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St. Patrick

Get to know the real St. Patrick

CONNIE CLARK

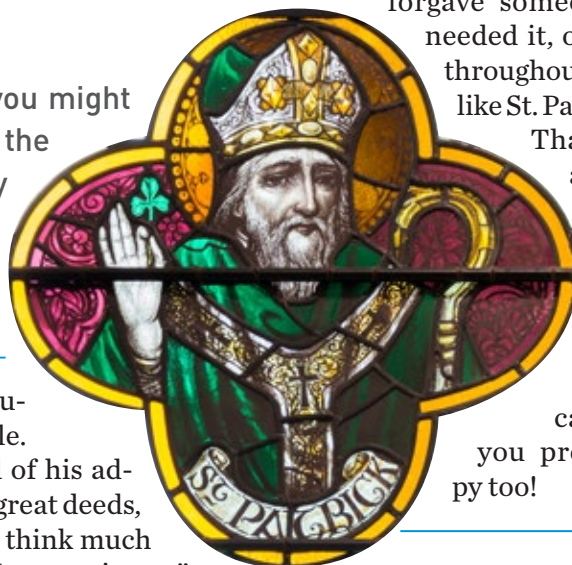
When you think of St. Patrick, you might think of Ireland. After all, he's the country's patron saint, and many people wear green on his feast day. But did you know that St. Patrick wasn't actually born in Ireland?

St. Patrick lived during a time when the Roman Empire ruled most of Great Britain. He was born in Wales or Scotland — we don't know for sure exactly where. But we do know that Patrick's family was Christian, and at some point, Patrick decided he didn't believe. When he was about 16, Patrick was captured by slave traders and taken to Ireland. There he spent six years as a slave, tending sheep. Imagine how Patrick felt, living among strangers, far away from his family. Not to mention the almost constant hunger and freezing cold!

It was during those terrible years that Patrick began to pray. Sometimes he prayed up to a hundred times a day! One night in a dream, Patrick saw a ship that would set him free. Patrick managed to escape and found his way home. A few years later, Patrick did something really amazing. He returned to Ireland. He didn't go to get even with the people who had captured him. He went because he loved Jesus and wanted to share the Good News with people who didn't know Jesus yet. Patrick traveled all over Ireland, teaching about Jesus and

baptizing thousands of people.

Despite all of his adventures and great deeds, Patrick didn't think much of himself. "I am a sinner," he once wrote. "A simple country person, and the least of all believers."



You can celebrate St. Patrick's Day by wearing green, but what if you did a little more? What if you forgave someone who needed it, or prayed throughout the day like St. Patrick did?

That would be a celebration St. Patrick would really love! And it can make you pretty happy too!

CONNIE CLARK is editor of *Living Faith Kids*, a magazine of daily Catholic devotions for children. To learn more, visit LivingFaithKids.com.



St. Patrick's Prayer Puzzler

More than 1,500 years ago, St. Patrick wrote this beautiful prayer. But some of the letters are missing here. Can you figure out what they are? Then pray this prayer on St. Patrick's Day — or any day!

... I arise tod y through God's st eng h to pilot me, God's m ght to uphold me, God's wisdom to uide me...

Christ, be wi h me, Christ be or me, Christ behind me...

Christ in me, Christ be eath me, Christ b ve me, Christ on y right, Christ on my l t, Christ where I lie, Christ where I sit, Christ where I arise, Christ in the h rt of every person who thin s of me...

Salv tion is of the L rd!

SOLUTION ... I arise today...through God's strength to pilot me, God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to guide me...Christ, be with me, Christ behind me...Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ where I lie, Christ where I sit, Christ where I arise, Christ in the heart of every person who thinks of me... Salvation is of the Lord!