

# ***Church History***



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- *Introduction to Church History*
- *The Ancient Church* AD 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries
- *The Rise of Christendom* AD 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Early Middle Ages* AD 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Age of Crusades* AD 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Renaissance* AD 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *Conquest and Reformation* AD 16<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Age of Enlightenment* AD 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Age of Revolution* AD 19<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Modern Age* AD 20<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Postmodern Age* AD 21<sup>st</sup> century



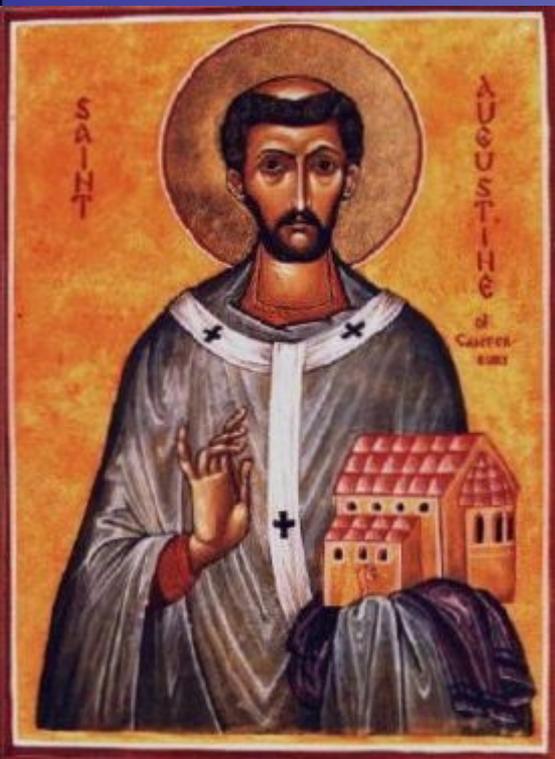
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- *The Ancient Church* AD 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries
- *The Rise of Christendom* AD 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries
  - *Constantine: The Thirteenth Apostle*
  - *The First Ecumenical Council*
  - *The Constantinian Line*
  - *The Establishment of Christendom*
  - *The Second Ecumenical Council*
  - *Fathers of the New Church (part 3)*



# *The Rise of Christendom*

- Several crucial events signalled quantum changes for the Church—especially in 386  
386± Augustine was converted to Christianity, having been born in Thagaste—*North Africa*



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  - 386± Augustine was converted to Christianity
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  - Maewyn Succat was born in Britain—*Europe*
- So great people of faith were popping up all over all of the known continents



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  - 386± Augustine was converted to Christianity
  - John Chrysostom was tonsured as a priest
  - Maewyn Succat was born in Britain—*Europe*
    - His grandfather, Potitus, had been a priest, and his father, Calpornius, was a deacon in the early British church (and a wealthy tax collector for Rome) in coastal Wales—and yet, he didn't grow up as a Christian
    - When he was 16 years old, Irish pirates raided the coast and kidnapped Maewyn as a slave, taking him back to Ireland with them
      - He remained a slave there for 6 years
      - Ironically, it was actually during his captivity in Ireland that Maewyn became a Christian
        - NOTE: St. Patrick did not bring Christianity to Ireland—it was the other way around



# *The Rise of Christendom*

- Funky little teaching moment—  
400± Christianity came to Ireland and Scotland
  - Possibly through the missionary work of Ninian of Whithorn (who may or may not have actually existed)
  - Whoever did it, Christianity was already at least present amongst the Celts and Picts when Pope Celestine finally sent out Palladius to the Scots and Patrick to the Irish three decades later



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  - 408 Maewyn had accepted Christ in Ireland
    - He later wrote that in his solitude as a shepherd, he had only God as a companion, and he prayed every day, all day long
      - One day, God told him that he would be able to return home soon, and that a ship was waiting for him 200 miles away on the coast
        - So Maewyn escaped at night, travelled the unfamiliar landscape to where the ship was supposed to be waiting for him, *found* the ship (just as it was in his vision) and returned home



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    - His father didn't understand Maewyn's newfound faith, nor why he no longer had any interest in taking over the family business
      - One day, he had another vision, where he perceived the people of Ireland were begging him to come back and “walk among us” again
      - So he left home again to study for the priesthood, taking the name, “Patricius” (“nobleman” in Latin—as in our word, “patrician”—or more literally, “born of a good father”)
        - But he encountered a long road getting to becoming a missionary



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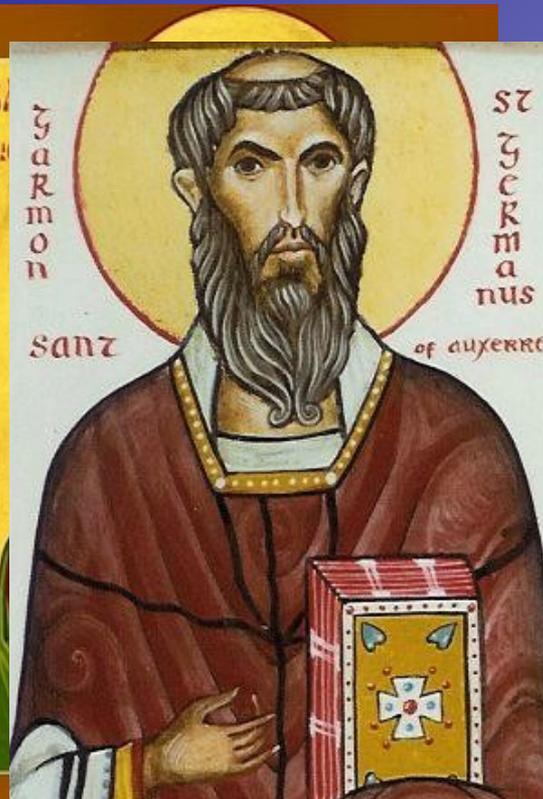
Patricius waited 22 years to get to Ireland

