

DETAILS



Saint Patrick the Forgiver The History and Legends of Ireland's Bishop

February 21, 2023 | \$18, 32 pages, hardcover | 978-1-5140-0724-2

Discover IVP Kids and share with children ages four to eight the things that matter to God.

Ned Bustard Carries the IVP Kids Imprint Forward

Ned Bustard launched our IVP Kids Imprint in October of 2021 with *Saint Nicholas the Giftgiver*. His latest addition to the line, *Saint Patrick the Forgiver*, brings our total to eight picture books for children ages four to eight with four more contracted to release in 2023 and 2024.

- *Saint Nicholas the Giftgiver: The History and Legends of the Real Santa Claus* written and illustrated by Ned Bustard
- *The O in Hope: A Poem of Wonder* by Luci Shaw, illustrated by Ned Bustard
- *The Celebration Place: God's Plan for a Delightfully Diverse Church* by Dorena Williamson, illustrated by Erin Bennett Banks
- *Isaiah and the Worry Pack: Learning to Trust God with All Our Fears* by Ruth Goring, illustrated by Pamela C. Rice
- *Josey Johnson's Hair and the Holy Spirit* by Esau McCaulley, illustrated by LaTonya Jackson
- *Little Prayers for Ordinary Days* by Katy Bowser Hutson, Flo Paris Oakes, and Tish Harrison Warren; illustrated by Liita Forsyth
- *All Will Be Well: Learning to Trust God's Love* by Lacy Finn Borgo, illustrated by Rebecca Evans (October 2022)
- *God, Right Here* by Kara Lawler, illustrated by Jennie Poh (Spring 2023)
- *When I Go to Church, I Belong* by Elrena Evans, illustrated by Rebecca Evans (Fall 2023)
- *Birth of the Chosen One* by Terry Wildman (Fall 2023)
- *Zion Loves to See* by Terence Lester with Zion Lester (Winter 2024)

[IVP Kids](#) is an imprint that presents themes such as justice, spiritual formation, and discipleship, which have been cornerstones of IVP throughout its nearly seventy-five years. Terumi Echols, IVP president and publisher, said, "This line is a much-needed resource for parents who are reading to and teaching their children about who they are as Christians, their place in God's kingdom, and the impact they can have on our culture."

Saint Patrick the Forgiver teaches families about the fascinating life of the real Saint Patrick and helps them discover a remarkable story of love and forgiveness along the way. Did you know that Patrick—the greatest bishop of Ireland—wasn't Irish? Told in rollicking rhyme, this retelling also includes tools to help parents engage in conversation about the content.

*Hello, my name is Patrick.
You may have heard my story.
I walked the span of Ireland
to tell of God's great glory.
And with a wee green shamrock
I shared of the Three-in-One:
our God—the blessed mystery—
Father, Spirit, and the Son.*

Ned continues to use his signature linocut artwork in *Saint Patrick the Forgiver*. This detailed, hands-on technique is one that involves chiseling the images into linoleum or wood, inking, and then stamping them onto the page.



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Ned Bustard is a graphic designer, a children's book illustrator, an author, and a printmaker. As the creative director for Square Halo Books, Inc. and curator of the Square Halo Gallery, Ned has lectured at colleges, schools, churches, and conferences. His work is found in numerous titles including *Saint Nicholas the Giftgiver*, *The O in Hope, Revealed: A Storybook Bible for Grown-Ups*, and *Every Moment Holy*. He lives with his family in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

An Interview About the Real Saint Patrick

You also wrote and illustrated [Saint Nicholas the Giftgiver](#) (October 2021). How was your experience the same or different as you wrote and illustrated *Saint Patrick the Forgiver*?

