

The Story of Patrick and the Celtic Church

The history of God's faithful people during the ages of Rome's supremacy are written in heaven, but they have little place in human history books. Rome endeavors to write history to show herself in the best light. But the stories can still be found.

Here is the story of St. Patrick and the Christianity he and his converts established in Northern Britain.

The Irish "Celtic" people trace their conversion to Christianity to Patrick, who came to them early in the fifth century:

It all began when the great empire of Roman declined and its legions were withdrawn from the defense of the British Continent. From the north the Irish, then called Scots, began swooping down on the English coast, sailing up the rivers, raiding the settlements, and carrying off plunder and slaves. Among those captured was a young man named Patrick. So Ireland's patron saint was not Irish! Patrick had been reared in a Christian home. His father was a deacon. Yet Patrick did not take religion serious until he was captured and sat as a swineherd in a foreign country. Here he began to pray for his freedom. His conversion dates from this captivity. "The Lord opened to me the sense of my unbelief," he says. After six years he managed to escape and found his way to the coast where he boarded a ship carrying a cargo of hounds.

He would have gladly remained in England had he not had a dream one night in which the babies of Ireland pleaded with him to come back to their country and tell them about Christ.

It seems to have been the custom in the early Celtic churches of early times, in Ireland as well Scotland, to keep Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. Why? Because they had never been affected by Rome. They kept the Sabbath in the same way Jesus and the apostles did. One of the earliest of their patriarchs, after the apostles, was a man by the name of Patrick. The Roman Church had to saint him because he was so deeply embedded in the cultures and legends of the people of the islands there.

Patrick had nothing to do with Roman Catholicism. He kept the seventh day holy. He knew nothing of priesthods. Those schools that he established, the teachers and religious leaders married there. They taught the trinity. They did not believe in Mary. They did not believe in saints. They believed the Bible, and so educated were these people in Biblical languages, and the knowledge of writing and literature, that the schools became centers of actually publishing copies of the Bible.

We also know that Ireland became the base for the evangelization of Britain. In fact one historian (Thomas Bokenkotter, *A Concise History Of The Catholic Church*, p. 94), says that "these Irish monks were the leading missionaries of the age, and they carried their monastic ideal across the length and breadth of Europe in the sixth and seventh centuries."

Then in the 6th century the Roman pope sent Augustine (of Canterbury) to evangelize the Anglo Saxons. As they worked, the papal missionaries and their converts met the primitive Christians from the north. There was a striking contrast between them. The northern Christians were simple, humble, while the papal representatives manifested the pomp and arrogance of popery. The latter demanded that these Christian churches acknowledge the supremacy of the sovereign pontiff. The Britons meekly replied that they desired to love all men, but that the pope was not entitled to supremacy

in the church, and they could render to him only that submission which was due to every follower of Christ. They acknowledged no other master than Christ.

According to Merle D'Aubigne, in History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century, b.17,ch.2, the Roman missionaries said, "If you will not unite with us in showing the Saxons the way of life, you shall receive from them the stroke of death."

Did you know that Patrick may very well have been a Seventh-day Sabbath keeper.

According to one historian:
"We find traces in the early monastic church of Ireland that they held Saturday to be the Sabbath on which they rested from all their labors." (W.T. Skene, Adamnan Life of St. Columba, p. 96)

Also Professor Moffet says: "It seems to have been customary in the Celtic churches of early times, in Ireland as well as Scotland, to keep Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, as a day of rest from labor. They obeyed the fourth commandment literally upon the seventh day." (The Church in Scotland, p. 140)

This seems to have been the case until about 1066 when the Norman invasions of England took place. William II, duke of Normandy (area in France bordering the English Channel) invaded England and established himself there as William I, king of England. The reigning pontiff favored William in his invasion, blessed his armies and consecrated his banners and took the opportunity to also establish his own spiritual authority. William permitted him to do so in order to more effectually humble the Saxon clergy and aggrandize his Norman prelates.

At this time the papacy was undergoing massive endeavors to gain control of all religious activities. Christian society, they maintained, must be organized under the pope, and guarded against all possibility of error by the presence of Peter perpetually present in his successors, the bishops of Rome. (Shelley, Church History in Plain Language, p. 182)

Pope Gregory VII (1073) successfully asserted the absolute papal power over the Church. It was he who declared that "the pope can be judged by no one, the Roman church has never erred and never will err till the end of time; the Roman church was founded by Christ alone; the pope alone can depose and restore bishops; he alone can make new laws, set up new bishoprics....he alone can revise his judgments; his legates...(A Concise History of the Catholic Church, p. 112)

The movement was to "free" the entire church from secular control and make everything subject to the pope. Gregory insisted that the church was above the state. It was Gregory who humiliated the German emperor Henry VI making him stand barefoot in the snow for three days begging for forgiveness.

During this time we see a Queen in Scotland named Margaret, wife of King Malcolm III Canmore (1057-1093). Raised in the Hungarian court, she promoted, in conformity with the Gregorian reform, the interests of the church. She was later granted Sainthood by Pope Innocent IV in 1250 for her great benefactions to the church.

In the book (Turgot, Life of Saint Margaret, p. 49) we read:
"It was another custom of theirs (people of Scotland) to neglect the reverence due to the Lord's day, by devoting themselves to every kind of worldly business upon it, just as they did upon other days. That this was contrary to the law, she (Queen Margaret) proved to them as well by reason as by authority. 'Let us venerate the Lord's day,' said she, 'because of the resurrection of our Lord, which happened upon that day, let us no longer

do servile works upon it.....Her next point was that they did not duly reverence the Lord's day, but in this latter instance they seemed to have followed a custom of which we find traces in the early Church of Ireland, by which they held Saturday to be the Sabbath on which they rested from all their labours."

