

FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH

The feast of St. Joseph, the spouse of Mary and foster father of Jesus, is on March 19. Many nationalities have special customs for celebrating this day. If your family has a tradition of baking St. Joseph bread, participating in a novena of prayers, reciting the litany of St. Joseph or some other custom be sure to continue it. If you don't, create a new custom. Stories of St. Joseph in the New Testament are rare but interesting. Take some time to read and discuss them with the family.

Trace the family tree of Joseph and Jesus in the Gospel according to Matthew 1:1-16. In Matthew 2, read about Joseph's dream, the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt and about their return.

In Luke 1, find out about Joseph in the story about the "Birth of Jesus Foretold." In Luke 2, read about Joseph's involvement in these stories: The Birth of Jesus, The Shepherds Visit, The Presentation of Jesus.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

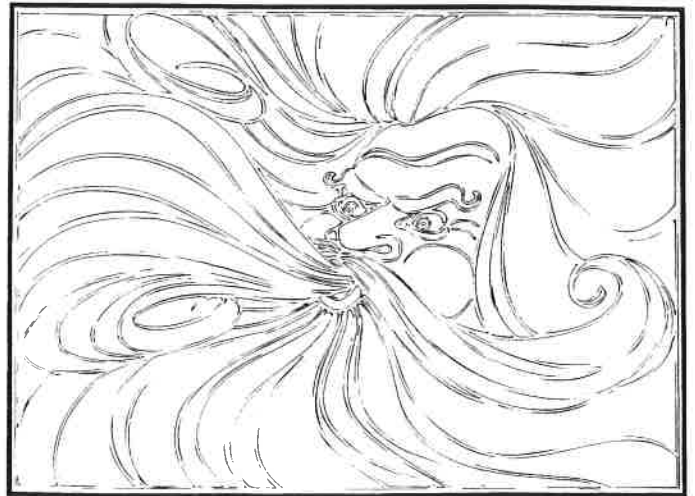
St. Patrick's Day, March 17, is one of those holy days that has become a holiday. Many of the celebrations of this day, such as parades and parties are secular. It is a day of Irish pride and a day when one hears "Everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day!"



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MARCH FACTS

- The name for the month of March is taken from the Roman the god of war, Mars.
- In England and its colonies March 25 was the first day of the new year until 1725.
- Easter Day is currently determined as the first Sunday after the full moon on or after March 21.
- March is National Peanut Month.



THE ANNUNCIATION

The feast of the Annunciation, on March 25, honors the Good News of our salvation. The angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she was to become the Mother of Jesus. The Annunciation commemorates an event that changed the course of history. In remembrance of the visit God's messenger Gabriel paid to Mary, read the Bible story (Luke 1: 26-38) to the family before dinner on March 25.

WORDS OF WISDOM

It isn't the mountains ahead that wear you out. It's the grain of sand in your shoe.

Anonymous

There is no good in arguing with the inevitable. The only argument available with an east wind is to put on your overcoat.

James Russell Lowell

St. Patrick

St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland. Hundreds of years ago he brought Catholicism to that small island country. There are many statues of St. Patrick in Ireland. He started over three hundred Churches there.

Many legends have grown up about St. Patrick. One explains why there are no big snakes in Ireland. The story is told about how St. Patrick charmed all of them and led them down to the sea where they drowned.

Another story describes how the shamrock became the national flower of Ireland. The tradition says that when St. Patrick came to Ireland he brought the clover-like flower with him. St. Patrick, who was a bishop, used the shamrock to teach people about the Blessed Trinity.

The feast of St. Patrick is celebrated on March 17. In many places, including the United States, there are parades and parties to celebrate.

Gaelic

Most of the Irish speak the English language. About 5 percent speak another language called Gaelic.

"How are you?" is *Conat ta tu?* in Gaelic. *Salan agat* means "good-bye".

Are You Irish?

Millions of Americans have Irish ancestors. Here is a list of the most popular names in Ireland.

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Murphy | 6. O'Brien | 11. Reilly | 16. Kennedy |
| 2. Kelly | 7. Byrne | 12. Doyle | 17. Lynch |
| 3. Sullivan | 8. Ryan | 13. McCarthy | 18. Murray |
| 4. Walsh | 9. O'Connor | 14. Gallagher | 19. Quinn |
| 5. Smith | 10. O'Neill | 15. Doherty | 20. Stewart |

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An Irish Blessing

May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always at your
back.
May the sun shine warm upon
your face.
May the rain fall soft upon your
fields.
And, until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm
of His hand.

A Celtic Resting Prayer

God shield the house, the
fire, the hearth,
Everyone who dwells herein
tonight.
Shield me and my beloved
family,
Preserve us from violence
and from harm;
Preserve us from enemies in
the night.
For the sake of the Son of
Mary Mother.
Bless us and protect us one
and all
in this place, and in every
place wherein they they
dwell tonight
On this night and on every
night. Amen.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

Irish Blessing

May the sun always shine
On your window pane.
May a rainbow be certain
To follow each rain.
May the hand of a friend
Always be near you.
May God fill your heart
With gladness to cheer you.



An Old Irish Blessing

May the good saints protect
you
And bless you today.
And may trouble ignore you
Each step of the way.

God Bless You

With the first light of sun,
God bless you.
When the day is done,
God bless you.
In your smiles and tears,
God bless you.
Through each day of your
years,
God bless you.



An Irish Blessing

May the road rise to meet
you.
May the wind be always at
your back.
May the sun shine warm
upon your face.
May the rains fall soft upon
your fields.
And, until we meet again,
May God hold you in the
palm of His hand.

Blessing

May your blessings be many,
The sun shine above,
Your life bring you gladness,
And always—
God's love.