

HOST NEWS

March 2009

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ST. PATRICK'S DAY CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

The person who was to become St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, was born in Wales about AD 385. His given name was Maewyn, and he almost didn't get the job of bishop of Ireland because he lacked the required scholarship.

Far from being a saint, until he was 16, he considered himself a pagan. At that age, he was sold into slavery by a group of Irish marauders that raided his village. During his captivity, he became closer to God.

He escaped from slavery after six years and went to Gaul where he studied in the monastery under St. Germain, bishop of Auxerre for a period of twelve years. During his training he became aware that his calling was to convert the pagans to Christianity.

His wishes were to return to Ireland, to convert the native pagans to Christianity. But his superiors instead appointed St. Palladius. But two years later, Palladius transferred to Scotland. Patrick, having adopted that Christian name earlier, was then appointed as second bishop to Ireland.

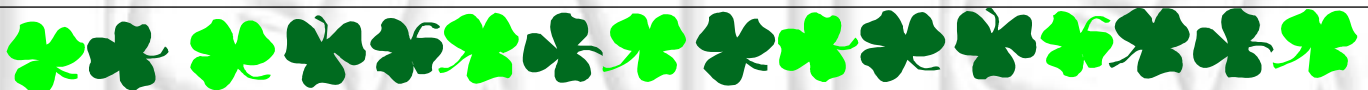
Patrick was quite successful at winning converts. And this fact upset the Celtic Druids. Patrick was arrested several times, but escaped each time. He traveled throughout Ireland, establishing monasteries across the country. He also set up schools and churches which would aid him in his conversion of the Irish country to Christianity. His mission in Ireland lasted for thirty years.

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"But God demonstrated his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 5:8



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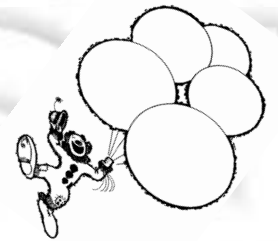
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Schedule of Events

March 8 - Daylight Saving Time
 March 17 - St. Patrick's Day
 March 20 - Spring Begins

Student's Birthdays

- 1st - Da Min Kwon
- 11th - Jaime Gallego
- 17th - Tsatsral Nyamsaikhan



St. Patrick's Day (cont.)



After that time, Patrick retired to County Down. He died on March 17 in AD 461. That day has been commemorated as St. Patrick's Day ever since.

Much Irish folklore surrounds St. Patrick's Day. Not much of it is actually substantiated.



Some of this lore includes the belief that Patrick raised people from the dead. He also is said to have given a sermon from a hilltop that drove all the snakes from Ireland. Of course, no snakes were ever native to Ireland, and some people think this is a metaphor for the conversion of the pagans. Though originally a Catholic holy day, St. Patrick's Day has evolved into more of a secular holiday.

One traditional icon of the day is the shamrock. And this stems from a more bona fide Irish tale that tells how Patrick used the three-leaved shamrock to explain the Trinity. He used it in his sermons to represent how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit could all exist as separate elements of the same entity. His followers adopted the custom of wearing a shamrock on his feast day.

The St. Patrick's Day custom came to America in 1737. That was the first year St. Patrick's Day was publicly celebrated in this country, in Boston.

Information by Jerry Wilson



WEAR GREEN!

Don't forget to tell your student about the St. Patrick's Day tradition of wearing something green.

Otherwise, they might suffer the consequences in the form of PINCHES by their classmates!



Spring Break

It's finally here!!!

Many schools will be having Spring Break this month or shortly thereafter. For most students, that means a break from homework and waking up early! Some will hang out at home, while others will do a bit of traveling.

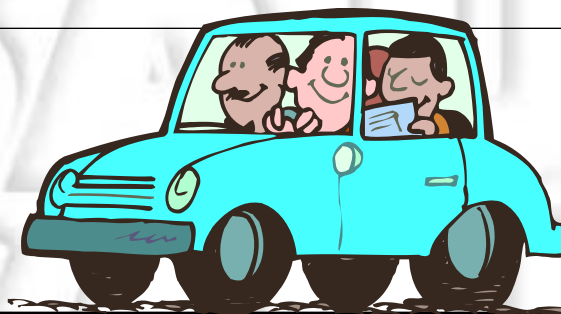
If your family or your student plan to travel during Spring Break, please:

1) Complete and mail the "Travel Agenda Form" (enclosed)

OR

2) E-mail the information from the "Travel Agenda Form" to usaprogram@msn.com

Thank you & have fun!





MONTHLY EVALUATIONS

Just a reminder - Please complete and mail in your Monthly Evaluations. We appreciate your care and cooperation. Never hesitate to call USA's main office if you have any questions or concerns. Our toll free number is: 1-877-336-HOST(4678).

SUMMER BREAK OPTIONS

As the end of the school year is nearing, it is time to begin planning for the summer!

USA provides our international students with three options for the summer break:

1. Return to the home country (to visit the natural family/friends)
2. Participate in USA's 5-week Summer Program (minimum 15 st.)
3. Visit relatives in the U.S. (family or friends)

Enclosed, you will find the "USA Summer Option Questionnaire" form on which your international student will indicate which of the three options he/she will choose.

Please ensure that your international student has discussed his/her plans with the natural parents before completing and submitting this important form into USA's office.

THANK YOU!