Ned Bustard: I started working on the Saint Nicholas story over twenty years ago for my family, and it later found more life within our community of church friends. I worked and reworked it little by little throughout that time. Feedback would come back from other writers and also friends. *Saint Patrick the Forgiver* was written in much less time—less than a year! Like *Saint Nicholas the Giftgiver*, it went through rounds and rounds of changes to reach its final form. One of the most enjoyable revisions occurred when I sat down with my friend Robert Bigley, and he helped me put the story into the form of an Irish jig. Rob and I have collaborated on several hymns and carols over the years, and our working sessions are always filled with laughter and rabbit trails. In one way, I have been working on *Saint Patrick* longer than *Saint Nicholas* because I have been studying and delving into Celtic Christianity since a short-term mission trip in Ireland I was part of during college.

Illustrating the books was almost identical between the two books. With both books I created hand-carved linocut prints and colored them on the computer. Both books are visually informed by medieval woodcuts, but in *Saint Patrick* I leaned heavily into Celtic art. I also included in *Saint Patrick* representations of actual Irish art and architecture.

How does your study of church history play into these books?

Ned: Growing up in the church and being the grandson of a church minister gave me an early love for church history that was developed in high school by Robert Walton, a teacher and church historian I fondly remember. My wife is a history teacher, and we love wandering around museums, old castles and cathedrals, and ruined monasteries. Two Septembers ago we went to Northern Ireland and enjoyed taking in the history there. One day we drove to the village of Kells, where we walked around a graveyard that featured actual Celtic high crosses. We were in awe of the magnitude of time and history in this place. My foray into church-history children's books began in 2010 when Stephen J. Nichols and I began our series of ABC books beginning with *The Church History ABCs: Augustine and 25 Other Heroes of the Faith*.

Why do you think Saint Patrick is so often overlooked or misunderstood?

Ned: Historically, Protestants have been disinterested in the study of or praise of saints. When many English people came over to America, especially the Puritans, they did not remember saints' days or other holy days. For community gatherings, they noted civic events. I think this influenced how many American Protestant Christians thought of church history and important early church fathers and church planters like Saint Patrick. Even our friends in Northern Ireland don't know much about him. When I was working on the book, I asked for fact checks and insights and was told that they knew very little about him, even though his ministry began in Northern Ireland. In their defense, he lived there over a thousand years ago!

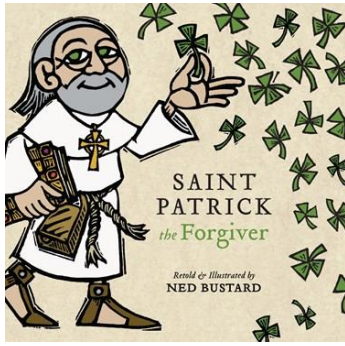


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Q & A



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"I can't wait to recommend and gift this beautiful book on the life of Saint Patrick. So many children (and adults) celebrate Saint Patrick's Day without knowing the faith and fortitude of this great saint. This treasure is the perfect collection of illustrations and verse incorporating Saint Patrick facts and legends. I will be recommending and gifting this to the grownups in my life too!"

—Lisa Landis Blowers, host and producer of *Kids Cookie Break* radio program

In your opinion, what are some of the most interesting stories or facts about Saint Patrick?

Ned: The most interesting fact about him is that he was a Roman citizen who grew up in Britannia, and he returned to preach the gospel to the people who had enslaved him. He loved them and served them until he died.

That is beyond my imagination. It is also interesting that in a museum in Ireland, someone can go and look at the bell Saint Patrick carried and used to call people to worship services. This speaks to me that Saint Patrick was a real person doing the work of God's kingdom. He wasn't a leprechaun or a fairy or someone like Paul Bunyan (to think of American lore).

What makes all this more fun, both in the lives of Saint Nicholas and Saint Patrick, are the wondrous and fantastical legends that grew up around them. Their own lives were pretty story-worthy, but add in all the legends, and they both make for such interesting reads.

Why should Saint Patrick be important to us?

Ned: Just reading and meditating on the words of Saint Patrick's Breastplate (although not actually written by him) is a rich, faith-building experience. It's a wonderful thing to share with young people.

