



0. THE APOSTLE OF IRELAND - Story Preface

1. BIRTHPLACE OF ST. PATRICK

2. MAEWYN SUCCAT: KIDNAPPING VICTIM

3. A SHEPHERD IN IRELAND

4. ESCAPE!

5. A DREAM COME TRUE

6. THE APOSTLE OF IRELAND

7. FACTS vs LEGENDS

8. ST. PATRICK'S DAY - YOU'LL REMEMBER ME

St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Church—in Brooklyn, New York—has an amazing stained-glass window featuring St. Patrick. This image depicts a detail from that window. St. Patrick is holding a shamrock (which—according to "[the legend of the shamrock](#)"—he used to teach the trinity). Image online, courtesy St. Thomas Aquinas Church website. Click on the image for a better view.

The [Druids](#) weren't exactly pleased with Patrick's return to Ireland. When he arrived (the exact date is the subject of debate) there may have already been a bishop (called Palladius) in his new homeland. It is also possible, however, that Patrick's arrival predated that of [Palladius](#).

One thing is fairly clear. Patrick was different, and so was his approach to the Irish people. He was not about teaching "religion" to potential converts. He wanted to be a missionary - an apostle to spread the word of God's love and grace to the Irish. "I spread my net," he said, "to find everyone for God."

He thought if he could get to the farthest place - to the edge of the Earth - he would be the one who made the second coming of Jesus actually happen. To him, the edge of the Earth was the [western part of Ireland](#). As Patrick wrote, in his *Confession*:

... behold, we are witnesses because the Gospel has been preached as far as the places beyond which no man lives. (The Confession of St. Patrick, point 34, available for online viewing at [Readings in Church History](#), edited by Jonathan Marshall, at [pages 157-58](#).)

It is said that bishops of the Catholic Church treated Patrick as a kind of theological looney since he focused less on ritual and more on the souls of people. As a priest, he wanted to preach the gospel to the whole world, "and then the end will come."

"The end," of course, did not come, but along the way even church officials began to change their views about Patrick. He went - in relatively short order - from theological looney, to bishop, to patron saint of Ireland.

He evolved, figuratively speaking, into someone whom everyone wants to own - culturally, politically, religiously and theologically. In 1801, following Britain's [Act of Union](#) with Ireland, [St. Patrick's Cross](#) was even added to the [Union Jack](#).

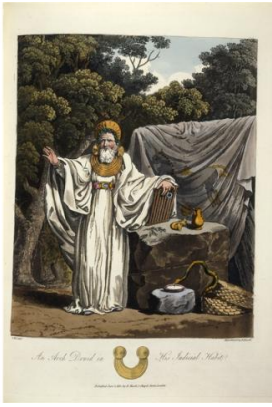
Patrick's approach to life was fairly simple - believe in God and do His will. His writings are authentic and straightforward - and they are not about drinking pints of Guinness.

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

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-APOSTLE-OF-IRELAND-St.-Patrick-of-St.-Patrick-s-Day>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-APOSTLE-OF-IRELAND-St.-Patrick-of-St.-Patrick-s-Day>



Druid in Judicial Habit

"An Arch Druid in His Judicial Habit," from Meyrick and Smith, *The Costume of the Original Inhabitants of the British Islands*, a book published by Howlett and Brimmer, London, 1815.

Image online, courtesy British Museum.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Druid-in-Judicial-Habit>



Palladius - In Ireland, 431-432

Information from *Life of St Patrick and His Place in History*, by J. B. Bury, pages 54-55. Online, courtesy Google Books.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Palladius-In-Ireland-431-432>



Western Ireland - Cliffs of Moher

Image online, courtesy Irish Central website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Western-Ireland-Cliffs-of-Moher>



St. Patrick's Cross

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/St.-Patrick-s-Cross>



THE APOSTLE OF IRELAND

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/THE-APOSTLE-OF-IRELAND>