(See also Skene, Celtic Scotland, Vol. 2, p. 349)

(Barnett, Margaret of Scotland: Queen and Saint, p, 97) writes: "In this matter the Scots had perhaps kept up the traditional usage of the ancient Irish Church which observed Saturday instead of Sunday as the day of rest." (Lewis, Seventh Day Baptists in Europe and America, Vol. 1 p. 29) says "There is much evidence that the Sabbath prevailed in Wales universally until A.D. 1115, when the first Roman bishop was seated at St. Davis's. The old Welsh Sabbath keeping churches did not even then altogether bow the knee to Rome, but fled to their hiding places."

But the worst was still to come for Ireland.

The total ruin of Patrick's church.

In 1156 Pope Adrian issued to King Henry II of England a bull authorizing him to invade Ireland. It was Dermot of Leinster, a man from Ireland itself, that carried out the dreadful order. Because of his cruelty as a chief, the people of Leinster had driven him out of Ireland. Blinded with revenge he aligned himself with the Norman King of England, Henry II and the Pope of Rome who had already resolved upon the destruction of Ireland.

Why would Rome want the invasion of Ireland?

We will refer frequently throughout the remainder of this article to (Lawrence, Historical Studies pp. 360-392 written in 1876,) in which we find the full story.

"The chief boast of Ireland was its independence...Christianity, in its purer form, came to Ireland about the middle of the fifth century....In the year 432 there were no images, nor crucifixes, no pompous ritual, no spiritual despotism, no moral corruption emanating from Rome....Patrick, therefore, the humble slave and missionary, brought to Ireland the simple elements of an apostolic faith..not the Romish practices..Ireland became a Christian country renowned for its intelligence, its pious genius, and its missionary zeal....Avarice and priestly pride were unknown to the successors of Patrick. Their doctrines were from the study of the Scriptures..."

"The Irish bishops firmly maintained their independence against the constant menaces of popes or councils; would consent to hold no intercourse with the Court of Rome; denied its claim to the right of ordination and consecrated each other by a simple laying on of hands; rejected the worship of images, the adoration of Mary, the infallibility of the pope, and in all their schools and colleges persisted in a free study of the Scriptures. They inculcated and exercised a general liberty of conscience founded upon the wide education of the people. The honesty, simplicity, and pious zeal of the Irish teachers were recognized by their opponents.

"But bitter was the hostility with which the Roman Popes and the Italian conclaves viewed the people of Ireland, where their maledictions were treated with neglect, where there was a general refusal to bow to mandates of Rome.

"Its apostolic usages, its Scriptural doctrines and its ever-open Bible were arguments so strong against the fabric of Romish superstition that the Popes felt that they could never be secure until they had swept from their path, in fire and blood, the schools, the churches, and the native bishops of Ireland. To accomplish this inhuman aim, **Pope Adrian IV., in 1156, sold Ireland to the Normans.**"

"The sale of Ireland to its foes is the guiltiest of all the evil deeds of the Italian priesthood. It produced a succession of St. Bartholomew massacres; worse than what happened to the Huguenots; it has proved more fatal to the Irish race than the Inquisition to Spain."

Dermot Macmorrough, with the permission of Henry II, enlisted Richard Strongbow, and Robert Fitz-Stephen to join his enterprise. But impatient at their slowness Dermot, with a small group of men attacked his country. The Irish drove him back and had they pursued him they might have saved the country a lot of trouble. But Dermot swore fealty to Ireland and they accepted his treacherous submission.

In May, 1169, Robert Fitz-Stephen with his army landed in Ireland, and Dermot joined him with a group of warriors of his own. City after city was destroyed. Ireland roused into action and resolved that the whole force of the nation be gathered to wage war against the traitor Dermot. They rallied a great host, led by the Roderic King of Ireland, and Dermot and the Normans, dismayed and disheartened fled and hid themselves in the marshes and forests. Roderic surrounded the Normans in their secret hiding place, and by his immense superiority might have forced them to surrender. But Roderic, perhaps misled by priests or bishops, perhaps fearful at the thought of being assailed by England and exposed to the anathemas of the Roman Church, for some reason unknown failed to press the battle and accepted another oath of allegiance from the traitor Dermot.

But the traitor continued his plans and set about building a larger army. Three years of skirmishes which caused much suffering for the Irish people and in which Dermot himself was killed, finally resulted in the English king sending an armada of four hundred ships filled with knights, soldiers and supplies to Ireland. The war ravaged bleeding land was a helpless victim and yielded to the authority of Henry II.

"When any Irish chief ventured to ask by what authority Henry had taken possession of Ireland, he was told that the Pope, as vicar and head of the Church, had given it to the king; and that he who resisted the generous donation of St. Peter to his favorite son was a heretic, condemned to everlasting reprobation." "It was ever the aim of the Roman Church in those ages--nor does the policy seem yet to have been abandoned—to set nation against nation, and from the horrid discord and general woe to add to its own growing strength. Henry, conscious of the claims of his Italian masters, hastened to lay Ireland at their feet.

A council was summoned at Cashel professing to represent the Church of St. Patrick. The Norman king ordered the bishops of Ireland to assemble. A motley group of Norman priests, of martial monks, of the papal archbishops, and a few trembling presbyters, natives of the South, gathered at his command; but it was noticed that none of the bishops of Ulster or Connaught assisted at the destruction of their national faith. They still adhered to the usages of Patrick, and of Columba, that the Irish Church, amidst bogs and forests, still defied the ambition of cruel Rome."

