

# RELIGIOUS BULLETIN

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Notre Dame, Ind.

## SPRING HOPES

The Spring weather, or a conscience suddenly come alive, or maybe a change of oil, resulted in more than the usual number being up and around early this morning. Here's hoping it continues. And speaking of our hopes..... Let's hope all remember there's a dispensation from fast and abstinence on St Patrick's Day. And let's hope all the sons of Erin honor the good saint by attending Mass on Friday. At Mass, too, let's hope all remember to pray for Jay Bachner. Friday is the first anniversary of his death.....

## TONIGHT

The Marriage Institute at 7:30 features Dr. Leone. The Bengal Bouts at 8:00 feature some of your friends and neighbors. If studies permit, try to get to one or the other.

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## LEADERSHIP

Of those to whom much is given, much is required. And when at some future date the high court of history sits in judgment on each one of us—recording whether in our brief span of service we fulfilled our responsibilities to the state—our success or failure, in whatever office we may hold, will be measured by the answers to four questions.

**FIRST**, were we truly men of courage—with the courage to stand up to one's enemies—and the courage to stand up, when necessary, to one's own associates—the courage to resist public pressure as well as private greed?

**SECONDLY**, were we truly men of judgment—with perceptive judgment of the future as well as the past—of our own mistakes as well as the mistakes of others—with enough wisdom to know what we did not know, and enough candor to admit it?

**THIRD**, were we truly men of integrity—men who never ran out on either the principles in which they believed or the people who believed in them—men whom neither financial gain nor political ambition could ever divert from the fulfillment of our sacred trust?

**FINALLY**, were we truly men of dedication—with an honor mortgaged to no single individual or group, and compromised by no private obligation or aim, but devoted solely to serving the public good

President John Fitzgerald Kennedy  
before the Massachusetts Legislature, 1961

## IN YOUR CHARITY

Please pray for the following. Deceased: Aunt of Rev. Leonard Collins, C.S.C.; Mrs. George Cody; Mrs. Clarence Brown. Ill: Mother of Jim Brogan of Walsh; mother of Mike Kennedy of Alumni; Robert J. Wallace; Mrs. John Davis. Three special intentions.



# St. Patrick After 1,500 Years

By Hugh A. Mulligan

CROAGH PATRICK, County Mayo, Eire (AP)—Fifteen centuries have passed since an Englishman or maybe a Scotsman named Patrick waved his shamrock over Ireland, drove out her snakes and had his goat stolen by some unconscionable blatherskite.

Yet the good saint who died in 461 A.D., exactly 1,500 years ago this March 17, is more alive today than Charlemagne, William the Conqueror, Catherine the Great and most of the other famous historical figures who came centuries after him.

To listen to the talk at any Irish crossroads and around the turf fire in any pub, you'd think it was only last week or a month ago at best, that he came over the mountain in his chariot, hair shirt flapping in the breeze, to put the fear of God into the druid high priests and convert this lovely jewel of an island to Christianity.

Everywhere you go in Ireland, from Ulster to Munster, from Leinster to Connacht, you hear of his exploits in the most extraordinary detail.

The slow, silent trickle of the years may have eroded the thin line between historical certainty and fireside legend, but the fact of his coming is indisputable.

## Outlasts Other Conquerors

Patrick came without troops or arms, without crown or colonists. Yet his conquest endured, a glimmer of learning to light the hopes of Europe in the Dark Ages of the barbarian invasions—a conquest that outlasted the Normans, the Danes, the Cromwellians, the Tudors, the Stuarts and all the others who swarmed over Ireland in the centuries after him and left only the ruins to speak for them.

From his "Confession," now regarded as authentic by most scholars, we know that he was born at Bannavem, which may have been at the estuary of the Severn River in England, or the estuary of the Clyde in Scotland.

Like the other great missionary, St. Paul, he was a Roman citizen, the son of Calphurnius, a platoon leader stationed in Britain.

