



THE NATURE OF GOD

DURING this Covid season, I know many people have found creative and new ways to learn more from the Bible, perhaps read more Christian books or, use the Morning Prayer readings and the Lent Reflections I provide – thanks for the feedback to the latter – always helpful to have.

I noticed on Facebook the other day that someone had spent time each day reflecting on some of the names given for God in the Bible.

Here are just a few.

Names of our God

Abba - *Father*
Adonai - *LORD*
Alpha & Omega - *Beginning & End*
Christos - *The Anointed One*
El Deah - *God Of Knowledge*
El Elyon - *The God Most High*
El-Olam - *The Everlasting God*
El Roi - *The God Who Sees*
El Shaddai - *God Almighty*
Elohim - *The Creator*
Yahweh - *I Am*
Yahweh-Bore - *The LORD Creator*
Yahweh-Nissi - *The LORD My Banner*
Yahweh Rapha - *The LORD That Healeth*
Yahweh-Shalom - *The LORD Is Peace*
Yahweh-Shammah - *The LORD Is There*
Yahweh-Tsabbaoth - *The LORD Of Hosts*
Yahweh-Tsidkenu - *The LORD Our Righteousness*
Yahweh-Jireh - *The LORD Will Provide*

You too might like to take one a day and ask how that name for God might change the way you think about God, and widen your understanding/appreciation?

PRAYER TOPICS

Saturday – for US/Chinese relations
Sunday – for the people of Myanmar
Monday – for those working on the Covid-jab delays
Tuesday – for the lonely and isolated
Wednesday – those at university/college
Thursday –for grandparents who have not seen family
Friday – strength for NHS workers

ST PATRICK'S DAY

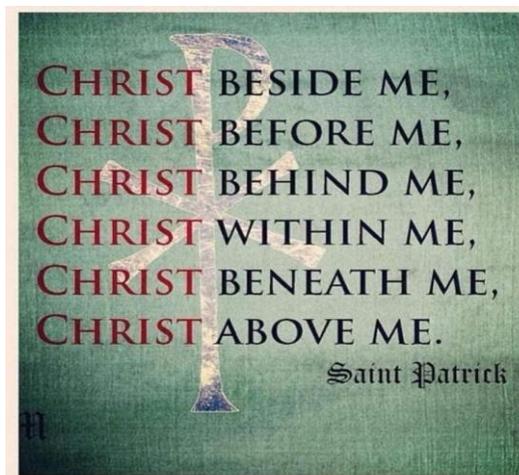
This week, millions celebrated St Patrick, patron saint of Ireland. But I wonder what people really know of him?

St. Patrick is one of Christianity's most widely known figures. But for all of his prevalence in culture—namely the holiday held on the day of his death that bears his name—his life remains somewhat of a mystery.

Many of the stories traditionally associated with St. Patrick, including the famous account of his banishing all the snakes from Ireland, are false, the products of hundreds of years of exaggerated storytelling.

St. Patrick was born in Britain—not Ireland—to wealthy parents near the end of the fourth century. He is believed to have died on March 17, around 460 AD. Although his father was a Christian deacon, it has been suggested that he probably took on the role because of tax incentives and there is no evidence that Patrick came from a particularly religious family.

At the age of 16, Patrick was taken prisoner by a group of Irish raiders who were attacking his family's estate. They transported him to Ireland where he spent six years in captivity. (There is some dispute over where this captivity took place. Although many believe he was taken to live in Mount Slemish in County Antrim, it is more likely that he was held in County Mayo near Killala.)



During this time, he worked as a shepherd, outdoors and away from people. Lonely and afraid, he turned to his religion for solace, becoming a devout Christian. (It is also believed that Patrick first began to dream of converting the Irish people to Christianity during his captivity.)

After more than six years as a prisoner, Patrick escaped. According to his writing, a voice—which he believed to be God’s—spoke to him in a dream, telling him it was time to leave Ireland.

To do so, Patrick walked nearly 200 miles from County Mayo, where it is believed he was held, to the Irish coast. After escaping to Britain, Patrick reported that he experienced a second revelation—an angel in a dream tells him to return to Ireland as a missionary. Soon after, Patrick began religious training, a course of study that lasted more than 15 years.

