

THE CREED

REVIEW OF THE CREED

STORY

When Patrick was sixteen, he was kidnapped from his home and sold into slavery in Ireland. Six years later, in 396, he escaped and began studying for the priesthood. After he was ordained, he had a dream that all the children of Ireland were stretching out their hands to him. Patrick believed the Holy Spirit was calling him to be a missionary. He followed his call to mission work in the same pagan country where he had suffered hunger and cold as a slave.

He arrived in Ireland in 433 and began preaching the Gospel. The Spirit worked through the Word to convert thousands to Christianity, even kings. Patrick built churches throughout the country, and in forty years almost single-handedly converted the Irish to Christianity. He used the common Irish shamrock with three leaves to teach the concept of the Trinity—three persons in one God.

Patrick's popular sainthood is celebrated March 17, the date of his death at the age of seventy-one. He wrote these words: "I bind unto myself today The strong name of the Trinity By invocation of the same, The Three in One and One in Three. . . . Of whom all nature has creation, Eternal Father, Spirit, Word. Praise to the Lord of my salvation; Salvation is of Christ the Lord!" (LSB 604:1, 5)

Discuss one-on-one or in small groups the following questions.

1. Would you want to return to people who enslaved you? Why did Patrick? *He felt called by God.*
2. How can you use a common object to teach a great theological truth? *People, especially uneducated people, can relate to something they see every day. The concept of the Trinity is difficult to grasp.*
3. How did the Holy Spirit work in Patrick's ministry? *The Spirit called Patrick to mission work. He worked through the Word Patrick shared to turn people to Christ.*