



New Life Riders

Motorcyclists Serving God and Community

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March 2014

Dear Friends,

It's March! Thoughts of blasts of cold air and frigid wind chill temperatures, leathers and lots of layers come to mind as the month rages in "like a lion." How we bikers in the Midwest long for an early Spring, especially after the winter we have experienced with record breaking snowfalls here in Indianapolis! We watch patiently for the first evidence of comfortable riding weather and perhaps a crocus forcing its way up through the frozen ground.

As March 17 approaches, we think of all the parades and revelry connected with St. Patrick's celebrations. This man of God, slave, missionary and bishop would probably be surprised and perhaps even upset by all the festivities that take place in his name at this time of year.

Patricius (Patrick) was born around AD 390 in what is now Dumbarton, Scotland. His father, Calpornius, was a landowner and a deacon in the church. When he was sixteen years old, Patrick was captured by a pirate raiding party and taken as a slave to Ireland. He worked as a shepherd for his master named Milchu for six years.

Although he came from a God fearing home, up to this point Patrick was a nominal Christian. It was while he was tending sheep that he reflected on his spiritual state and believed in the living God. This made me think of the shepherd King, David, author of the twenty-third Psalm, who became close to the Lord while caring for his flocks, too.

Patrick escaped from Ireland at the age of twenty-two. He was happy to be home with his people but had a burden for the souls of those he left behind in Ireland. His dream of the Irish people calling him to come to them sounded so much like the Apostle Paul's vision of a man begging him to come over to Macedonia to help them in Acts 16:9.

Patrick was steeped in God's Word referring to approximately 200 passages of scripture in his Confessions saying, "I must make known the gift of God." He quoted Mark 1:17 as the basis for his missionary call. "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." And go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every living creature. Mark 16:15. "I will call them my people which were not my people." Romans 9:25. (In this verse, the Apostle Paul was actually quoting the prophet, Hosea 2:23)

Patrick returned to Ireland in 432 as a bishop, prepared to give his very life for Jesus' name. He said, 'I came to the people of Ireland to preach the gospel and to suffer insult. I am prepared to give my life without hesitation and most gladly for His Name.'" Patrick was a man of prayer and loved the scriptures. He used everything available to explain Christianity to his Druid listeners. He used the shamrock to describe the doctrine of the Trinity. He is said to have led some 120,000 people to Christ, including his former slave master, Milchu.

Patrick established more than 300 churches and brought clergy from France and England to nurture the new believers. He died around 461 AD.

This is the man that so many celebrate on March 17 without knowing anything of his deep commitment to the Lord and to the Scriptures. His life is a testimony of what the Lord can do in the life of a willing servant of God.

If you are searching for something to believe in or belong to, you are not alone. We strive to open our hearts to the world and accept each person as a child of God. We are by no means perfect, but we take seriously Christ's call to invite all to participate in an experience of faith while working together to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. As Christians we place Jesus Christ at the center of all we do. Our mission is at the heart of all we do: To make disciples of Jesus Christ!!

In Second Corinthians 5:17 we read, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, old things are passed away, behold all things become new." Christianity is a new life, a new beginning as Jesus lives in and through us. As we prayerfully read the Bible, with a desire to do God's will, His Word strengthens us. We have a brand new way of thinking...So on these windy March days when you put on your leathers, remember you can have a new life when you "put on Christ." Remember we are New Life Riders.

We hope to see you at our meeting on Friday, March 7 at 6:30 PM at Bob Evans Restaurant, 25 South High School Road, located just off Route 465 at the corner of High School Road and U.S. 36, Indianapolis. If you will be in the area, please feel especially invited. Remember, you don't have to ride to be part of our group. All are welcome. We need prayer warriors, too!

My wife, Kathy, and I pray you have safe riding, blessings and many opportunities to share the love of Jesus in the upcoming riding season. Please check all the events listed on the New Life Riders Website. Since it would be humanly impossible to attend everything, prayerfully decide where you will be most effective.

Until next time...May you be blessed as you ride and witness for the Lord.

God bless,

Riding with Jesus, Bob Dillon