

St Aiden's Homeschool



A Book of Saints & Angels

Saint Patrick

Digitally Reconstructed by Donnette E Davis

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The Four Households

There were many great saints among the Gael, but Patrick was the bush among them all. It was beyond the sea he was born, and his mother was a sister of Saint Martin of Tours; and he dreamed in Rome, and walked all Ireland barefoot. It was in his young youth he was brought from France to Ireland as a slave, and he was to set to serve four households, and he did his work so well that every one of the households thought him to be servant to itself alone and it was by an angel the ashes used to be cleared away from the hearth for him.

He gets his Freedom

He was sent out after a while minding swine & he went through great hardships; but Victor the angel used to come to visit him and to teach him the order of prayer. And he had no way to buy his freedom, but one time a wild boar came rooting in the field, and brought up a lump of gold; and Patrick brought it to a tinker and the tinker said "It is nothing but solder, give it here to me." But then he brought it to a smith, and the smith told him it was gold and with that gold he brought his freedom. And from that time the smiths have been lucky, taking money every day and never without work; but as for the tinkers, every man's face is against them and their face is against every man, and they get no ease or rest, but are ever and always travelling the world.

The Man and Woman that were always Young

After that he went out to sea with foreigners and he went back to his own country, and his people asked him to stop there with them. But he would not; for always in his sleep he could see the island of the Gael, and he could hear the singing of the children of the Wood of Fochlad. He went over the sea of Icht then, and he fasted in the islands of the Torrian sea, and then he went to learn from Germanus, and after that again to Rome. And then he and his people went out to sea, nine in all, and they came to an island where they saw a new house, and a young man and a young woman in it; and they saw a withered old hag by the door of the house. "What happened this old woman?" said Patrick. "It is great her weakness is" "She is my own grandchild, old as she is," said the young man. "What way did that happen?" said Patrick. "It is not hard to say that" said the young man; "For we are here from the time of Christ" he said "and he came to visit us when he was here among men, and we made a feast for him and he blessed our house and be blessed ourselves, but the blessing did not reach to our children. And this is the way we will be, without age coming upon us, to the Judgement. And it is a long time your coming is foretold to us" he said "and it is the will of God for you to go and to preach in the country of the Gael; and Christ left a token with us, a bent staff to be given to you."

Patrick goes back to Ireland

Patrick took the staff with him then & went back to Germanus. And Victor the angel came and said to him "It was God's bidding to you to go back and to teach in the country of the Gael." But Patrick was not willing to go and he

complained to God of the hardheartedness of the Gad. And God said "I myself will be your helper." Then Patrick went back to Rome and he was made a bishop, and when they were making a bishop of him the three quires answered to them, the quire of the people of Heaven, the quire of the Romans and the quire of the children of the Wood of Fochlad. It was in the east of Ireland he landed, at Inis Patrick; and three times before that the druids had foretold his coming, and it is what they said, "Adzeheads will come over an angry sea; their cloaks hole-headed; their staves crooked; their tables to the east of their houses; they will all answer Amen." At the time he landed it was the feast of Beltaine, and on that day every year the High King lighted a fire in Teamhuir, and there was geasa, that is a bond, upon the men of Ireland not to kindle a fire in any place before the kindling of that fire in Teamhuir. Patrick, now, struck the flame of the Paschal fire, and all the people saw it and it lighted up the whole of Magh Breg. "That is a breaking of bonds" said the king to his druids; "and find out for me" he said "who was it kindled that fire." And it is what the druids said, "Unless that fire is quenched before morning in the same night it was kindled, it will never be quenched." And when the fire was not quenched in that night, there was great anger on the king.

The Deer's Cry

Patrick made this hymn one time he was going to preach the Faith at Teamhuir, and his enemies lay in hiding to make an attack on him as he passed. But as he himself and Benen his servant went by, all they could see passing was a wild deer and a fawn. And the Deer's Cry is the name of the hymn to this day.

"I bind myself to-day to a strong strength, to a calling on the Trinity. I believe in a Threeness with confession of a Oneness in the Creator of the World.