- Within months of coming home, he was captured by the Picts, but escaped
- Later, he was also taken by barbarian pirates to Bordeaux, but quickly released

- Now in France, he spent four years at Tours as a monk

- He spent another four years studying under Bishop Germanus at Auxerre

- Then nine years studying Scripture off the coast of Narbonne



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    - As all of this was going on, there were also a lot of major political upheavals going on that undermined his efforts



# *The Rise of Christendom*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - 407 The Roman legions pulled out of Britain
    - The Visigoths had been camped in Roman territory since 376, when Emperor Valens had given them land... then taken it away
      - They had been steadily encroaching on the lands of Emperor Honorius for a decade
      - In desperation, Honorius withdrew all of his legions from Britain to defend Italy, led by a general named Constantine (no relation)
        - But it was all too little, too late



# The Rise of Christendom

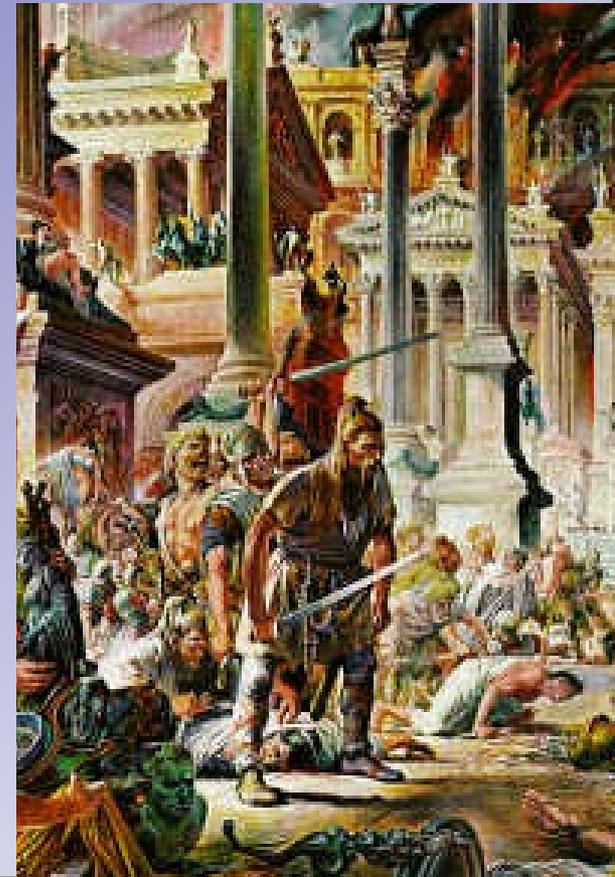
- Funky little teaching moment—

407 The Roman legions pulled out of Britain

410 Alaric sacked Rome

- King Alaric and his Visigoths laid siege to Rome on three separate occasions and on the *third* try, Roman slaves actually opened the gates and let them in

- While Honorius hid out in his capital in Ravenna, the Visigoths raped and pillaged throughout Rome for three straight days



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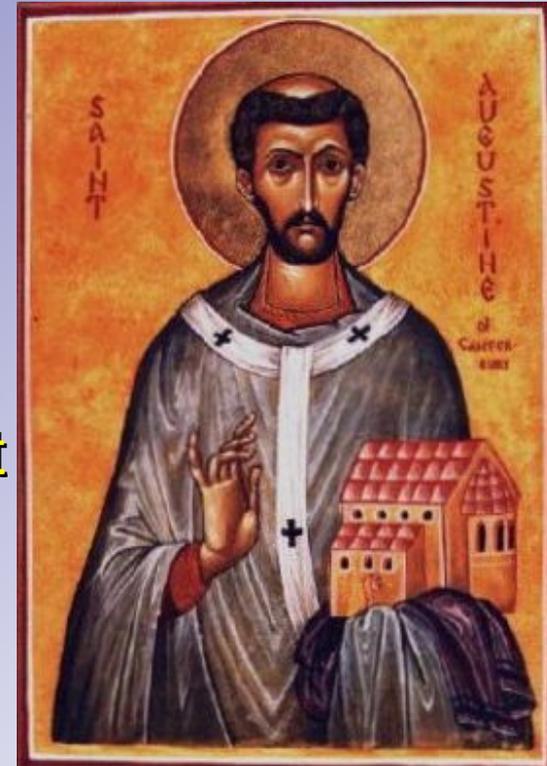
418 The Council of Carthage was held

- The Bishop of Carthage convened a council (including only African churches, since Europe was in political turmoil) to deal with the heresies of a British priest named Pelagius

- Augustine himself came to the council to speak against the Pelagians who taught that sexuality was *not* inherently evil—in fact, God gave all of us free will to choose to act either according to righteous or to unrighteous ends

- So fornication is sin *not* because sex is sinful, but because we *choose* to use it sinfully

