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This image is an artist's interpretation of Patrick's dream wherein a man named Victoricus delivers many letters, ostensibly from people in Ireland, asking Patrick to return to the land where he'd been enslaved. The image is from the BBC's archived-but-no-longer-updated "[Saint Patrick's Journey](#)." Copyright BBC, all rights reserved. Image provided here as fair use for educational purposes.

A few years after he escaped slavery in Ireland, Patrick returned home to his family. Given all he had been through, his parents urged him to stay home. Once again, however, a dream changed his life.

[[I]n a vision of the night, I saw a man whose name was Victoricus coming as if from Ireland with innumerable letters, and he gave me one of them, and I read the beginning of the letter: 'The Voice of the Irish...' (*The Confession of St. Patrick*, point 23, available for online viewing at [Readings in Church History](#), edited by Jonathan Marshall, at [page 156](#).)

What could the Irish people possibly want from Patrick? He was a former slave, someone who tended sheep and pigs. Who even knew him? Why would anyone ask for his help?

As I was reading the beginning of the letter I seemed at that moment to hear the voice of those who were beside the forest of Foclut which is near the western sea, and they were crying as if with one voice: 'We beg you, holy youth, that you shall come and shall walk again among us.' (*Confession*, [point 23](#).)

Were these people whom Patrick knew before his escape—or—were they people he'd never met? We do not know the answer to that question. One thing is clear. The dream troubled Patrick:

And I was stung intensely in my heart so that I could read no more, and thus I awoke. (*Confession*, [point 23](#).)

Despite the pleas of his family, Patrick once again left Britain - this time of his own free will. In the ensuing years, he had studied theology and was ready to embark on an entirely new career.

He would respond to his dream and return to Ireland—then a mostly pagan country where [Druids](#) held sway—to become an apostle to the Irish people.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

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Forest of Foclut

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