"I bind myself to-day to the strength of Christ's birth and his baptism; to the strength of his crucifixion with his burial; to the, strength of his resurrection with his ascension;

"In stability of earth, in steadfastness of rock, I bind to myself to-day God's strength to pilot me;

"God's power to uphold me; God's wisdom to guide me; God's eye to look before me; God's ear to hear me;

"God's word to speak for me; God's hand to guard me; God's path to lie before me; God's shield to protect me; God's host to save me;

"Against snares of demons; against the begging of sins; against the asking of nature; against all my ill-wishers near me and far from me; alone and in a crowd.

"So I have called on all these strengths, to come between me and every fierce and merciless strength that may come between my body and my soul;

"Against incantations of false prophets; against black laws of heathens; against false laws of heretics; against craft of idolatry; against spells of women and smiths and druids; against every knowledge forbidden to the souls of men;

"Christ for my protection to-ty against poison, against burning, against drowning, against wounding; that a multitude of rewards may come to me.

"Christ with me, Christ before me; Christ behind me, Christ in me; Christ under me, Christ over me; Christ to the right of me, Christ to the left of me; Christ in lying down, Christ in sitting, Christ in rising up; Christ in the heart of everyone that thinks of me; Christ in the mouth of everyone that speaks to me; Christ in every eye that sees me; Christ in every ear that hears me.

"I bind to myself to-day a strong strength to a calling upon the Trinity; I believe in a Threeness with confession of a Oneness in the Creator of the World!"

Patrick and the Big Men

It is often told by the people of Ireland how Oisín, son of Finn, came back to Ireland in the time of Patrick; and the poets of Ireland have put into verses the arguments they used to be having with one another. And there are some say Caoilte of the Fianna and a troop of his people were in Ireland at that same time; and whether or not that story is true, this is the way the meeting between himself and Patrick is put down in the old writings.

Patrick was one time singing the Mass at the Rath of the Red Ridge where Finn, son of Cumhal, used to be, and his clerks were with him. And the clerks saw Caoilte and his people coming towards them, and fear and terror fell on them before the great men and the great hounds that were with them; for they were not of the one time with themselves. It is then there rose up that high herdsman, that angel of the earth, Patrick son of Calpurn, Apostle of the Gael, and sprinkled holy water upon the big men, and with that every bad thing that was about them made away into the hills and the scalps and the borders of the country on every side, and the big men sat down. And there was great wonder on the clerks as they looked at them, for the tallest of themselves reached but to their waist or to their shoulders, and they sitting. "What name have you?" said Patrick then. "I am Caoilte, son of Ronan of the Fianna." "Was it not a good lord you were with" said Patrick "that is Finn, son of Cumhal?" And Caoilte said "If the brown leaves falling in the woods were gold, if the waves of the sea were silver, Finn would have given away the whole of it." "What was it kept you through your lifetime?" said Patrick. "Truth that was in our hearts, and strength in our hands, and fulfilment in our tongues" said Caoilte. Then Patrick gave them food and drink and good treatment and talked with them. And on the morning of the morrow his two protecting angels came to him out on the green, and he asked them was it any harm before the King of Heaven and earth, for him to be listening to the stories of the Fianna. And it is what the angels answered him: "Holy Clerk" they said "it is no more than a third of their stories these old fighting-men can tell, by reason of forgetfulness and their memory that fails them; but whatever they tell, let you write it down on poet's boards and in the words of poets, for it will be a diversion to the companies and the high people of the latter times to be listening to them." And Patrick did as they bade him, and he bade Brogan the scribe to write down all the stories told by Caoilte; and Brogan did that, and they are in the world to this day.

