

Scripture Reading: Philippians 3:17–4:1

*Christ beside me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ within me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me. —Saint Patrick*

Today, on St. Patrick's Day, the whole world wants to be Irish! We wear green, we might go to a parade, we listen to the fife-and-drum corps, we hunt for shamrocks, we eat corned beef and cabbage and we might have a glass of green beer.

It's a bit odd that we do this on St. Patrick's Day in honor of a man who wasn't even Irish!

Patrick's story, however, is a story of a young man who didn't hold a grudge, and was able to turn a bad situation into a stunning victory for the gospel!

As a youth, Patrick was kidnapped and taken to Ireland. There, he worked as a slave for more than six years. He learned the language and in time came to appreciate his captors. The Irish then were considered barbarians who lived beyond the borders of civilization.

When Patrick was able to return to Britain, he went to Rome, was consecrated as a priest, and eventually returned to the very land where he'd been a captive. Not only did Patrick spread the gospel of the Lord Jesus through his preaching, but through his life as well. He practiced what he preached. That's a good reminder for all of us.

- If we preach forgiveness, we should live forgiveness.
- If we preach love for one another, we should love one another.
- If we preach patience, we should live patience.
- If we preach humility, we should live humility.

Let's thank God for Patrick of Ireland and the great work he did in his lifetime. And let's remember to follow his selfless example of letting go of grudges, injuries and complaints.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: O God, thank you for godly men and women who have shown us throughout history how to live selflessly and with humility. Thank you for Patrick and his great work, and the lessons he taught us. May I show in my life a willingness to forgive and to move on from injury to blessing! In Jesus' name. Amen.