"Every trace of independence was abandoned by the Council of Cashel. The Romish ritual was enjoined on every priest; the worship of Mary, of images, and of saints was to extend throughout the Island; the priest was forbidden to marry; his hair was to be cut after the exact fashion at Rome; the clergy who failed to observe the new customs were condemned with indignant solemnity; tithes were to be paid by the laity; and Ireland for the first time was made tributary to the Romish Pope."

The conquered lands were divided among the victors while the freedom loving Irish were reduced to the condition of slaves and paupers; driven to live in caves, huts, and forests; outcasts and beggars amidst the lands that once belonged to them.

But even this is not the end. Henry returned to England and for a few years took care of duties assailing him there. In Ireland the old church may have been formally replaced by the Roman approved bishops. But Irish presbyters rejected the authority of the unpatriotic synod.

“At length Henry, when his affairs were somewhat settled in England, resolved to..launch the thunders of the Romish popes against the Irish patriots. He had procured from Alexander III a confirmation of the bull of Adrian excommunicating all who opposed his authority over Ireland, and he now prepared to publish the two solemn decrees, in their full enormity, to all its schismatical Church.”

“1175 the two bulls were read by John of Salisbury, who had come from Rome bearing the final decree of Alexander, recited the doom of Ireland. ...Under a florid profession of Christian zeal it contained a bitter denunciation of the Irish Church...and promised Henry the favor of Heaven and an illustrious renown should he succeed in planting true religion in the home of Patrick and Columba. Alexander’s bull was still more effective, for it excommunicated all who resisted Henry’s authority or that of his heirs...every Irish patriot was converted into a child of Satan; every aspiration of freedom was an impious defiance of the Roman Church.”

“Now began that perpetual conflict of races, the saddest in the history of Europe, ...a mournful wail has never ceased to ascend to heaven and blight the charms of Ireland...when the papal decrees were proclaimed they still retained a sentiment of independence...in defying the authority of the Italian priests. ..Centuries of fatal discord followed, during which the Normans strove in vain to extirpate the accursed race who refused to obey the decrees of the Popes or submit to a foreign lord. **Papal legates launched new excommunications against the Irish**, and Romish priests urged on that work of extermination which alone could secure the supremacy of the Romish See. **The papal monks declared that it was no crime, no sin, to kill a Celt...**

Things didn’t get better with the reformation. The chief leaders in the English reformation were Henry the VIII and his daughter Elizabeth I. The English had become protestant but they showed no disposition to abandon control of Ireland which they had received from the Papacy of Rome. Elizabeth I continued the conquest to reduce the Irish to a passive subjection to her power.

“The cause of this fresh assault upon the liberties of Ireland was the restless intrigues of the Jesuits. Elizabeth was waging war against the Pope and the Jesuits, the most active and most dangerous of her foes were ever the disciples of Loyola. To ruin and break down every Protestant government, to cover with discord and slaughter every Protestant land, and from the wreck of nations to build up a spiritual empire tyrannical and severe was the secret or open aim of every Jesuit. To wound or destroy Elizabeth the society began its disastrous labors in Ireland. The Jesuits, in various disguises, penetrated to the courts of the native chiefs. They roused the fires of national antipathy; they scoffed at the British as heretics; they allured the Irish to abandon forever the usages of St. Patrick and to ally themselves with the Roman Church; they promised the natives the protection of St. Peter, the shield of Mary, the blessing of the Pope, and the military aid of all Catholic Europe, if they would rise once more in a crusade against the English.”

“The Irish accepted the offers of Rome, threw themselves at the Pontiff’s feet, **and became, for the first time, the willing instruments of the Jesuits and the Popes.** They may be excused, if not forgiven. Their schools had long been swept away; their people had sunk into ignorance; they had endured centuries of ceaseless turmoil

and war. Rome stretched forth its cunning hand to get control of the Irish Church, and after four centuries of violence, succeeded at last by fraud..

The Irish rallied against the British, but were hopelessly defeated by Elizabeth's armies. The Pope gave little aid, the Spanish were too far off and the English Raleigh cut down the Irish and Grey massacred the rebels. When Elizabeth died, Ireland was almost wholly conquered by England.

St. Patrick's day?

The church of St. Patrick is gone. Rome has claimed his name and largely blotted out the history of the defeat and takeover of the church he established, and the fact that most of Ireland's present miseries are still ripples of the dark history.

But that is the story if one simply looks in the **old history books.**

"Confession" of St. Patrick

This year is the 1625 anniversary of the birth of St. Patrick. His autobiographical confession was written in Latin, toward the end of his life. It is over 1500 years old and it is a real miracle that *any* of it has survived. It is missing a major section - at least 30 years of his life. It jumps from his dreams at home to an incident in Ireland 30 years later. His greatest triumph on Tara Hill is not even mentioned. The Roman censors were *very* busy with this one!!

St. Patrick believed that the end of the world would come with the evangelization of the Irish. They were the last known people to the ancient world, living in the uttermost part of the earth. God always keeps the best for last!!

