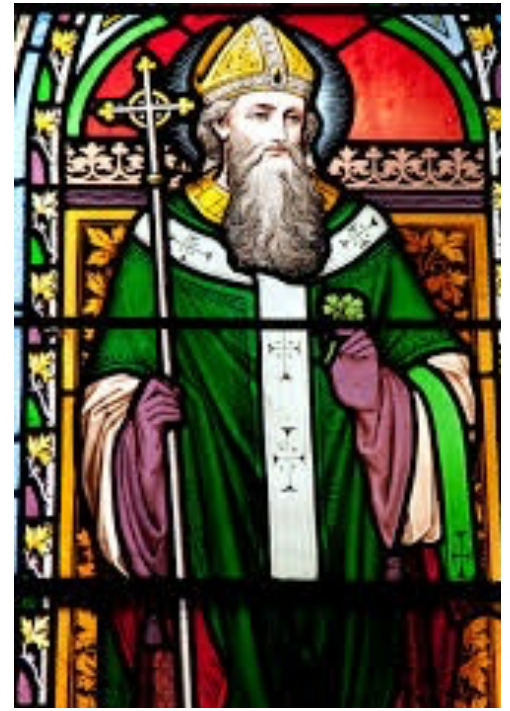


The Life and Times of Saint Patrick

Online course: Thursdays 7:30–9 pm / March 4, 11, 18 & 25, 2021

Saint Patrick is the person most associated with Ireland around the world. He is the Patron saint of Ireland and is recognized as having played a major role in the Christianization of Ireland. There are many myths and legends associated with Patrick. This course will look at the historical record based on available facts and accepted understandings.

Patrick came to Ireland as a slave at age sixteen. He, along with others living on the west coast of Britain, were kidnapped by raiders from Ireland. At this time Irish forces were involved in campaigns to destabilize Roman settlements in Britain and Gaul. He spent six years as a slave before escaping probably with help from an underground slave network in Ireland.



He returned to Ireland in his mid-forties with a group of people that included family members and spent the next twenty-five years there until his death. His mission was to gain the adherence of existing Christians in Ireland – mainly slaves and refugees – to the rule of the Roman church and to ensure that new converts among the indigenous Irish community also accepted the claim of the Roman church to be “the one true church of God”.

The course will examine the historical context of his mission in Ireland. This includes a review of the development of Irish society prior to his arrival; the history of Christianity, particularly in England and Ireland; an examination of the crises in the Roman Empire; and the major social and political events in western Europe impacting the situation in Ireland in the fourth to sixth centuries A.D.

The course will also examine the strategies employed by Saint Patrick to achieve his mission, the specifics of his achievements, and the role played by some of his siblings. A special part of the course will be an examination of the writings of Saint Patrick: the “Confessio” and a “Letter to the Soldiers of Coroticus”.

Course fee: \$80. To enroll, email seanmurphy630@gmail.com.