- It is thus possible *not* to sin *at all*, if one could keep one's motives pure



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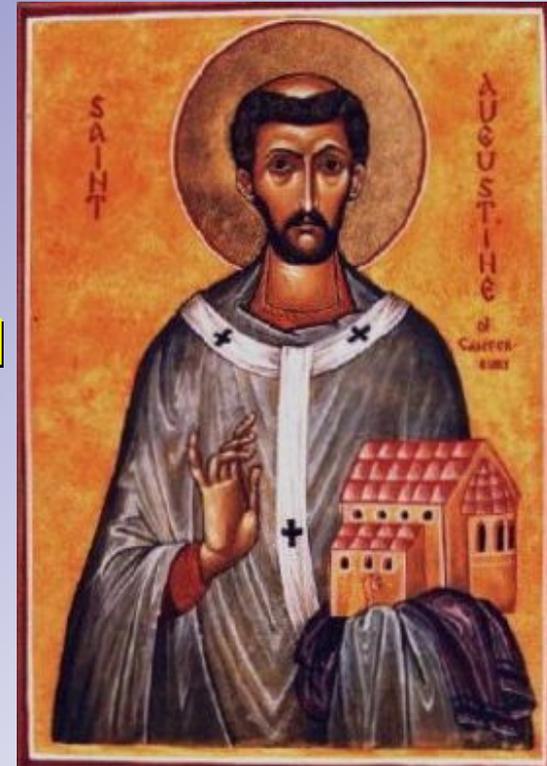
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- “Nothing impossible has been commanded by the God of justice and majesty”

- So if we’ve been called by Christ to “be perfect” (Matthew 5:48), and Paul tells us that our sin has been “done away with” (Romans 6:6), then it must be possible to overcome sin in our lives by consciously *choosing* to live righteously



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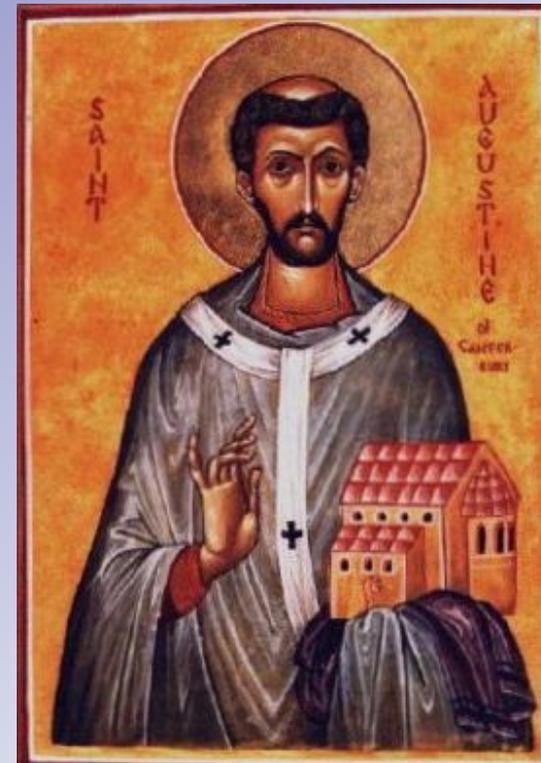
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- “Nothing impossible has been commanded by the God of justice and majesty”

- **NOTE:** this automatically put the Pelagians at odds with Augustine's doctrines of original sin, the nature of God's grace, and predestination

- The Pelagians were thus anathematized, though they were still very popular in Britain



# The Rise of Christendom

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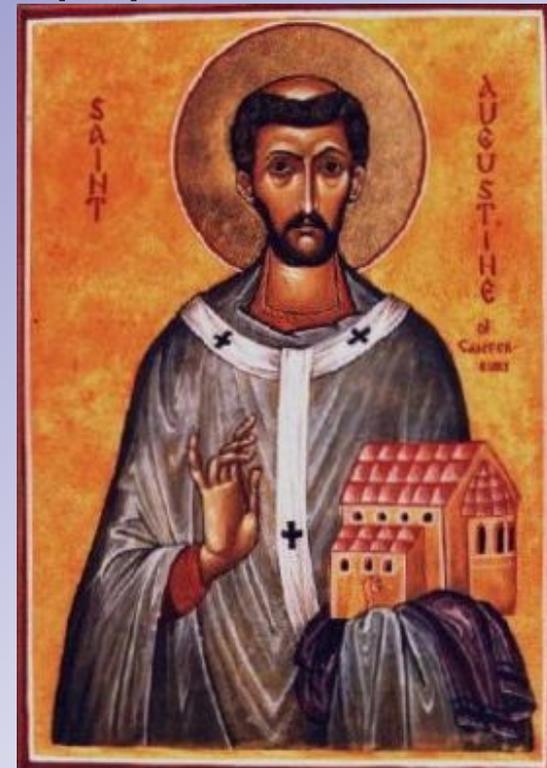
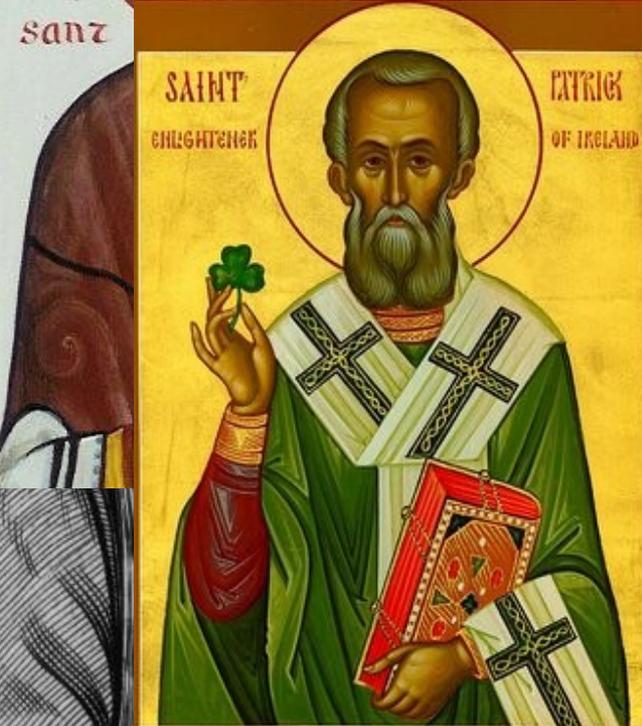
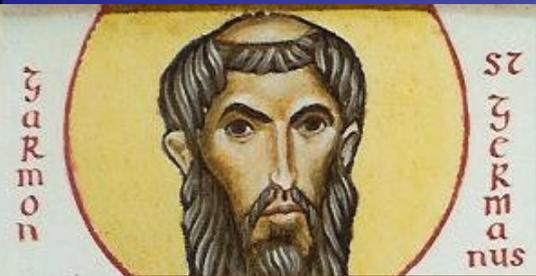
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- In fact, the Pelagians were so popular in Britain that the Pope later sent Bishop Germanus of Auxerre to debate them and defend orthodoxy... along with one of his monk students, Patricius