He mention 3 periods of his life:
 His boyhood: *pueritia*
 His youth: *adolescens*
 His young manhood: *iuventus*

<u>Year of our Lord</u>	<u>Age of St. Patrick</u>	<u>Event</u>
373	0	Patrick is born along the banks of the River Clyde in Roman Britain, now a part of Scotland. Even though he was baptized, had Christian parents and grandparents that didn't make him (or anybody else) a Christian!!
388	15	Patrick commits a sin which is to come back and haunt him almost 50 years later!!
389	16	He is taken captive by pirates and sold into slavery in Ireland.
395	22	He is converted to Christ. He manages to escape and finds a ship that takes him to Gaul or Britain. Is taken captive again and manages to escape.
397	24	He finally reaches home. The Lord speaks to him by dreams and tells him to return to Ireland. His parents and friends offer him gifts and beg him not to leave.
401	28	Is ordained a deacon in the church. Before becoming a deacon he confesses his boyhood sin to a close friend in the church. That was one of the few mistakes of his life. It almost sabotages his mission in Ireland 30 years later!!
405	30	He arrives in Ireland with <i>one</i> book: the Latin Bible; and begins to evangelize the country.
431	58	St. Patrick has great success in Ireland. By <i>faith alone</i> thousands are converted to Christ. He puts an end to Druid human sacrifices. Slavery is ended. News of his great success soon reached Rome and Celestine, Bishop of Rome sent Palladius as bishop. Palladius was repulsed and fled for his life. He never returned to Rome and died in Scotland on March 16!! As revenge, he was behind the "elders" coming to St. Patrick and almost destroying him through the divulging of his boyhood sin. The time frame is so close and the date fixing is so monumental that the finger point to Rome as the author of the <i>scandal that almost ended</i> St. Patrick's ministry in Ireland! Palladius was unable to

stop his ministry so he tried to find some scandal in his past that would ruin him. That is why March 17 is St. Patrick's Day. Even in death, Rome wants Palladius to precede St. Patrick!!

432 This is the revised date of the beginning of St. Patrick's ministry. It was revised to honor Palladius, cover up his rejection and make *him* the Apostle of Ireland!!

The age of St. Patrick when he became a deacon and left for Ireland may be off by 1 or 2 years; Patrick simply says that he ministered among the Scots from the time that he was a "iuventus" a young man. Most of the great Biblical heroes began their ministry around 30. The revised chronology sends him to Ireland when he would be almost 60 years old. A *youth* of 60!!

Read his complete life story on the *History of the Scottish Nation*

In all of recorded history prior to the Roman Catholic Norman invasion of 1066, not one invasion of Ireland from Britain is ever recorded. Even the Scots entered Ireland from Spain and not Britain. The only *invasion* prior to that time was the *invasion* of the humble Patrick with the everlasting Gospel of Jesus Christ!!

The Confession

I, Patrick, a sinner, a most simple countryman, the least of all the faithful and most contemptible to many, had for father the deacon Calpurnius, son of the late Potitus, a presbyter, of the settlement of Bannaven Taburniae; he had a small villa nearby where I was taken captive. I was at that time about sixteen years of age. I did not, indeed, know the true God; and I was taken into captivity in Ireland with many thousands of people, according to our deserts, for quite drawn away from God, we did not keep his precepts, nor were we obedient to our presbyters who used to remind us of our salvation. And the Lord brought down on us the fury of his being and scattered us among many nations, even to the ends of the earth, where I, in my smallness, am now to be found among foreigners.

And there the Lord opened my mind to an awareness of my unbelief, in order that, even so late, I might remember my transgressions and turn with all my heart to the Lord my God, who had regard for my insignificance and pitied my youth and ignorance. And he watched over me before I knew him, and before I learned sense or even distinguished between good and evil, and he protected me, and consoled me as a father would his son.

Therefore, indeed, I cannot keep silent, nor would it be proper, so many favours and graces has the Lord deigned to bestow on me in the land of my captivity. For after chastisement from God, and recognizing him, our way to repay him is to exalt him and confess his wonders before every nation under heaven:

For there is no other God, nor ever was before, nor shall be hereafter, but God the Father, unbegotten and without beginning, in whom all things began, whose are all things, as we have been taught; and his son Jesus Christ, who manifestly always existed with the Father, before the beginning of time in the

spirit with the Father, indescribably begotten before all things, and all things visible and invisible were made by him. He was made man, conquered death and was received into Heaven, to the Father who gave him all power over every name in Heaven and on Earth and in Hell, so that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and God, in whom we believe. And we look to his imminent coming again, the judge of the living and the dead, who will render to each according to his deeds. And he poured out his Holy Spirit on us in abundance, the gift and pledge of immortality, which makes the believers and the obedient into sons of God and co-heirs of Christ who is revealed, and we worship one God in the Trinity of holy name.

He himself said through the prophet: 'Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.' And again: 'It is right to reveal and publish abroad the works of God.'

I am imperfect in many things, nevertheless I want my brethren and kinsfolk to know my nature so that they may be able to perceive my soul's desire.

I am not ignorant of what is said of my Lord in the Psalm: 'You destroy those who speak a lie.' And again: 'A lying mouth deals death to the soul.' And likewise the Lord says in the Gospel: 'On the day of judgment men shall render account for every idle word they utter.'

So it is that I should mightily fear, with terror and trembling, this judgment on the day when no one shall be able to steal away or hide, but each and all shall render account for even our smallest sins before the judgment seat of Christ the Lord.

And therefore for some time I have thought of writing, but I have hesitated until now, for truly, I feared to expose myself to the criticism of men, because I have not studied like others, who have assimilated both Law and the Holy Scriptures equally and have never changed their idiom since their infancy, but instead were always learning it increasingly, to perfection, while my idiom and language have been translated into a foreign tongue. So it is easy to prove from a sample of my writing, my ability in rhetoric and the extent of my preparation and knowledge, for as it is said, 'wisdom shall be recognized in speech, and in understanding, and in knowledge and in the learning of truth.'