The Hidden Well of Usnach

One time Diarmuid king of Ireland was with Patrick on the Hill of Usnach, and there was no water to be had; and one of the big men of the Fianna, it might have been Caoilte and it might have been Oisín, asked for a vessel that he might go and get it. And as he went he was looking back to see were they watching him, and when he was out of their sight he went to the Well of Usnach that was called the Whitebrimmed, and since the time of the battle of Gabra it had never been found by any man in Ireland. And when he came to the brink of the well he saw in it eight beautiful speckled salmon, for it was such a hidden place there was nothing for them to be in dread of. He took then eight sprigs of watercress and eight of brook-lime, and he put down the vessel into the well and he took the eight salmon alive and leaping like mad things. And then he went back and set the vessel before the King of Ireland, and there was wonder on them all seeing that; and the stalk of every one of the sprigs of the watercress reached as high as Diarmuid's knee. "They must be divided into two shares" he said "a half to Patrick and a half ourselves." "Not so" said Patrick "for there are more of you than of ourselves. But make three parts" he said "and give one to the church for that is her own share;" and so it was done. "That is well, King of Ireland" he said then "but do not lose your share in heaven through these big men." "What do you mean saying that?" said Diarmuid. "I mean that you have your thoughts too much taken up with them" said Patrick.

Patrick and Cascorach the Musician

One time the King of Ulster went up with Caoilte to a great liss that was called Foradh-na-Feinne, the Resting-place of the Fianna. And when they were there they saw coming towards them a young man that was wearing a beautiful green cloak having in it a silver brooch; a shirt of yellow silk next his skin he had; a coat of soft satin, and a harp from his neck. "Where do you come from and who are you yourself?" said the King. "I come from the South from the Hill of Bodb Dearg son of the Dagda," said he; "and I am Cascorach, son of Cainchen that is poet to the Tuatha de Danaan and I am the makings of a poet myself. And it is what I am come for now" he said "to get true knowledge and the stories of the Fianna and their great deeds from Caoilte son of Ronan." With that he took his harp and made music for them till he had put them all into their sleep., "Well Caoilte my soul" he said then "what answer will you give me?" "I will give you all you are asking" said Caoilte "if you have skill and understanding to learn all the Fianna did of arms and of bravery. And it was a great fighting-man used to be in this place" he said "that was Finn, son of Cumhal, and it is great riches and great wages you would have got from him for your music; although this day the place is empty." And he made this lament:

"The Resting-place of the Fianna is bare to-night where Finn of the naked sword used to be; through the death of the king that was without gloom, wide Almuin is deserted;

"The high company are not living; Finn the very prince is not alive; no armies to be seen, no captains with the King of the Fianna.

"They are all gone, the people of Finn, they that used to be going from valley to valley; it is a pity the life I have now, to be left after Diarmuid and Conan, after Goll son of Morna from the plain.

"It is the truth I am telling you; all that I say is true; it is great our losses were there beyond. They are gone, the armies and the hundreds; it is a pity I myself not to have found death; they are all gone now; they used to be together from border to border."

Then Caoilte brought to mind the loss of the heroes and of the great companies he used to be going among, and he cried miserably, sorrowfully, till all his breast was wet with him. He set out after that and Cascorach with him and they went up by hills and rocks to the top of green-grassed Slieve Fuad, to the rowan tree of the Meadow of the Two Stags and to the place where the men of Ulster left their chariots after the last battle of the War for the Bull of Cuailgne. And Patrick was there before him, having with him three times fifty bishops and three times fifty priests and three times fifty deacons and three times fifty singers of psalms. And they sat down there, and Patrick kept his Hours with praising the Maker of the world. Then he gave a welcome to Caoilte. "Well, my soul" he said "who is that well-looking dark-eyebrowed curly-headed young man that is with you, having a harp with him?" "He is Cascorach son of the musician of the Tuatha De Danaan, that is come to find news and knowledge of the Fianna from me." "It is a good road he has chosen" said Patrick. "And O Caoilte" he said "it is great good you yourself have waited for, the time of belief and of saints and of holiness, and to be in friendship with the King of Heaven and earth. And play to us now Cascorach" he said "till we hear your music and your skill." "I will do that" said Cascorach; "and I never was better pleased, holy Clerk, to do it for any man than for yourself." He took his harp then and readied it, and played a strain of music, and the clerks had never heard the like of that music for sweetness, unless it might be the praises of the King of Heaven sung according to the Rule. And they all fell into their sleep listening to the continuous music of the Sidhe. And when Cascorach had made an end of playing, he asked a reward of Patrick. "What reward are you asking, my soul?" said Patrick. "Heaven for myself" said he "for that is the reward is best; and good luck to go with my art and with all that will follow it after me." "I give you heaven" said Patrick, "and I give this to your art, it to be one of the three arts by which a man can find profit to the last in Ireland. And however great the grudgingness a man of your art may meet with, let him but make his music, and no one will begrudge him anything. And that they may have all happiness" he said, "so long as they are not slothful in their trade." After that Cascorach put back his harp in its covering. "That was good music you gave us" said Brogan the scribe. "It was good indeed" said Patrick; "and but for a taste of the music of the Sidhe that was in it I never heard anything nearer to the music of heaven." "If there is music in heaven why- should it not be on earth?" said Brogan. "And so it is not right to banish it away." "I do not say we should banish it" said Patrick, "but only that we should not hold to it out of measure."