# The Rise of Christendom

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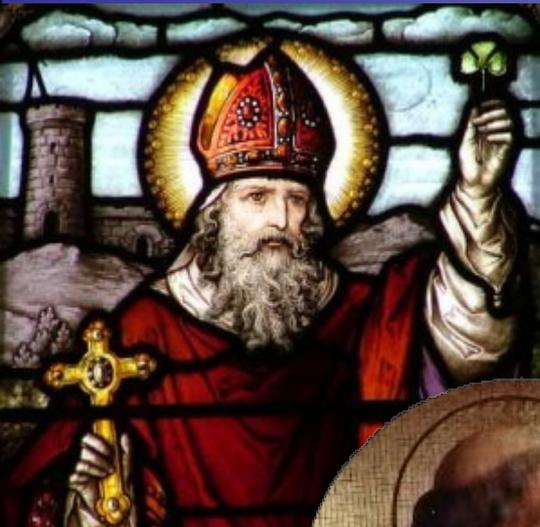
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430± Pope Celestine sent out missionaries

- There was a popular Pelagian priest in Britain named Palladius that Celestine didn't know what to do with

- So he sent Palladius to bring the Gospel to Ireland, where he ministered to the Scots

- Remember that we're talking about *tribes* here, not countries—there were Celts throughout Western Europe, and Scots in Ireland *and* Scotland (which was also home to the crazy blue-painted head-hunters called the Picts)



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- But soon after Palladius got there, he found that the Scots had already *heard* of Christianity, but didn't *like* it

- He was quickly banished by King Lóegaire mac Néill of Leinster, and sent back to Britain

As a last-ditch effort, Celestine sent him north, to minister to the Scots up in Scotland where he stayed for years, and is still considered a patron saint of the nation



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- There was a popular Pelagian priest in Britain named Palladius

- **After Palladius was banished from Ireland, Celestine finally allowed the relatively untested—but well-trained and popular—Patricius to go off to Ireland as his successor**

- **So Patricius—whom the Irish called Pádraig or Patrick—didn't even *begin* his ministry in Ireland until he was in his *mid-forties*...**



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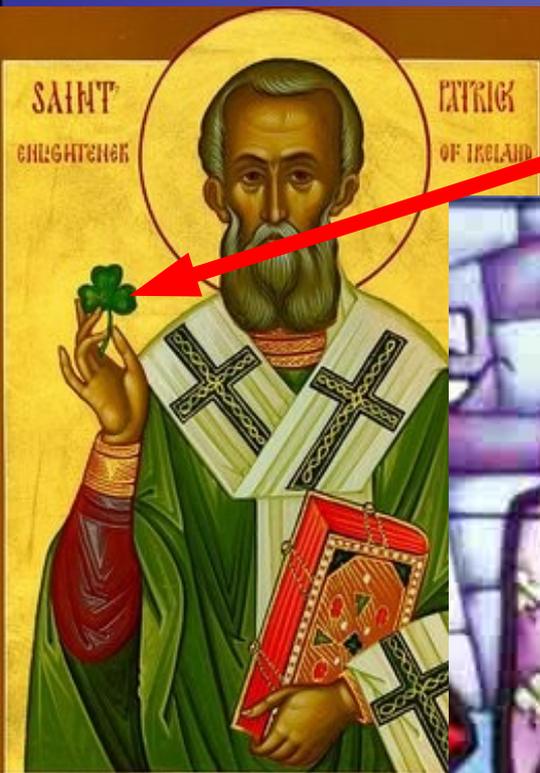
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430± Patrick became a missionary to Ireland

- The first place he went to was Leinster, to convert King Lóegaire mac Néill
  - He used the local shamrock as an analogy for the Trinity