But why make excuses close to the truth, especially when now I am presuming to try to grasp in my old age what I did not gain in my youth because my sins prevented me from making what I had read my own? But who will believe me, even though I should say it again? A young man, almost a beardless boy, I was taken captive before I knew what I should desire and what I should shun. So, consequently, today I feel ashamed and I am mightily afraid to expose my ignorance, because, [not] eloquent, with a small vocabulary, I am unable to explain as the spirit is eager to do and as the soul and the mind indicate.

But had it been given to me as to others, in gratitude I should not have kept silent, and if it should appear that I put myself before others, with my ignorance and my slower speech, in truth, it is written: 'The tongue of the stammerers shall speak rapidly and distinctly.' How much harder must we try to attain it, we of whom it is said: 'You are an epistle of Christ in greeting to the ends of the earth ... written on your hearts, not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God.' And again, the Spirit witnessed that the rustic life was created by the Most High.

I am, then, first of all, countrified, an exile, evidently unlearned, one who is not able to see into the future, but I know for certain, that before I was humbled I was like a stone lying in deep mire, and he that is mighty came and in his mercy raised me up and, indeed, lifted me high up and placed me on top of the wall. And from there I ought to shout out in gratitude to the Lord for his great favours in this world and for ever, that the mind of man cannot measure.

Therefore be amazed, you great and small who fear God, and you men of God, eloquent speakers, listen and contemplate. Who was it summoned me, a fool, from the midst of those who appear wise and learned in the law and powerful in rhetoric and in all things? Me, truly wretched in this world, he inspired before others that I could be-- if I would-- such a one who, with fear and reverence, and faithfully, without complaint, would come to the people to whom the love of Christ brought me and gave me in my lifetime, if I should be worthy, to serve them truly and with humility.

According, therefore, to the measure of one's faith in the Trinity, one should proceed without holding back from danger to make known the gift of God and everlasting consolation, to spread God's name everywhere with confidence and without fear, in order to leave behind, after my death, foundations for my brethren and sons whom I baptized in the Lord in so many thousands.

And I was not worthy, nor was I such that the Lord should grant his humble servant this, that after hardships and such great trials, after captivity, after many years, he should give me so much favour with these people, a thing which in the time of my youth I neither hoped for nor imagined.

But after I reached Ireland I used to pasture the flock each day and I used to pray many times a day. More and more did the love of God, and my fear of him and faith increase, and my spirit was moved so that in a day [I said] from one up to a hundred prayers, and in the night a like number; besides I used to stay out in the forests and on the mountain and I would wake up before daylight to pray in the snow, in icy coldness, in rain, and I used to feel neither ill nor any slothfulness, because, as I now see, the Spirit was burning in me at that time.

And it was there of course that one night in my sleep I heard a voice saying to me: 'You do well to fast: soon you will depart for your home country.' And again, a very short time later, there was a voice prophesying: 'Behold, your ship is ready.' And it was not close by, but, as it happened, two hundred miles away, where I had never been nor knew any person. And shortly thereafter I turned about and fled from the man with whom I had been for six years, and I came, by the power of God who directed my route to advantage (and I was afraid of nothing), until I reached that ship.

And on the same day that I arrived, the ship was setting out from the place, and I said that I had not the wherewithal to sail with them; and the steersman was displeased and replied in anger, sharply: 'By no means attempt to go with us.' Hearing this I left them to go to the hut where I was staying, and on the way I began to pray, and before the prayer was finished I heard one of them shouting loudly after me: 'Come quickly because the men are calling you.' And immediately I went back to them and they started to say to me: 'Come, because we are admitting you out of good faith; make friendship with us in any way you wish.' (And so, on that day, I refused to suck the breasts of these men from fear of God, but nevertheless I had hopes that they would come to faith in Jesus Christ, because they were barbarians.) And for this I continued with them, and forthwith we put to sea.

And after three days we reached land, and for twenty-eight days journeyed through uninhabited country, and the food ran out and hunger overtook them; and one day the steersman began saying: 'Why is it, Christian? You say your God is great and all-powerful; then why can you not pray for us? For we may perish of hunger; it is unlikely indeed that we shall ever see another human being.' In fact, I said to them, confidently: 'Be converted by faith with all your heart to my Lord God, because nothing is impossible for him, so that today he will send food for you on your road, until you be sated, because everywhere he abounds.' And with God's help this came to pass; and behold, a herd of swine appeared on the road before our eyes, and they slew many of them, and remained there for two nights, and they were full of their meat and well restored, for many of them had fainted and would otherwise have been left half dead by the wayside. And after this they gave the utmost thanks to God, and I was esteemed in their eyes, and from that day they had food abundantly. They discovered wild honey, besides, and they offered a share to me, and one of them said: 'It is a sacrifice.' Thanks be to God, I tasted none of it.

The very same night while I was sleeping Satan attacked me violently, as I will remember as long as I shall be in this body; and there fell on top of me as it were, a huge rock, and not one of my members had any force. But from whence did it come to me, ignorant in the spirit, to call upon 'Elijah'? And meanwhile I saw the sun rising in the sky, and while I was crying out 'Elijah, Elijah' with all my might, lo, the brilliance of that sun fell upon me and immediately shook me free of all the weight; and I believe that I was aided by Christ my Lord, and that his Spirit then was crying out for me, and I hope that it will be so in the day of my affliction, just as it says in the Gospel: 'In that hour', the Lord declares, 'it is not you who speaks but the Spirit of your Father speaking in you.'

