

Saint Patrick

A patron saint is saint who looks after and guides a person or place. Saint Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland and is very special to Irish people.

Early Life

Not much is known for certain about Saint Patrick because he lived such a long time ago. He is thought to have been born in the 5th century in a town along the west coast of Britain. His family were thought to be very wealthy and religious but Patrick was not religious himself.

Patrick's Capture and Escape

When Patrick was 16 years old, he was taken to Ireland by a group of Irish pirates. He was made to work as a slave. During this time, he began to pray to God. After six years as a slave, Patrick heard a voice telling him that he would be able to go home soon because a ship was waiting for him. That night, Patrick ran away from where he was being kept. He found a ship and its captain reluctantly agreed to take Patrick away from Ireland.

Did You Know...?

- Some people believe that there are no snakes in Ireland because Saint Patrick sent them all away!
- It is said that Saint Patrick would talk for so long that his walking stick would grow roots into the ground.

The Wild Boar

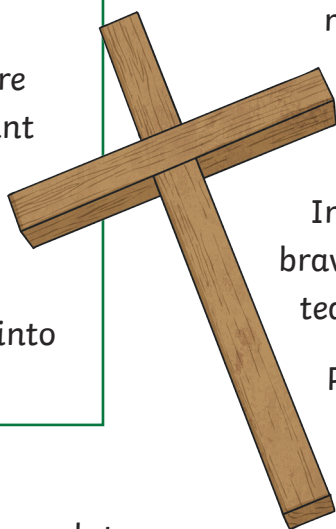
The boat reached Britain three days later. Patrick and the crew all left the ship. They are said to have walked through the forest for 28

days and they began to feel poorly because they were so hungry. Patrick told the ship's crew to put their faith in God. He prayed that they would find something to eat soon. Soon after Patrick had prayed, the crew found a group of wild pigs roaming in the forest. Patrick knew that his prayers had been answered.

Patrick Returns to Ireland

Patrick was so strong in his faith that he became a Christian priest. A few years after returning home, Patrick heard a voice telling him to go back to Ireland and help the Irish people. Patrick knew that many of the people of Ireland were not Christians but he bravely chose to go back to Ireland and teach people about Christianity.

Patrick taught thousands of Irish people about Christianity and built lots of churches across the country. Patrick used things that Irish people already knew about to explain Christianity to them. One example of



this was when Patrick used the shamrock (a plant with three leaves) to teach people about the Holy Trinity.

After teaching people about Christianity for over 40 years, Patrick died on 17th March 461. The people of Ireland have never forgotten how special Patrick was to their country and celebrate St. Patrick's Day every year on this day.

