

LITURGICAL LIVING

Series 29: March 10-17

Feast of St. Patrick (March 17)

St. Patrick, known as the Apostle to Ireland, was born into a Catholic family in the 5th century in Roman Britain. What we know about him comes from two documents that were written by St. Patrick himself.



When he was 16, he was imprisoned by pagan Irish pirates and was enslaved as a shepherd in Ireland for 6 years. Then God spoke to him in a dream about a ship that was awaiting him. So he fled and traveled to a port on the ship that was waiting there. He returned home to his family, and he had another dream. In this dream the people of Ireland called to him, asking him to return and teach them about Christ. Convicted by this dream, he was ordained a priest, confirmed a bishop and received permission to return to the land of his previous enslavement. He had a great love for the people of Ireland and evangelized them with great success. He baptized thousands of people, ordained priests, and established religious communities.

With St. Patrick there are also many traditions and stories such as using a 3-leafed clover to help explain the Holy Trinity or driving snakes out of Ireland using his Bishop's crozier as Moses used his staff in the Old Testament. True? Possibly. Good stories nonetheless.

St. Patrick's day is actually a Holy Day of Obligation in Ireland but is an optional memorial in the United States. There is a large following of people who love to celebrate this day, especially if you are of Irish descent. St. Patrick's feast day is not a Solemnity as the upcoming Feast of St. Joseph is. Therefore, it does NOT exempt us from our voluntary Lenten disciplines, and if it falls on a Friday, we are still bound to abstain from meat (unless the Bishop gives permission to move the day of abstinence). This happened last year or two years ago, and we were not given that permission.

But I have good news, a way you can celebrate St. Patrick and still honor your Lent, is to wait until Sunday to celebrate! You can have a little St. Patrick gathering on Sunday and eat sweets or whatever it is you are fasting from.

Celebrate

Wear green, eat green or eat Irish-Inspired Food

- Green Smoothie or Shepherd's Pie and Soda Bread

Make a Shamrock

- You can make this to help you meditate on the Holy Trinity as St. Patrick did.
- You can mold some air clay and paint once dry to have a reminder in your home of the Holy Trinity.

Fun fact, early Catholics used to fast from alcohol on St. Patrick's Day. Which is very different from the way the secular culture celebrates today. Maybe that is something to consider.

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Combat Self-Doubt

- Write on your journal (As St. Patrick did in his *Confessio*) and reflect on your day.
 - What are the ways I succeeded today?
 - What are three things I could have done better?

Cultivate Gratitude

- St. Patrick wrote, "I will not be silent because of my desire for thanksgiving." Though he believed himself to be imperfect, he continued to minister and serve anyway. Most of his energy came from the practice of gratitude for God's blessing.
- Consider adding a gratitude section to your notebook. Write 3 things you are grateful for each day. Build up to 10. You are encouraged to draw the things as well,

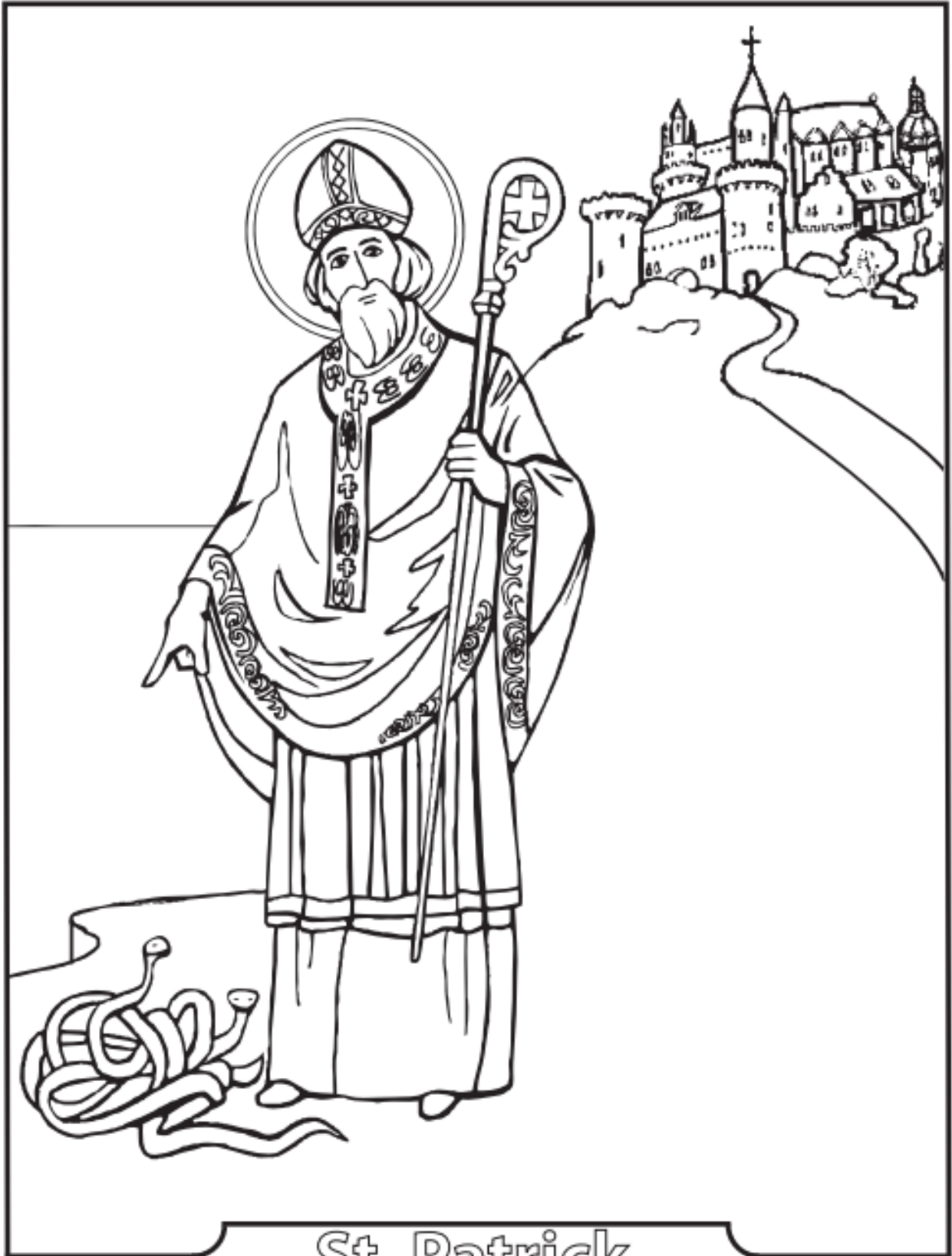
Prayer of St. Patrick's Breastplate:



Christ with me,
Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
Christ in me,
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ on my right,
Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down,
Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man
who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone
who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

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Digital Version





St. Patrick

SaintAnnesHelper.com