And a second time, after many years, I was taken captive. On the first night I accordingly remained with my captors, but I heard a divine prophecy, saying to me: 'You shall be with them for two months. So it happened. On the sixtieth night the Lord delivered me from their hands.

On the journey he provided us with food and fire and dry weather every day, until on the tenth day we came upon people. As I mentioned above, we had journeyed through an unpopulated country for twenty-eight days, and in fact the night that we came upon people we had no food.

And after a few years I was again in Britain with my parents [kinsfolk], and they welcomed me as a son, and asked me, in faith, that after the great tribulations I had endured I should not go any where else away from them. And, of course, there, in 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', and 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.' And I was stung intensely in my heart so that I could read no more, and thus I awoke. Thanks be to God, because after so many years the Lord bestowed on them according to their cry.

And another night-- God knows, I do not, whether within me or beside me-- ... most words + ... + which I heard and could not understand, except at the end of the speech it was represented thus: 'He who gave his life for you, he it is who speaks within you.' And thus I awoke, joyful.

And on a second occasion I saw Him praying within me, and I was as it were, inside my own body, and I heard Him above me-- that is, above my inner self. He was praying powerfully with sighs. And in the course of this I was astonished and wondering, and I pondered who it could be who was praying within me. But at the end of the prayer it was revealed to me that it was the Spirit. And so I awoke and remembered the Apostle's words: 'Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we know not how to pray as we ought. But the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for utterance.' And again: 'The Lord our advocate intercedes for us.'

And then I was attacked by a goodly number of my elders, who [brought up] my sins against my arduous episcopate. That day in particular I was mightily upset, and might have fallen here and for ever; but the Lord generously spared me, a convert, and an alien, for his name's sake, and he came powerfully to my assistance in that state of being trampled down. I pray God that it shall not be held against them as a sin that I fell truly into disgrace and scandal.

They brought up against me after thirty years an occurrence I had confessed before becoming a deacon. On account of the anxiety in my sorrowful mind, I laid before my close friend what I had perpetrated on a day-- nay, rather in one hour-- in my boyhood because I was not yet proof against sin. God knows-- I do not-- whether I was fifteen years old at the time, and I did not then believe in the living God, nor had I believed, since my infancy; but I remained in death and unbelief until I was severely rebuked, and in truth I was humbled every day by hunger and nakedness.

On the other hand, I did not proceed to Ireland of my own accord until I was almost giving up, but through this I was corrected by the Lord, and he prepared me so that today I should be what was once far from me, in order that I should have the care of-- or rather, I should be concerned for-- the salvation of others, when at that time, still, I was only concerned for myself.

Therefore, on that day when I was rebuked, as I have just mentioned, I saw in a vision of the night a document before my face, without honour, and meanwhile I heard a divine prophecy, saying to me: 'We have seen with displeasure the face of the chosen one divested of [his good] name.' And he did not say 'You have seen with displeasure', but 'We have seen with displeasure' (as if He included Himself). He said then: 'He who touches you, touches the apple of my eye.'

For that reason, I give thanks to him who strengthened me in all things, so that I should not be hindered in my setting out and also in my work which I was taught by Christ my Lord; but more, from that state of affairs I felt, within me, no little courage, and vindicated my faith before God and man.

Hence, therefore, I say boldly that my conscience is clear now and hereafter. God is my witness that I have not lied in these words to you.

But rather, I am grieved for my very close friend, that because of him we deserved to hear such a prophecy. The one to whom I entrusted my soul! And I found out from a goodly number of brethren, before the case was made in my defense (in which I did not take part, nor was I in Britain, nor was it pleaded by me), that in my absence he would fight in my behalf. Besides, he told me himself: 'See, the rank of bishop goes to you'-- of which I was not worthy. But how did it come to him, shortly afterwards, to disgrace me publicly, in the presence of all, good and bad, because previously, gladly and of his own free will, he pardoned me, as did the Lord, who is greater than all?

I have said enough. But all the same, I ought not to conceal God's gift which he lavished on us in the land of my captivity, for then I sought him resolutely, and I found him there, and he preserved me from all evils (as I believe) through the in-dwelling of his Spirit, which works in me to this day. Again, boldly, but God knows, if this had been made known to me by man, I might, perhaps, have kept silent for the love of Christ.

Thus I give untiring thanks to God who kept me faithful in the day of my temptation, so that today I may confidently offer my soul as a living sacrifice for Christ my Lord; who am I, Lord? or, rather, what is my calling? that you appeared to me in so great a divine quality, so that today among the barbarians I might constantly exalt and magnify your name in whatever place I should be, and not only in good fortune, but even in affliction? So that whatever befalls me, be it good or bad, I should accept it equally, and give thanks always to God who revealed to me that I might trust in him, implicitly and forever, and who will encourage me so that, ignorant, and in the last days, I may dare to undertake so devout and so wonderful a work; so that I might imitate one of those whom, once, long ago, the Lord already pre-ordained to be heralds of his Gospel to witness to all peoples to the ends of the earth. So are we seeing, and so it is fulfilled; behold, we are witnesses because the Gospel has been preached as far as the places beyond which no man lives.

But it is tedious to describe in detail all my labours one by one. I will tell briefly how most holy God frequently delivered me, from slavery, and from the twelve trials with which my soul was threatened, from man traps as well, and from things I am not able to put into words. I would not cause offense to readers, but I have God as witness who knew all things even before they happened, that, though I was a poor ignorant waif, still he gave me abundant warnings through divine prophecy.

