

# “A Great Cloud of Witnesses”

A Historical Series of the Murals on the Walls of Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian Church

## Saint Patrick

*Fifth Century Ireland*

St. Patrick was born to a Roman nobleman in 387 A.D. in present-day Scotland. When he was sixteen, he was captured by Irish raiders and sold as a slave to an Irish chieftain. He was a slave for six years, tending sheep, and during this time he learned the language and practices of his masters. He escaped back to Britain, and was ordained a priest.

He helped evangelize Britain, but was sent by Pope Celestine I to preach the Gospel to pagan Ireland around the year 433 A.D. He converted numerous local chieftains, but his greatest triumph occurred on Easter Sunday in 433 A.D. On that date, the supreme monarch of Ireland summoned all the chieftains to Tara to celebrate a feast. St. Patrick showed up, and against the strenuous efforts of the Druids, he preached the faith to all assembled and received permission to spread the Gospel throughout Ireland. Shortly afterwards, the brother of the monarch was publicly baptized, and this date, April 5th, is considered the beginning of the baptism of Ireland. By the end of his life, St. Patrick had preached the Gospel to the entire island and had consecrated over 350 bishops. St. Patrick died in 461 A.D., and is the patron saint of Ireland.



A famous prayer written by him is called the “St. Patrick’s Breastplate.” A portion of this prayer is the following:

Christ shield me today. Against poison, against burning, against drowning, against wounding, so that there may come to me abundance of reward. Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.

**His Feast day is March 17.**

This series will feature the murals painted on the walls of Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian Church along with history and commentary. You can also find this series on our website at [www.hcscchurch.org](http://www.hcscchurch.org).  
*Historical commentary researched and prepared by Anthony Lickteig (Seminarian).*