

# St. Patrick's Day



- 1 Do you know what this plant is?  
Can you guess how St. Patrick used it to introduce Christianity to Ireland?
- 2 Read about St. Patrick's Day, and check your answers.

St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland. He introduced Christianity to the Irish in the fifth Century, illustrating the Holy Trinity with a three-leaved shamrock. There are parties and parades all over the world to celebrate his feast day, on the 17<sup>th</sup> March.

There are an estimated 80 million people worldwide who can claim Irish descent. In the 19th Century over one million people left Ireland because of hunger and poverty. Many crossed the ocean, emigrating to North America and becoming part of the community. At least twenty five past U.S. Presidents are of Irish descent, and every one since 1961. The flag of Montreal, Canada, has a shamrock in one of its corners.



On St. Patrick's Day people pin shamrock to their clothes and dress in green, Ireland's national colour. It is a public holiday in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, as well as, of course, in Ireland. It is also a holiday on the tiny Caribbean island of Montserrat, where Irish emigrants settled in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The biggest parade is in New York City, with 150,000 participants and 2 million spectators! In Chicago they add an orange chemical substance to the river – the chemical reaction turns the river green!

*Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig, Blessings of St. Patrick's Day!*

### Word check

|          |                    |
|----------|--------------------|
| to claim | <i>sostenere</i>   |
| at least | <i>almeno</i>      |
| descent  | <i>discendenza</i> |
| to pin   | <i>attaccare</i>   |
| to pinch | <i>pizzicare</i>   |



- 3 Read the text again and answer the following questions.

When did St. Patrick introduce Christianity to Ireland?  
*In the fifth century.*

- 1 When is St. Patrick's Day?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Why did many people emigrate from Ireland in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 When was the last U.S. President who was not of Irish descent?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 In what three countries is St. Patrick's Day a public holiday?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 What colour is the substance they add to Chicago's river?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Which is the biggest St. Patrick's Day parade in the world?  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 4 **K ES** Write a short paragraph (35-50 words) about the celebrations for the patron saint of your town or city. Use the following points to help you.

- Who is the patron saint of your town?
- What did he / she do?
- What date do you celebrate his / her feast day?
- What happens in the town?
- What do you do?