At the age of 16 he was kidnaped by Irish pirates and taken to the Slemish Mountains in Antrim, where he tended flocks for six years as a slave of Milchu, a druid high priest. Patrick finally escaped to his home in Britain, only to find his sleep troubled by the cries of children, somewhere in the west of Ireland, who kept calling:

"O pious youth, come back to Erin."

The dream was too incessant to be ignored. With the blessing of Pope Celestine I, Patrick returned to Ireland in 432 as a missionary. He attempted to land at Wicklow Head on the east coast but was driven off by the same hostile chieftain who had turned back another missionary, named Palladius, several years before.

Skirting Dublin, which wouldn't be founded for another 400 years, Patrick and his party put in at Skerries for supplies. It was an unfortunate choice. By morning the goat he had trained to carry his water jars was gone and one of history's longest feuds was launched.

## 1,500-Year Feud

After 1,500 years the question of who stole St. Patrick's goat still smolders. The Skerries men insist the theft was perpetrated by the men from Rush, two miles to the south. The Rush men hold an opposite opinion. Either will defend their innocence at the drop of a hurling stick.

Bereft of his goat, Patrick continued north and made his first real landing at Saul in County Down. He baptized Dichu, the local chieftain, after miraculously silencing his dogs, said mass in a barn and founded his first church.

## Greatest Triumph

The heavens were "spilling rain," in the words of a local constable, as we drove down the lovely Valley of the Boyne to the Hill of Slane, overlooking Tara, the scene of St. Patrick's greatest triumph. Summoned by High King Leoghaire, the kings of Ireland had gathered at Tara to cope with Patrick's assault on the pagan beliefs of the druid priests.

Protocol decreed that no fire should be lit until the lamps went on in the great Hall of Kings at Tara. Patrick defied the druid law on Easter eve, 433 A.D., by lighting a huge bonfire on the opposite Hill of Slane. The king dispatched a dozen charioteers to extinguish the alien blaze, but the oxen ran wild and the flames would not die. Conceding defeat, Leoghaire gave Patrick permission to preach the Gospel throughout Ireland. His lighting of the Pascal fire is believed to have established the date of our modern Easter observance.

## Slept On A Rock

For the next 20 years Patrick wandered about Ireland, preaching the Gospel, baptizing the faithful at wells once worshiped by the druids, praying and fasting on lonely mountain tops, like Croagh Patrick in Mayo, and on remote islands, like Lough Berg in Donegal, where thousands of pilgrims now come barefoot each year to pray and fast in his footsteps. The origin of both pilgrimages is lost in the mists of the Middle Ages.

An ascetic who slept on a rock, ate little and preached mostly by example, Patrick knew the secret of all great missionaries. He gently blanketed the old pagan beliefs without stamping too hard on the customs of people. Which is why the old, secret, mysterious, hysterical Ireland still exists in vanishing lakes, haunted mountains and eerie creatures who cry of death with the dogs in the night.

## Drives Out Snakes

The legends that have grown up around Patrick through the centuries have not harmed his stature as a saint and missionary, and, if anything, have dramatized his closeness to the minds and hearts of the Irish people.

At Croagh Patrick, the devil tried to disturb his prayers by blackening the sky with screaming crows and ravens. Patrick dispersed the flocks by flinging his bell down the mountain, crashing against the rocks, and further retaliated by driving the snakes "and every evil thing" out of Ireland into Clew Bay.

The headquarters he established at Armagh is still the ecclesiastical capital of Ireland.

On the rock of Cashel in Tipperary, Europe's most impressive religious ruins, Patrick plucked a shamrock to explain the mystery of the Trinity and inadvertently drove his staff through the foot of King Aengus of Minster. The king, thinking it part of the baptismal ceremony, did not cry out.

In the centuries after Patrick, Irish monks trained by him and his followers "walked the world for God," founding universities from Gaul to Kiev, bringing the light of the fire lit on Slane into the chaos of darkness left by the collapse of the Roman empire and the barbarian invasion.