After his ordination as a priest, he was sent to Ireland with a dual mission: to minister to Christians already living in Ireland and to begin to convert the Irish. (*Interestingly, this mission contradicts the widely held notion that Patrick introduced Christianity to Ireland.*)

Familiar with the Irish language and culture, Patrick chose to incorporate traditional ritual into his lessons of Christianity instead of attempting to eradicate native Irish beliefs. For instance, he used bonfires to celebrate Easter since the Irish were used to honouring their gods with fire. He also superimposed a sun, a powerful Irish symbol, onto the Christian cross to create what is now called a Celtic cross, so that veneration of the symbol would seem more natural to the Irish.

Although there were a small number of Christians on the island when Patrick arrived, most Irish practiced a nature-based pagan religion. The Irish culture centered around a rich tradition of oral legend and myth. When this is considered, it is no surprise that the story of Patrick’s life became exaggerated over the centuries—spinning exciting tales to remember history has always been a part of the Irish way of life.

Finally, He may be known as the patron saint of Ireland, but Patrick was never actually canonized by the Catholic Church. This is simply due to the era he lived in. During the first millennium, there was no formal canonization process in the Catholic Church. After becoming a priest and helping to spread Christianity throughout Ireland, Patrick was likely proclaimed a saint by popular acclaim.

SUNDAY BIBLE READINGS

My reflections, in the same style as the ones I have been doing for each day of Lent via email, is attached for Sunday. Here are the Bible readings: -

Psalms 51: 1-17

Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the

stain of my sins. ²Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. ³For I recognize my rebellion; it haunts me day and night. ⁴Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against Me is just. For I was born a sinner – yes from the moment my mother conceived me. ⁵But you desire honesty from the womb,^[a] teaching me wisdom even there. ⁶Purify me from my sins,^[c] and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. ⁷Oh, give me back my joy again; you have broken me— now let me rejoice. ⁸Don’t keep looking at my sins. Remove the stain of my guilt. ⁹Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me. ¹⁰Do not banish me from your presence, and don’t take your Holy Spirit^[d] from me. ¹¹Restore to me the joy of your salvation and make me willing to obey you. ¹²Then I will teach your ways to rebels, and they will return to you. ¹³Forgive me for shedding blood, O God who saves; then I will joyfully sing of your forgiveness. ¹⁴Unseal my lips, O Lord, that my mouth may praise you. ¹⁵You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering. ¹⁶The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God.

Hebrews 5: 5-10

⁵That is why Christ did not honour himself by assuming he could become High Priest. No, he was chosen by God, who said to him, “You are my Son. Today I have become your Father.”^[a]

⁶And in another passage God said to him, “You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.”^[b]

⁷While Jesus was here on earth, he offered prayers and pleadings, with a loud cry and tears, to the one who could rescue him from death. And God heard his prayers because of his deep reverence for God. ⁸Even though Jesus was God’s Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. ⁹In this way, God qualified him as a perfect High Priest, and he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him. ¹⁰And God designated him to be a High Priest in the order of Melchizedek.

John 12: 20-33

²⁰Some Greeks who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover celebration ²¹paid a visit to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee. They said, “Sir, we want to meet Jesus.” ²²Philip told Andrew about it, and they went together to ask Jesus.

²³Jesus replied, “Now the time has come for the Son of Man^[a] to enter into his glory. ²⁴I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives. ²⁵Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care

nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity. ²⁶ Anyone who wants to serve me must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honour anyone who serves me.

²⁷ "Now my soul is deeply troubled. Should I pray, 'Father, save me from this hour'? But this is the very reason I came! ²⁸ Father, bring glory to your name."

Then a voice spoke from heaven, saying, "I have already brought glory to my name, and I will do so again." ²⁹ When the crowd heard the voice, some thought it was thunder, while others declared an angel had spoken to him.

³⁰ Then Jesus told them, "The voice was for your benefit, not mine. ³¹ The time for judging this world has come, when Satan, the ruler of this world, will be cast out. ³² And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." ³³ He said this to indicate how he was going to die.

THE VICAR AND HIS TYPO'S

FOR those who often smile at the vicar's typo's. you might like this!

Church bulletin board

The following appeared in church bulletins or were announced at church services.

The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'	The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.
Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.	At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.
Don't let worry kill you off – let the Church help.	The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.
Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again', giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.	This evening at 7pm there will be hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.
For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.	Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7pm. Please use the back door.
The Rector will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing 'Break Forth Into Joy'.	The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new tithing campaign slogan last Sunday: 'I Upped My Pledge – Up Yours.'
Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.	This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.
Potluck supper Sunday at 5pm – prayer and medication to follow.	

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