Saint Patrick gives us examples of what it looks like to live a life of forgiveness. He also shows us what it looks like to give up our lives for the kingdom of God. He is a model to how God calls us to obey him in hard things, but that because God is faithful in his presence and won't leave or forsake us, we can be courageous to obey him in these hard things. He also shows us the importance of working for justice and the needs of those who can't speak for themselves. I didn't get to cover this in the book, but two documents have come down to us through history. One is his *Confessions* and the other is his *Letter to Coroticus* (a denunciation of British mistreatment of Irish Christians).

Saint Patrick is a bridge to our culture across which we can walk to discuss what real Christianity looks like. Many people may not have heard of Saint John or Saint Matthew, but they will have heard of Saint Patrick. For those with children in their lives, they can honor Saint Patrick's Day as a day to celebrate with Irish food and music while focusing on God's work through the life of Saint Patrick, which is why this book can be helpful.

How do you hope readers (parents, grandparents, kids) interact with the story of *Saint Patrick the Forgiver*?

Ned: I recommend listening to good Irish jigs and eating Irish soda bread while also reading this book. Enjoy the pictures. Maybe it will start a discovery of how God ends up using the Irish monasteries to save much of Western civilization (see Thomas Cahill's *How the Irish Saved Civilization*) and its writings and inspire you to look over the Book of Kells and how beautiful it is (created by monks). I don't want readers to ask the question, "How can you be like Saint Patrick?" We are each called to follow God in different ways. I do want readers to ask the question, "How do we see God working through someone who trusted and obeyed him?" I want them to get excited by what they see happening in the story of Saint Patrick's life but not feel burdened to be him.

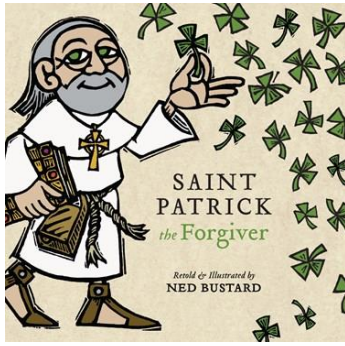


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For the homeschooler or the child who is caught up with all of his or her homework, I'd be delighted if they did a deep dive into legends around Saint Patrick and read *The Life and Acts of St. Patrick* by Jocelin, particularly chapters 81, 85, 150 and 170.

Or investigate some of the extra things I snuck into the illustrations in this book, including:

- the bell of Saint Patrick (and its shrine)
- the Boa Island figure
- the Poulnabrone Dolmen
- the Giant's Causeway
- Brian Boru's harp
- the bell tower of Nendrum Monastery
- Saint Patrick's High Cross
- the Gallarus Oratory
- the Book of Kells

And for grownups, I recommend reading Philip Freeman's *St. Patrick of Ireland: A Biography*.

Are there any stories about Saint Patrick that didn't make it into the book?

Ned: Many did not get in. One story that I illustrated and carved a block for is in the legends of Saint Patrick. He comes across a young doe in the woods while walking with his disciples. His followers want to kill the doe for food, but Patrick protects the doe by picking it up and carrying it to another place in the woods. He prays for water and God miraculously provides a fountain.

How do you resonate most with Saint Patrick?

Ned: I'm third-generation Irish with my family coming from Donegal in the northwest region of the island. I feel like, in many ways, Patrick is my saint. Certainly, my family grew up in an area that was Christian because of the work of Patrick. My faith heritage can be traced through to him. I love the land and the people of Ireland and Northern Ireland. I admire Saint Patrick's commitment to prayer and following boldly God's leading in this life. One of the high points of art history is Celtic art—the Book of Kells and the Hybernia metal and stonework. Saint Patrick wasn't responsible for it, but a space for that artwork was created because of his work establishing the church. The art was preserved because there was the church and monks who knew to fight for its preservation during the time of the Viking raids.



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