Which is why the shamrock became Patrick's personal symbol—and later, Ireland's national one



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- The first place he went to was Leinster, to convert King Lóegaire mac Néill
- There are tons of folk-tales told about Patrick
  - The shamrock story (which is probably true)
  - The story of how his old walking stick took root and grew into an ash tree
  - The story of him driving the snakes out of Ireland (which is probably *sorta* true)
    - Most modern scholarship says that there *never were* any snakes in Ireland to drive out... but there's a lot more to it than that



# *The Rise of Christendom*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Before Patrick came to Ireland, the land was under the religious influence of the druids
  - We don't know exactly what they looked like (if you go online, you'll find too many pictures of magical fairies and sorcerers)
  - But as near as we can tell, they probably looked more like this (which isn't anywhere near as interesting)



# The Rise of Christendom

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Before Patrick came to Ireland, the land was under the religious influence of the druids
  - Their religion was nature-based, and they worshipped the ash tree, mistletoe, the sun and moon, etc... and the *serpent*
  - In fact, the serpent was a recurring theme in Celtic and druidic art
  - So most modern scholars think that “St. Patrick driving the snakes out of Ireland” is actually a folksy representation of him defeating and driving out the *druids*
  - Of course, all that begs a question—
    - If there never were any snakes in Ireland to drive out, then why did druids use them so prominently as their symbol?



# The Rise of Christendom

- Funky little teaching moment<sup>2</sup>—
  - Even though there are presently no indigenous snakes in Ireland, they do have something *like* a snake
  - The “slow worm”—actually a legless lizard—is indigenous to the island, though there are so few of them left that they are considered an endangered species in Ireland



- But why would anyone call them “snakes” or connect them to druidic worship...?
- And if they were more prevalent in the days of the druids, then why are they an endangered species today?



# *The Rise of Christendom*

- Funky little teaching moment<sup>3</sup> —
  - There's also a related story of Patrick exorcising a serpent (the *Oilliphéist* or “great wyrm”) that lived either in the River Shannon or Loch Dearg
    - But whether this was related to the druid/snake story or based on some other historical situation (or just entirely made up) is unclear



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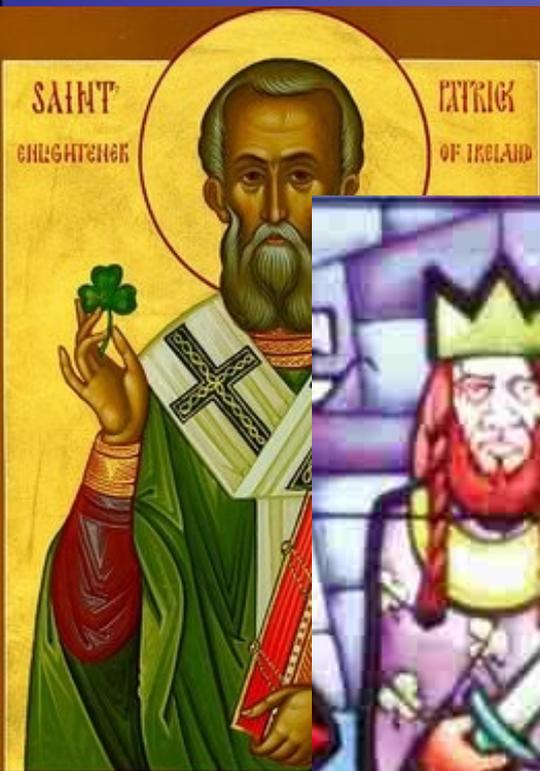
- The realities of Patrick's mission work are even more interesting than the folk-tales

- Lóegaire mac Néill had not just been a king, but rather the *High King of Tara*

- Tara was a sacred hill in Ireland where kings were crowned

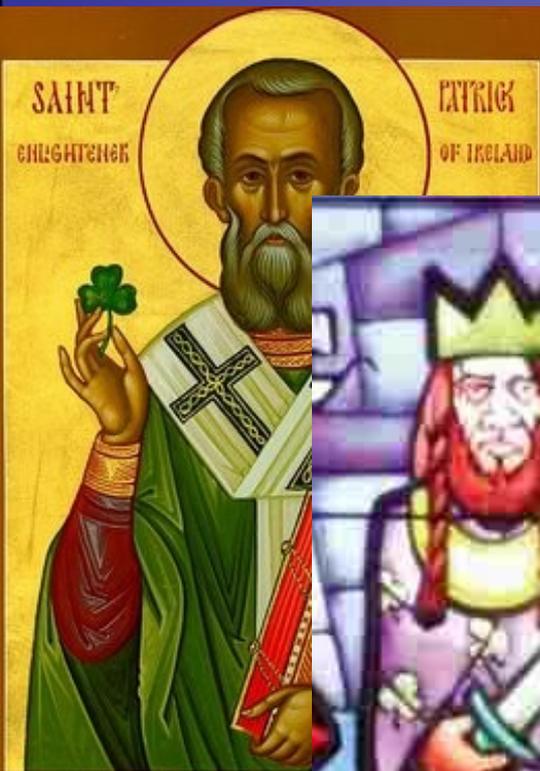
- But more than that, to be “King of Tara” was to be *the* king—the *king* of the various kings in Ireland

- He was *totally* the guy to convert



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  - Lóegaire mac Néill had not just been a king, but rather the *High King of Tara*
  - On top of that, the timing was just right
    - Easter that year fell on the same day as the Celtic fire festival that greeted the coming of Spring
    - Every fire in the land had to be extinguished until Sunday morning when the *High King's* fire at Tara was lit
    - Patrick, in celebrating the Easter ceremonies, had already lit a Pascal fire, so this was a problem...



