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SAINT PATRICK AND THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN IRELAND

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In the history of the Roman Catholic Church there were enough representatives of church hierarchy who have been beatified and canonized due to their educational and missionary work. Antonio di Padova, Francis of Assisi, Padre Pio, mother Theresa from Calcutta, Pope John Paul II can serve as examples. Due to their spiritual and educational activities word of preaching, knowledge and books have extended in Europe and even worldwide.

Ireland, where nowadays Catholic Church holds strong position, didn't stand aside from religious and educational activities of missionaries. Among the firstborns of the Irish Catholic church there was Patrick – a missionary and a preacher who is worshipped today by Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran churches and also by Russian Orthodox church in some countries.

Childhood and boyhood of Saint Patrick were unfavorable. At the age of 14 he was kidnapped by Irish pirates and had been taken from Britain to Ireland. There he became shepherd and met druids. At that time Ireland was pagan country. Patrick, being Catholic, later wrote the following: «The love of God and his fear grew in me more and more, as did the faith, and my soul was roused, so that, in a single day, I have said as many as a hundred prayers and in the night, nearly the same. I prayed in the woods and on the mountain, even before dawn. I felt no hurt from the snow or ice or rain» [1].

Having released from the captivity, Patrick runs to Slane where the first legend of calling of priesthood takes place. The legend says that he has met one of leaders of druids who tried to kill him. After Divine intervention Patrick could transform the leader and started to preach the Sacred Gospel all around Ireland [2]. As a result of evangelization Patrick decided to build a church for commission of Sacred Sacraments. He was given a barn, which he had rebuilt into his first church.

Saint Patrick's mission to Ireland to have lasted about 30 years and its impact was immense. A.D. 432 is the date traditionally given for the start of his mission. It is probable that there was a small number of Christians in the country before this time, as Ireland had considerable trading links with both Roman Britain and continental Europe [3, p. 28].

Saint Patrick's major activity was preaching of Christianity among druids and their confidants. He, like Jesus, with his disciples walked everywhere and proclaimed the Holy Gospel and the word of God. Saint Patrick is considered to be the first Catholic missionary on the territory of Ireland. Due to his activities construction of Catholic temples, formation of church parishes and parish schools for children had begun. Day of his death which is on March, 17 is a holiday of adoption of Christianity and a national day of Ireland. Due to his merits Saint Patrick is esteemed not only in this country, but also in many other countries of the world. This holiday is celebrated not only in Ireland, but also in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, Australia, Japan, Singapore, etc. In recent years it has gained popularity in Belarus, too. Parades whose participants wear green clothes that symbolizes shamrock which Patrick used as an example for sermons to explain the doctrine of Trinity take place this day. Catholic church demonstrates loyal relation to this holiday, which is celebrated during the Lent and allows moderate consuming of alcohol.

So not only is Saint Patrick's Confession the only contemporary narrative telling of the arrival of Christianity to Ireland, it also marks the beginning of documented history, a history that was to be developed and sustained by the monastic church for the next 1000 years [3, p. 30].

Saint Patrick is a vivid example of whole-hearted service to Christianity. His are being studied at Catholic theological academies, universities, colleges and parish schools. His merits before the Roman Catholic Church and Ireland are included to the list of exploits of the canonized saints.

Literature

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ВЗАИМООТНОШЕНИЯ ПАПЫ ПИЯ XII С НАЦИСТСКОЙ ГЕРМАНИЕЙ В ПЕРИОД ВТОРОЙ МИРОВОЙ ВОЙНЫ

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С избранием на пост Святого Петра в Ватикане кардинала Эудженио Марии Джузеппе Джованни Пачелли (после интронизации папа Пий XII) Римско-Католическая церковь приняла ряд изменений в своей Конституции, причиной которых было обострение международных отношений, особенно между нацистской Германией и Советским Союзом.