

MARCH 2026

Last month, people celebrated Valentine's Day. This month, many will celebrate St. Patrick's Day. How do I know? I see what's in the stores. The flowers, candy, and cards have been quickly marked down to 50% off and pushed into the corner while sham-rocks, leprechauns, and everything green take center stage. I'm not saying this is bad or wrong or that it irritates me, I'm simply observing what I see. And these things can be fun. Couples going on a dates and expressing their love. Friends getting together, pinching each other, and maybe even having a beer - even a beer that's green (which doesn't feel right for some reason.)

Yes, these particular days bring folks together to share something whether it be love or friendship or heritage. Yet we should also remember that Valentine and Patrick were real people. They were Christians. The days that we celebrate which bear their names are the days that they were gathered into eternity with our Lord. For St. Valentine in the 3rd century, after being imprisoned for proclaiming the Gospel, he was martyred by beheading on February 14. Because he would not deny Christ, we commemorate the day of his execution for the faith and entrance into heaven. St. Patrick was a missionary to Ireland in the 5th century. He strongly defended the doctrine of the Holy Trinity at a time when it was not popular to do so. He organized Christian communities and continued to spread the Gospel until his death on March 17.

These days that are celebrated among us aren't just days but real people for whom we give thanks to God. They bore witness to the truth of Christ and died in the faith. During Lent, we can think about them and their example and pray for our Lord to keep us, too, faithful unto death. During Lent, we want to reflect on our lives and identify, like Valentine, what we are loving most - the things of our God or the things of the world. During Lent, we are to take heed to see if the Gospel which Patrick proclaimed is having its way with us or are we tucking it away for times when it feels convenient. Lord, help us!

Use the season of Lent reorder your loves, your confession of the faith, and anchor you in Christ who is the same yesterday and today and forever. He is the same Lord of Valentine and Patrick as He is for you. By His Spirit He will give you strength to say no to self and yes to His love. He will give you courage to proclaim and confess His mercies which are new every morning.

"Return to the Lord your God," God says through the prophet Joel at the beginning of Lent (Joel 2:13). "Return with all your heart" (Joel 2:12). Help us, O Lord, to arrange our live and loves according to your good and gracious will that we may come to the feast of Easter in sincerity and truth.

A Blessed Lent to you,
Pastor Suggitt

LIFE QUOTE

Never will a time come when the most marvelous recent invention is as marvelous as a newborn baby.

A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

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