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- The druids were enraged and prophesied that if Patrick's fire wasn't extinguished by the king, *at once*, "it will burn forever"... which was why King Lóegaire went to speak with Patrick *personally*

- At which point, Patrick told him about the *true* "High King" of Heaven

- Think of that next time that we sing "Be Thou My Vision"—an ancient Irish hymn



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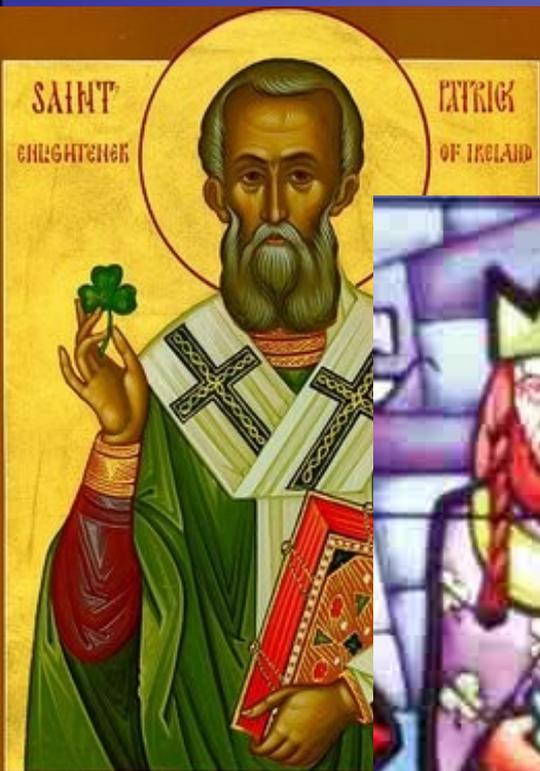
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- As a result of Lóegaire's conversion, the door was open for Patrick to reach out to *all* of Ireland



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  - Lóegaire mac Néill had not just been a king, but rather the *High King of Tara*
  - By the time of Patrick's death in 461, nearly the entire nation of Ireland had come to faith in Jesus Christ
    - And not as a “state religion” such as had been the case in Rome—Celtic Christianity stressed the importance of a *personal* relationship with God, so this was genuine, *conversion* growth



# *The Rise of Christendom*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Celtic Christianity really was doing its own thing
    - They had their own version of prayer
      - They emphasized not so much the praying of specific prayers at specific times of day (as was the case with most European churches and monastic orders), but rather praying *all day*—being in a *constant state* of communication with God, as if He were right in the room with you
  - As Esther de Waal (the author of *The Celtic Way of Prayer*) said, when talking about the Celtic concept of living as if we were all on a journey in this life and “just passing through” this world,
    - “I shall not find Christ at the end of the journey unless He is with me along the way”



# *The Rise of Christendom*

- Funky little teaching moment—
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    - They had their own version of prayer
    - They had their own version of penance
      - In Roman Christianity at this time, penance was made *publicly*—and on a one-time basis
        - You demonstrated your contrition before the whole congregation for being sinful, and if you were ever found sinning *again*, you were excommunicated
        - As you might imagine, very few people ever confessed to a *second* sin in their lives, and hiding sins thus became the church-wide norm



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      - In Celtic Christianity, your penance was between you and God, confessed to your priest in private—and if you sinned *again*, you confessed *again* and did more private penance
        - Their argument was that “We’re all sinful, all the time”—so we need to *keep* confessing our sins and letting them go, all the time
        - Interestingly, after an initial condemnation from Rome, this became the common practice of the Roman Catholic Church



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    - They had their own version of martyrdom
      - They acknowledged that many Christians have been martyred for their faith, and that it was an act of selfless worship to give your life for God
      - But they also acknowledged what they called “*green* martyrdom” (fasting and praying to an intense and health-endangering dramatic level) and “*white* martyrdom” (becoming a monk or hermit, or becoming a missionary to a foreign land)
        - These were *also* ways to “give your life to Christ”—to give your life, and not just your death



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    - They had their own version of Easter observance
      - Actually, that's not true—they resurrected and used the classic Eastern church method of Quartodecimanism, which calculated the date of Easter by basing it off of the Jewish Passover (the fourteenth day of Nisan)
        - Again, this got them in hot water with Rome



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    - They even had their own version of *tonsure*
      - Instead of shaving the top off to make a crown of hair around the head, like the Roman priests they shaved from ear-to-ear (*why is debatable*) and Rome officially censured them for it