Whence came to me this wisdom which was not my own, I who neither knew the number of days nor had knowledge of God? Whence came the so great and so healthful gift of knowing or rather loving God, though I should lose homeland and family.

And many gifts were offered to me with weeping and tears, and I offended them [the donors], and also went against the wishes of a good number of my elders; but guided by God, I neither agreed with them nor deferred to them, not by my own grace but by God who is victorious in me and withstands them all, so that I might come to the Irish people to preach the Gospel and endure insults from unbelievers; that I might hear scandal of my travels, and endure many persecutions to the extent of prison; and so that I might give up my free birthright for the advantage of others, and if I should be worthy, I am ready [to give] even my life without hesitation; and most willingly for His name. And I choose to devote it to him even unto death, if God grant it to me.

I am greatly God's debtor, because he granted me so much grace, that through me many people would be reborn in God, and soon after confirmed, and that clergy would be ordained everywhere for them, the masses lately come to belief, whom the Lord drew from the ends of the earth, just as he once promised through his prophets: 'To you shall the nations come from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Our fathers have inherited naught but lies, worthless things in which there is no profit.' And again: 'I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles that you may bring salvation to the uttermost ends of' the earth.'

And I wish to wait then for his promise which is never unfulfilled, just as it is promised in the Gospel: 'Many shall come from east and west and shall sit at table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.' Just as we believe that believers will come from all the world.

So for that reason one should, in fact, fish well and diligently, just as the Lord foretells and teaches, saying, 'Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men,' and again through the prophets: 'Behold, I am sending forth many fishers and hunters, says the Lord,' et cetera. So it behooved us to spread our nets, that a vast multitude and throng might be caught for God, and so there might be clergy everywhere who baptized and exhorted a needy and desirous people. Just as the Lord says in the Gospel, admonishing and instructing: 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always to the end of time.' And again he says: 'Go forth into the world and preach the Gospel to all creation. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who does not believe shall be condemned.' And again: 'This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached throughout the whole world as a witness to all nations; and then the end of the world shall come.' And likewise the Lord foretells through the prophet: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days (sayeth the Lord) that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams; yea, and on my menservants and my maidservants in those days I will pour out my Spirit and they shall prophesy.' And in Hosea he says: 'Those who are not my people I will call my people, and those not beloved I will call my beloved, and in the very place where it was said to them, You are not my people, they will be called 'Sons of the living God'.

So, how is it that in Ireland, where they never had any knowledge of God but, always, until now, cherished idols and unclean things, they are lately become a people of the Lord, and are called children of God; the sons of the Irish [Scotti] and the daughters of the chieftains are to be seen as monks and virgins of Christ.

And there was, besides, a most beautiful, blessed, native-born noble Irish [Scotta] woman of adult age whom I baptized; and a few days later she had reason to come to us to intimate that she had received a prophecy from a divine messenger [who] advised her that she should become a virgin of Christ and she would draw nearer to God. Thanks be to God, six days from then, opportunely and most eagerly, she took the course that all virgins of God take, not with their fathers' consent but enduring the persecutions and deceitful hindrances of their parents. Notwithstanding that, their number increases, (we do not know the number of them that are so reborn) besides the widows, and those who practice self-denial. Those who are kept in slavery suffer the most. They endure terrors and constant threats, but the Lord has given grace to many of his handmaidens, for even though they are forbidden to do so, still they resolutely follow his example.

So it is that even if I should wish to separate from them in order to go to Britain, and most willingly was I prepared to go to my homeland and kinsfolk-- and not only there, but as far as Gaul to visit the brethren there, so that I might see the faces of the holy ones of my Lord, God knows how strongly I desired this-- I am bound by the Spirit, who witnessed to me that if I did so he would mark me out as guilty, and I fear to waste the labour that I began, and not I, but Christ the Lord, who commanded me to come to be with them for the rest of my life, if the Lord shall will it and shield me from every evil, so that I may not sin before him.

So I hope that I did as I ought, but I do not trust myself as long as I am in this mortal body, for he is strong who strives daily to turn me away from the faith and true holiness to which I aspire until the end of my life for Christ my Lord, but the hostile flesh is always dragging one down to death, that is, to unlawful attractions. And I know in part why I did not lead a perfect life like other believers, but I confess to my Lord and do not

blush in his sight, because I am not lying; from the time when I came to know him in my youth, the love of God and fear of him increased in me, and right up until now, by God's favour, I have kept the faith.

What is more, let anyone laugh and taunt if he so wishes. I am not keeping silent, nor am I hiding the signs and wonders that were shown to me by the Lord many years before they happened, [he] who knew everything, even before the beginning of time.

Thus, I should give thanks unceasingly to God, who frequently forgave my folly and my negligence, in more than one instance so as not to be violently angry with me, who am placed as his helper, and I did not easily assent to what had been revealed to me, as the Spirit was urging; and the Lord took pity on me thousands upon thousands of times, because he saw within me that I was prepared, but that I was ignorant of what to do in view of my situation; because many were trying to prevent this mission. They were talking among themselves behind my back, and saying: 'Why is this fellow throwing himself into danger among enemies who know not God?' Not from malice, but having no liking for it; likewise, as I myself can testify, they perceived my rusticity. And I was not quick to recognize the grace that was then in me; I now know that I should have done so earlier.

Now I have put it frankly to my brethren and co-workers, who have believed me because of what I have foretold and still foretell to strengthen and reinforce your faith. I wish only that you, too, would make greater and better efforts. This will be my pride, for 'a wise son makes a proud father'.