Patrick's Farewell to Caoilte

But after a good while Caoilte said "Holy Patrick, my soul, I am thinking it is time for me to be going to-morrow." "Why would you go?" said Patrick. "To be searching

out the hills and the hollows of every place where my comrades and the King of the Fianna used to be together with me, for it seems long to me to be in the one place." And when they rose up on the morrow, Caoilte laid his hand in Patrick's bosom and it is what Patrick said "From myself to yourself, in the house or out of the house, in whatever place God will lay his hand on you, I give you Heaven."

Bodb Dearg's Daughter

Aedh King of Connacht was at Dun Leoda Loingsig one time giving a great feast. And it happened at the fall of the clouds of evening he came out on the green lawn, and as he was there and the people of his household with him, he saw on one side a girl of wonderful appearance, having yellow hair, and she not looking at the people but only at the king. "Where do you come from girl?" said the king. "Out of the shining Brugh in the east" said she. "For what cause are you come?" said the king. "You are my sweetheart," said she. "Whose daughter are you and what name have you?" said the king. "I am Aillenn of the many shapes, daughter to Bodb Dearg, son of the Dagda. "I have never seen a woman I would sooner have as a wife than yourself" said the king "but that I am under the rule of Blessed Patrick and of the King of Heaven and earth. And Patrick bound me" he said "to have one wife only, that is Aife daughter of Eoghan, King of Leinster. And would you wish to be seen by the great men of my kingdom?" he said. "I would like it indeed" said she "for I am not an ever living woman of the Sidhe, but I am of the Tuatha de Danaan, having my own body about me." Then she showed herself to the whole gathering of the people and they never saw before or after a woman more beautiful than herself. "And what judgment do you put upon me King?" she said. "Whatever judgment Blessed Patrick gives I will give it" said he. Then Aedh sent messengers to Patrick where he was in the south, and they brought him to Beinn Gulbain in Maenmag. And Aedh the King went to meet him there and knelt before him and told him the whole story. "Are you the girl" said Patrick "that gave her love to the King of Connacht?" "I am" said she. "Well girl" said Patrick "it is good your shape is and your appearance. And what is it keeps you like this" he said "at the very height of your comeliness?" "Everyone that drank at Giobniu's Feast" she said, "no sickness or wasting comes upon them. And tell me now holy Clerk" she said "what is your judgment on myself and on the King of Connacht?" "It is a good one" said Patrick; "it is settled by God and myself that a man must have one wife only." "And I myself" said the girl "what am I to do?" "Go back to your house among the Sidhe" said Patrick; "and if it should happen the King of Leinster's daughter to die before yourself, let the man you have given your love to take you as his only wife. But if you should try to harm Aedh or his wife by day or by night" he said "I will destroy you the way neither your father or your mother or your fosterers will like to be looking at you." Then the girl cried pitifully, heavily, and the King said "I am dear to you." "You are dear to me indeed" said she. "There is not one of the people of the world is dearer to me than yourself" said the king; "but I must not go beyond the conditions of the Adzehead and of God." With that the girl went back to her hidden house among the Sidhe. And after a while the wife of the King of Connacht died at Uaran Garaid and was buried on the hill that is called the High Place of the Angels. And after that again there was a gathering made of all the five provinces of Ireland to hold the feast of Teamhuir. And Patrick and Aedh King of Connacht were out on the green; and they saw coming towards them Aillenn daughter of Bodb Dearg, having with her three fifties of the

women of the Tuatha de Danaan, and she sat down on the grass beside Patrick and the King of Connacht, and she gave her message. Then Patrick said to the king "I will give her to you if you will take her as your wife." "Whatever you are willing for me to do I will do it" said the king. "I promised you would take her" said Patrick, "if she would give up her false druid belief and kneel to the King of heaven and earth." "Do you agree to that Aillenn?" said the king. "I agree to it" said she. Then she rose up, and her women, and they all kneeled to Patrick, and Patrick joined her and the king in marriage. That now was the first marriage made by the Adzehead in Ireland.