Roman

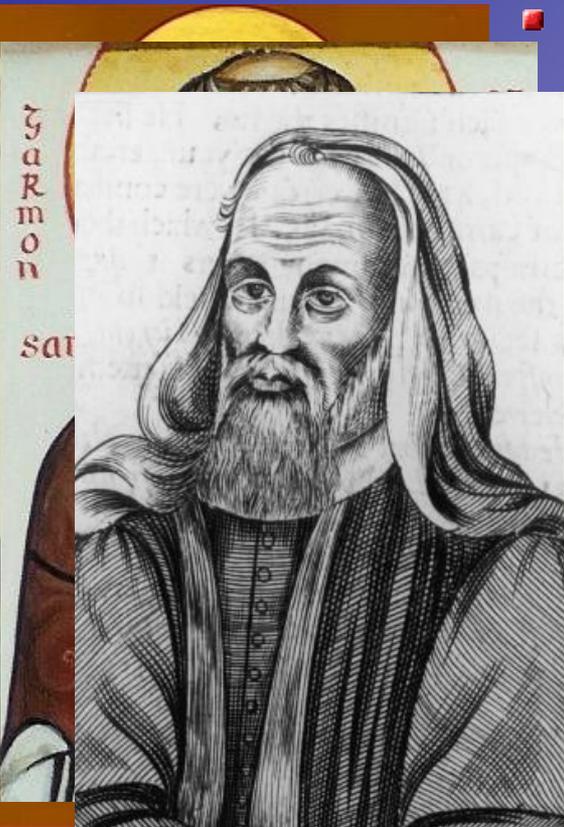


Celtic



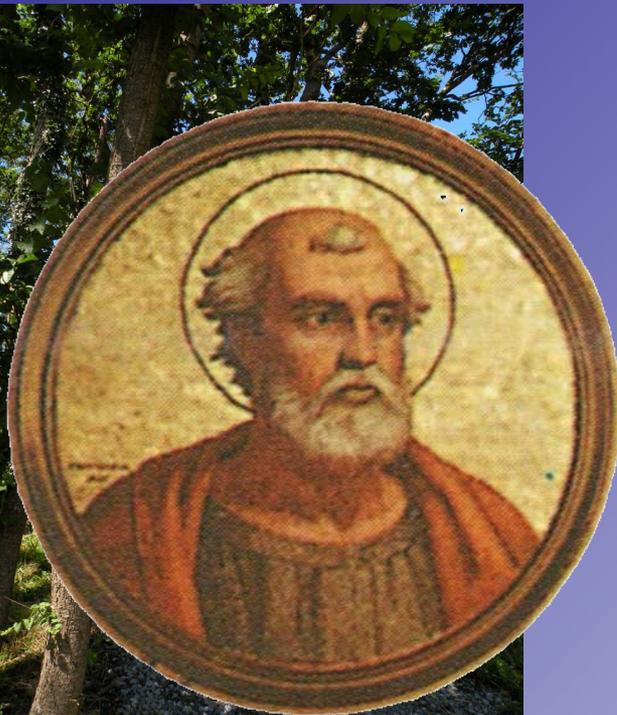
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    - They even had their own version of *tonsure*
    - But most importantly, they became a bastion of rational, Biblical theology in a sea of turmoil
    - For instance, later on, we'll hear how the church in Rome actually called upon the Irish priests—trained by Patrick, who was trained by Germanus—to debate and properly teach the Pelagians in Britain



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      - In addition, within a century of the founding of Celtic Christianity, Pope Gelasius I compiled a list of banned books which good Christians should never read
        - Soon, the Church was banning—and burning—every copy of Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, the Talmud, etc., that they could find
        - By the Council of Toulouse in 1229, the Church made it an excommunicable offence for a Christian to even own a *Bible*, since only *priests* were really qualified to read it



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      - In response, Irish monks began a series of night-time commando raids on the European continent, stealing books
        - They would load up their one-man skiffs with as many books as they could steal, and take them to Ireland for safekeeping
        - Once the Vikings began raiding Irish monasteries, they took to hiding the books in abandoned European ones (even as far away as *Italy*—right under the nose of Rome itself)



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    - They even had their own version of *tonsure*
    - But most importantly, they became a bastion of rational, Biblical theology in a sea of turmoil
      - In response, Irish monks began a series of night-time commando raids on the European continent, stealing books
      - Centuries later, once the Renaissance hit and the Church realized what a tragedy it was to have irretrievably lost such a wealth of knowledge, the Irish monks brought it all back out and re-introduced the world to its own heritage



# The Rise of Christendom

- Several crucial events signalled quantum changes for the Church—especially in 386

386±

Maewyn Succat was born in Britain

408

Maewyn had accepted Christ in Ireland

430±

Patrick became a missionary to Ireland

- The realities of Patrick's mission work are even more interesting than the folk-tales
- And all of this was due to God using a spoiled little rich, non-Christian, Romano-Welsh kid
  - Saved him through slavery
  - Taught him through kidnapping to France
  - And sent him to a people group who'd originally enslaved him, and who had kicked out their last missionary
- How can God use *you*?



