

# Living Faith @



Dear Friends, Every year at this time I get excited as there is always something to get ready for. We begin the journey to Lent. We anticipate the first day of Spring. There are holidays to observe such as Martin Luther King day, St. Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day.

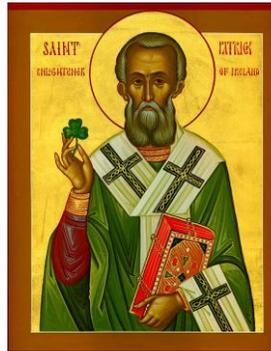
These are all perfect times to gather the family to make memories and share faith stories. Included in this special issues are some ideas and information about ways to celebrated these holidays..

*Elayne Werges, Diaconal Minister*

## Why a Shamrock?

Patrick used the shamrock to explain the Trinity, and has been associated with him and the Irish since that time. Do some crafts with the kids to celebrate the day.

- ♣ Use shamrocks as decorations. Talk about the three leaves and how they are shaped like hearts.
- ♣ Talk about the Trinity-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit like Patrick did.
- ♣ Make a card to give to a friend. Trace heart shaped cookie cutters into the shape of a leaf. Paint the leaves.
- ♣ Make giant shamrock cookies. Frost them with green frosting and sprinkles.



SAINTS & SINNERS!



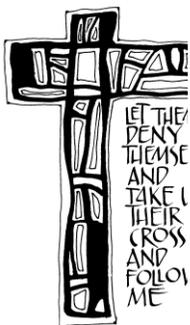
## St. Patrick Day ~ March 17

St. Patrick's Day is about more than wearing green and making shamrocks. It is a day that celebrates the life of St. Patrick. He was born in Scotland around 387AD and died on March 17, 461. Patrick had a difficult childhood. When he was 14 he was kidnapped and taken to Ireland where he was forced into slavery. He took care of the sheep (who else took care of sheep?). During this time he learned about God and his faith grew. He learned to pray and prayed daily to be released.

When he was twenty he had a dream that he would escape and leave Ireland by going to the coast. He did escape and when he reached the coast he found some sailors who took him back to Britain, where he reunited with his family.

He had another dream in which the people of Ireland were calling out to him "We beg you, holy youth, to come and walk among us once more."

He began his studies for the priesthood and later He was ordained as a priest. Later, Patrick became a bishop, and was sent to take the Gospel to Ireland. Patrick began preaching the Gospel throughout Ireland, converting many. He and his disciples preached and converted thousands and began building churches all over the country. Kings, their families, and entire kingdoms converted to Christianity when hearing Patrick's message. He worked many miracles and wrote of his love for God in Confessions. After years of living in poverty, traveling and enduring much suffering he died March 17, 461. Patrick was a humble, pious, gentle man, whose love and total devotion to and trust in God should be a shining example to each of us.



This information is prepared for you by the  
**Northwestern Iowa Synod-Home Life Network**

for use by families and local congregations.

For more ideas about how you can pass on faith in your homes go to:

[http://www.neiasynod.org/synod\\_resources/YouthFamilyResources.asp](http://www.neiasynod.org/synod_resources/YouthFamilyResources.asp)

If you have a comment or suggestion for future newsletters or are interested in joining the Home-Life Network please contact the synod office – Look for us on Facebook and Pinterest!

# Decorate for the Holiday...

## What You Need:

Scraps of colored paper and tissue  
Masking tape

Clear contact paper  
scissors

## What to Do:

1. Cut two- 12 inch pieces of clear contact paper.
2. Remove the paper backing from the one of the sheets of contact paper. Tape onto a window.
3. Take scrapes of paper and tissue paper. Let your child place the paper onto the contact paper. When it is filled up, remove the paper from the second piece of contact paper and place carefully over the second. Smooth out any bubbles.
4. Cut into the shape you desire...hearts, shamrocks, crosses, or whatever. Display on a window. Make other shapes out of the scrapes. While you are doing this, talk about the shape and what it means to living a life of faith.

Find more about this idea and many other really cool ideas on the blog:

[www.handsonaswegrow.com](http://www.handsonaswegrow.com). The blog is written by Jamie Reimer, a very talented Mom and writer from Elkader, Iowa.



## St Valentine~February 14

The origin of St. Valentine remains a mystery. One opinion is that he was a Roman martyred for refusing to give up his Christian faith. Other historians hold that St. Valentine was a temple priest jailed for defiance during the reign of Claudius. Whoever he was, Valentine really existed because archaeologists have unearthed a Roman catacomb and an ancient church dedicated to Saint Valentine. In 496 AD Pope Gelasius marked February 14th as a celebration in honor of his martyrdom.

## Table Talk....

Conversation Starters to use when you gather for a meal, as you are driving in the car, or as you are preparing for bed.

- ✓ What are your blessings today/this week.
- ✓ What signs of Spring did you see today?
- ✓ What can we pray for today/this week
- ✓ Tell the story of a great person from history....like St Patrick, St Valentine, or Martin Luther King!
- ✓ Share one piece of useless information you learned today/this week
- ✓ Share a Memory about one of the upcoming days you will celebrate.

The first representation of Saint Valentine appeared in a The Nuremberg Chronicle, a great illustrated book printed in 1493. Some sources say that he was caught marrying Christian couples and aiding any Christians who were being persecuted under Emperor Claudius in Rome [when helping them was considered a crime], Valentinus was arrested and imprisoned. Claudius took a liking to this prisoner -- until Valentinus made a strategic error: he tried to convert the Emperor -- whereupon this priest was condemned to death.

Saints are not supposed to rest in peace; they're expected to keep busy: to perform miracles, to intercede. Being in jail or dead is no excuse for non-performance of the supernatural. One legend says, while awaiting his execution, Valentinus restored the sight of his jailer's blind daughter. Another legend says, on the eve of his death, he penned a farewell note to the jailer's daughter, signing it, "From your Valentine."

St. Valentine is named the Patron Saint of engaged couples, bee keepers, epilepsy, fainting, greetings, happy marriages, love, lovers, plague, travelers, young people. He is represented in pictures with birds and roses.