You know, as God does, how I went about among you from my youth in the faith of truth and in sincerity of heart. As well as to the heathen among whom I live, I have shown them trust and always show them trust. God knows I did not cheat any one of them, nor consider it, for the sake of God and his Church, lest I arouse them and [bring about] persecution for them and for all of us, and lest the Lord's name be blasphemed because of me, for it is written: 'Woe to the men through whom the name of the Lord is blasphemed.'

For even though I am ignorant in all things, nevertheless I attempted to safeguard some and myself also. And I gave back again to my Christian brethren and the virgins of Christ and the holy women the small unasked for gifts that they used to give me or some of their ornaments which they used to throw on the altar. And they would be offended with me because I did this. But in the hope of eternity, I safeguarded myself carefully in all things, so that they might not cheat me of my office of service on any pretext of dishonesty, and so that I should not in the smallest way provide any occasion for defamation or disparagement on the part of unbelievers.

What is more, when I baptized so many thousands of people, did I hope for even half a jot from any of them? [If so] Tell me, and I will give it back to you. And when the Lord ordained clergy everywhere by my humble means, and I freely conferred office on them, if I asked any of them anywhere even for the price of one shoe, say so to my face and I will give it back.

More, I spent for you so that they would receive me. And I went about among you, and everywhere for your sake, in danger, and as far as the outermost regions beyond which no one lived, and where no one had ever penetrated before, to baptize or to ordain clergy or to confirm people. Conscientiously and gladly I did all this work by God's gift for your salvation.

From time to time I gave rewards to the kings, as well as making payments to their sons who travel with me; notwithstanding which, they seized me with my companions, and that day most avidly desired to kill me. But my time had not yet come. They plundered everything they found on us anyway, and fettered me in irons; and on the fourteenth day the Lord freed me from their power, and whatever they had of ours was given back to us for the sake of God on account of the indispensable friends whom we had made before.

Also you know from experience how much I was paying to those who were administering justice in all the regions, which I visited often. I estimate truly that I distributed to them not less than the price of fifteen men, in order that you should enjoy my company and I enjoy yours, always, in God. I do not regret this nor do I regard it as enough. I am paying out still and I shall pay out more. The Lord has the power to grant me that I may soon spend my own self, for your souls.

Behold, I call on God as my witness upon my soul that I am not lying; nor would I write to you for it to be an occasion for flattery or selfishness, nor hoping for honour from any one of you. Sufficient is the honour which is not yet seen, but in which the heart has confidence. He who made the promise is faithful; he never lies.

But I see that even here and now, I have been exalted beyond measure by the Lord, and I was not worthy that he should grant me this, while I know most certainly that poverty and failure suit me better than wealth and delight (but Christ the Lord was poor for our sakes; I certainly am wretched and unfortunate; even if I wanted wealth I have no resources, nor is it my own estimation of myself, for daily I expect to be murdered or betrayed or reduced to slavery if the occasion arises. But I fear nothing, because of the promises of Heaven; for I have cast myself into the hands of Almighty God, who reigns everywhere. As the prophet says: 'Cast your burden on the Lord and he will sustain you.'

Behold now I commend my soul to God who is most faithful and for whom I perform my mission in obscurity, but he is no respecter of persons and he chose me for this service that I might be one of the least of his ministers.

For which reason I should make return for all that he returns me. But what should I say, or what should I promise to my Lord, for I, alone, can do nothing unless he himself vouchsafe it to me. But let him search my heart and [my] nature, for I crave enough for it, even too much, and I am ready for him to grant me that I drink of his chalice, as he has granted to others who love him.

Therefore may it never befall me to be separated by my God from his people whom he has won in this most remote land. I pray God that he gives me perseverance, and that he will deign that I should be a faithful witness for his sake right up to the time of my passing.

And if at any time I managed anything of good for the sake of my God whom I love, I beg of him that he grant it to me to shed my blood for his name with proselytes and captives, even should I be left unburied, or even were my wretched body to be torn limb from limb by dogs or savage beasts, or were it to be devoured by the birds of the air, I think, most surely, were this to have happened to me, I had saved both my soul and my body. For beyond any doubt on that day we shall rise again in the brightness of the sun, that is, in the glory of Christ Jesus our Redeemer, as children of the living God and co-heirs of Christ, made in his image; for we shall reign through him and for him and in him.

For the sun we see rises each day for us at [his] command, but it will never reign, neither will its splendor last, but all who worship it will come wretchedly to punishment. We, on the other hand, shall not die, who believe in and worship the true sun, Christ, who will never die, no more shall he die who has done Christ's will, but will abide for ever just as Christ abides for ever, who reigns with God the Father Almighty and with the Holy Spirit before the beginning of time and now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Behold over and over again I would briefly set out the words of my confession. I testify in truthfulness and gladness of heart before God and his holy angels that I never had any reason, except the Gospel and his promises, ever to have returned to that nation from which I had previously escaped with difficulty.

But I entreat those who believe in and fear God, whoever deigns to examine or receive this document composed by the obviously unlearned sinner Patrick in Ireland, that nobody shall ever ascribe to my ignorance any trivial thing that I achieved or may have expounded that was pleasing to God, but accept and truly believe that it would have been the gift of God. And this is my confession before I die.

This a remarkable document in that it has survived so long. We cannot be certain that the monks didn't tamper with it as some of it appears to be missing. He never mentions the virgin Mary, the Pope, Purgatory, Masses etc., etc., because they didn't exist at that time. Not *one* dogma of the Roman church appears in it except maybe the Trinity and the Last Judgment and the *theory* of evolution denies even that!!