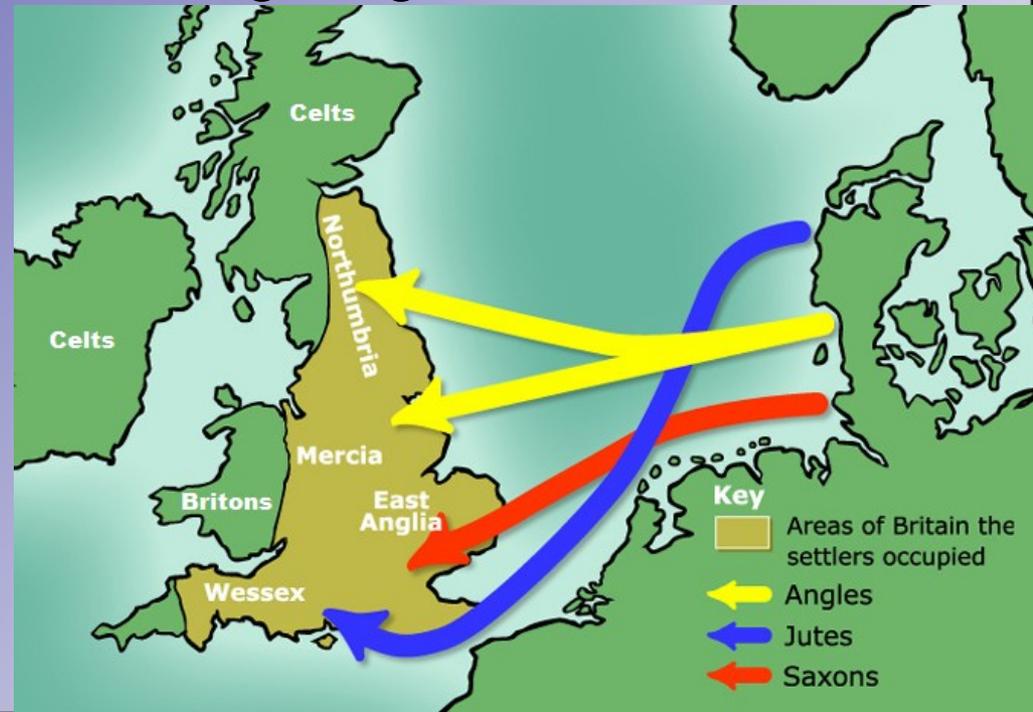
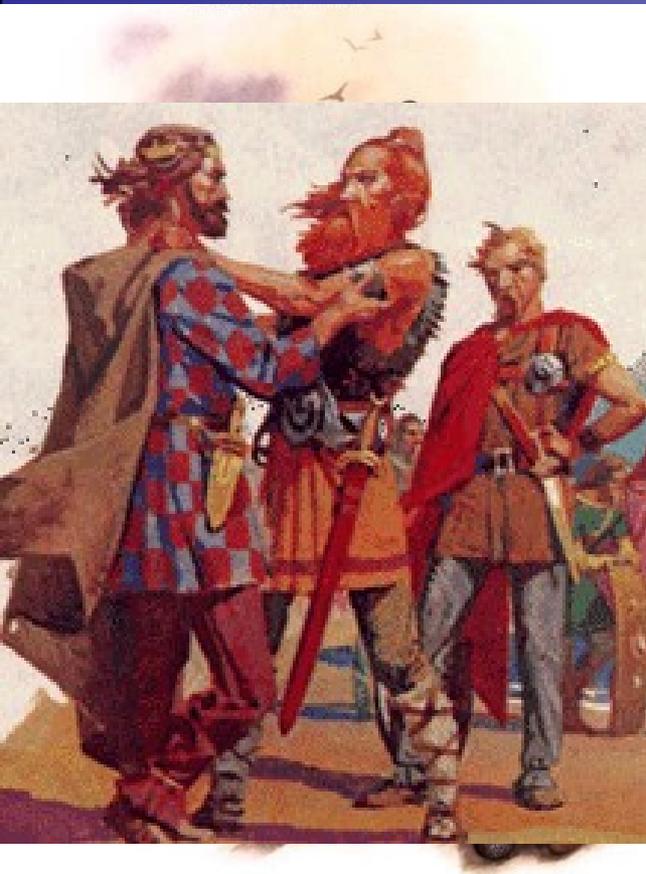
# *The Rise of Christendom*

- Final funky little teaching moment—  
446 The Groans of the Britons
  - Britain had been under attack by European barbarians ever since the Romans had pulled out in 407
  - Time and again, they begged Rome for aid
    - In their final plea in 446, they wrote, “To Agitius, thrice consul, the groans of the Britons... The barbarians drive us to the sea, the sea drives us to the barbarians— between these two means of death we are either killed or drowned...”
    - But Rome's empire was already falling apart in Europe, and there was nothing that they could do (or were willing to do)



# The Rise of Christendom

- Final funky little teaching moment—
  - 446 The Groans of the Britons
  - 449 King Vortigern made an alliance
    - In desperation, King Vortigern of the Britons made an alliance with the Germanic Angles and Saxons of northern Europe, inviting them to Britain and offering them land if they would help repel the barbarian raiders
    - Instead, the Angles and Saxons *invaded* Britain, taking the majority of it for themselves and relegating the Britons and Celts to the edges of their own country



# The Rise of Christendom

- Final funky little teaching moment—

446 The Groans of the Britons

449 King Vortigern made an alliance

490 The Battle of Mount Badon

- There was one, shining moment of British victory against the Anglo-Saxon invasion—the Battle of Mount Badon (aka “Badon Hill”)
- The last vestiges of the Roman legions, led by war chief Ambrosius Aurelianus, actually repelled the Anglo-Saxons and pushed them back to the coasts
- Ambrosius was said to have been the grandson of General Constantine, who had led the legions of Britain, during the reign of Honorius
- The Britons gave him the epithet, “Artorius” or “Arthur”—pointing back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century hero, Lucius Artorius Castus, and/or to the Celtic word, “arth” (“bear”)
- Under Arthur's leadership, Britain enjoyed a generation of relative peace...

