proclaimed: _____

8. Why do you think Aspatia is so-called?

9. Create a timeline of the life of Saint Patrick, including as many details from the text.

Answers

1. Give two reasons why Saint Patrick is connected with Ireland.
Saint Patrick is connected to Ireland because he brought Christianity to Ireland and is its patron saint.
2. Why do you think Patrick chose the shamrock to represent God?
Saint Patrick chose the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity - The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit. It has three leaves and it makes it easier to understand a difficult idea.
3. Saint Patrick is often said to have driven the snakes out of Ireland. Why do you think this myth continues?
It is unlikely to be true that Saint Patrick drove the snakes out of Ireland. The snake is a metaphor for evil and the myth represents Saint Patrick's work spreading Christianity and 'driving out' evil.
4. Find two or more words or phrases in the text that show we are unsure of Saint Patrick's biography.
Any two from: 'probably', 'according to legend', 'reputed', 'is said'
5. When do we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day? Why do we celebrate it on this date?
Pupils' answers will vary.
6. What memories do you have associated with Saint Patrick's Day?
Pupils' answers will vary.
7. Use your dictionary to find the meanings of these words.
Pupils' answers will vary depending on dictionary.
8. Why do you think Aspatria is so-called?
Aspatria is so-called because the 'as' represents the ash wood of the stick and the 'pat' represents Patrick.
9. Create a visual timeline of the life of Saint Patrick, including as many details from the text as you can.
Pupils' responses will vary.