Ethne the Beautiful and Fedeim the Rosy-Red

Patrick was one time at Cruachan of Connacht, and he went up to the well that is called Clibach and that is opposite the rising of the sun, and he sat down beside the well, and his clerks with him. There were two daughters now of Laoghaire the High King were living at Rath Cruachan at that time, getting their learning from the druids and the name of the one was Ethne and the other was Fedelm the Rosy-Red. And it was their custom every morning to come and to wash themselves in the well. And on this day when they came they saw a company of men having white clothes, and books before them beside the well. And there was great wonder on them and they thought them to be of the people of the Sidhe. And they questioned Patrick and said to him "Where do you come from? And where are you going? And is it gods you are" they said "or men from the hills of the Sidhe?" "It would be better for you to believe in God than to be asking who we ourselves are" said Patrick "Who is your God?" said Ethne then. "And where is he?" she said "Is it in the skies he is, or in the earth, or under the earth, or upon the earth, or in the seas or in the streams, or in the mountains or in the valleys? And has he riches?" she said "Is he young? Is he beautiful? Has he sons and daughters? Is he of the ever living ones?" Patrick took in hand then to answer their questions and to teach them the true faith; and he told them it was fitting they should join with the King of Glory, being as they were the daughters of an earthly king. And when they had heard the whole story a great desire came upon them to serve Him. "And it is the desire of our hearts" they said "to see his Son, our husband." "That is not possible" said Patrick "but through taking the body of Christ and through death." "We would die surely" they said "if we might see Christ on the moment." Then Patrick baptized them and gave them the Body of Christ, and put a white veil upon their heads, and they were filled with peace and with the friendship of God. And when they were sleeping in death, his people put them on a little bed and laid coverings over them, and keened them there.

The Soul and the Body

The Saviour told Patrick one time to go and prepare a man that was going to die. And Patrick said "I would sooner not go for I never yet saw the soul part from the body." But after that he went and prepared the man. And when he was lying there dead, he saw the soul go from the body, and three times it went to the door and three times it came back and kissed the body. And Patrick asked the Saviour why it did that and he said "That soul was sorry to part from the body because it had kept it so clean and so honest."

Patrick's Rush Candles

Patrick went one time into a house in the south, and the people of it were poor, and they had not a candle or a rush light or turf or sticks for a fire, but when the daylight was done what they had to do was to go to their bed. And when Patrick came in and saw the house so dark he said "Are there no green rushes growing in the bog?" So they went out and brought him in a bundle of green rushes and he took them in his hand and blessed them, and they gave out light through the whole of the night time.

His Church at Ardmacha

Patrick was walking up the hill of Ardmacha one time with his people and they found a doe resting on the ground, and a fawn beside her. And his people were going to kill the fawn, but Patrick forbade them and he took it in his arms and carried it, and the doe came following after him. And it was in the place where he put down the fawn, the church of Ardmacha was built for him afterwards.

He is Waked by the Angels

When the time came for Patrick to die it is to Ardmacha he had a desire to go. But Victor the angel went to meet him on the road at midday and said "Go back to the place you came 'from, to the barn, for it is there your death will be. And give thanks to Christ" he said "for your prayers are granted; it is to Heaven you will soon be going." And when his soul parted from his body, there was no candle wasted with him, but it was the angels of God kept lasting watch over him until the end of twelve nights, and through all that time there was no night in Magh mis with the light of the angels. It is that was a long day of peace! And after his death there was near being a great battle between the men of Ulster and the Ua Neil, fighting for his body. But at the last it seemed to them that his body was brought by each of them to his own country, and so they were separated by God.

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