

March 17, 1980

you the one would betray your Lord? And he says, and with that Judas looks up at the Lord and says, aw, blimey, Governor, what kind of a bloke do you take me for? With that, I give you Monsignor Flynn.

MONSIGNOR FLYNN. Thank you. As Senator Murphy told you I am an Irishman by birth, an American by adoption, a Nebraskan by my own free choice and I have truly enjoyed the good life of Nebraska for forty years and I did not come through Boston when I came here. I came directly from Ireland to serve the people in Nebraska. Year after year on this date the memory of St. Patrick is renewed in millions of grateful hearts and minds. The contribution that he made to humanity and to Christianity in the fourth century has perpetuated itself over fifteen hundred years among all his followers throughout the world. He was born in France. That is controversial but I believe he was born in France. His parents were killed and two of his sisters imprisoned during an era of persecution and then he himself became the victim in the hands of Irish pirates who captured him and sold him as a slave when he was only fifteen years old. As a slave he tended flocks of sheep on the rolling hillsides overlooking the Irish Sea. By night and day he prayed to God for help and one day he saw a ship coming over the tumbling waves to the Irish seacoast and secretly he went aboard and was able to return to his own land. Coming back to Ireland as a missionary he worked for forty years christianizing the Irish pagans and if you knew as I know the Irish, St. Patrick had his hands full in carrying out this mission. He died at the age of a hundred and ten leaving a rich heritage of faith that continues to influence and enrich the lives of all his followers. If St. Patrick lived in our society today how would we characterize him? We would see him as a man of great virtue, of mercy and compassion. He would face the problems of today with determination, to turn them into opportunities for tomorrow. He would enter fields of activity that would touch the lives of many people and influence them for even a better and a happier way of life. We could see St. Patrick as a man of great character, a man with a firm dedication to truthfulness, honor, integrity and generosity. We could see him as one who knew what he had to do and was determined to succeed in doing it, as one whose firm trust in God increased his faith in himself and as one who neglected nothing but constantly disciplined his own mind, his own heart, who persevered and hoped through a sense of dedication and love and duty to God and to his own conscience. We can see him as an upright, intelligent, skillful, strong and courageous agent of God's love, peace and goodness for all people regardless of race, color or creed. Thank you.