



CATHOLIC HEROES
OF THE FAITH

Student Handouts for
THE STORY OF SAINT PATRICK



From Christian History Institute

S T U D E N T



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NOTE: Answer key for selected pages is on p. 21 of the Leader's Guide.



The Shepherd's Staff

"Your rod and your staff comfort me." Psalm 23:4b



Photo by Süleyman Şahan from Pexels.com.

You may know that shepherds in ancient times used staffs, but did you know that modern day shepherds still use staffs today? (And its design hasn't changed much, either!) The staff serves two main purposes:

1. **It guides and corrects sheep.** Sheep need help in finding the right way to go and in following the safest paths. A shepherd uses his staff like an extra long arm to block sheep from the wrong direction!
2. **It catches wayward or injured sheep.** The hook on the end of a shepherd's staff, called the crook, is a very important tool for the shepherd. The crook can gently catch injured sheep and bring them to the shepherd without scaring them or hurting them more. It's also used to pull a wayward sheep back into the herd.

Did you know that your bishop carries a shepherd's staff? It is called a **crozier**. This is because he is a shepherd on earth for the people of Jesus. The crozier is a sign of his responsibility to guide and correct the people, and to bring people back to the Church.



Dig into the Story!

Questions to get you thinking and talking after you watch
The Story of Saint Patrick.

1. Where was Saint Patrick taken?
2. What did the Druid Priest, Cathbad, want to do to Patrick?
3. What work did Patrick do in Ireland as a slave?
4. How did Patrick escape?
5. What did Patrick do when he returned home?
6. What surprising thing did Patrick decide to do?
7. How did Patrick show God's power to the Irish?
8. What was the result of Patrick's return to Ireland?



Dig Deeper

Thinking through hard questions

1. Before Patrick was kidnapped, he did not believe in Jesus like his parents did. Why is it important to “make faith your own” or trust Jesus personally?
2. Even though Patrick was alone in a strange land as a slave, he learned to be content and unafraid. How did Patrick’s growing relationship with God change him and bring him peace?
3. The Druid religion told the Irish they had to make human sacrifices to appease their gods and get favors from them. How is Druidism different from Christianity?
4. Saint Patrick went back to Ireland to share the Gospel with his kidnappers. Why? Can you think of other saints who shared the good news about Jesus even when it put them in great danger? Can you name any saints that shared the faith and became a martyr?



Legends of Saint Patrick

While many Christians celebrate Saint Patrick, we don't really know much about him!

Myths and legends outnumber verified historical accounts of this early missionary to Ireland. Read the stories below and discuss—what do you think really happened?

When you've read the legends, complete the word search on the next page!

The Deer's Cry, a poem attributed to Patrick, describes how Patrick and a friend miraculously escaped a Druid ambush on their way to preach at Ireland's ancient capital. It claims they transformed into wild deer, passed by their enemies, and made it to their destination unharmed.

Where did all the snakes go? This story states that after a 40-day fast on top of the mountain now known as Croagh Patrick, Patrick chased the snakes of Ireland into the sea and banished them from the island forever.

Why are shamrocks so popular? According to one story, it's how Patrick explained God! Wanting to help the Irish people understand the Trinity (God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), Patrick supposedly used the shamrock to show God as one-in-three.

The legend of Aspatia says that Patrick carried a walking stick made of ash wood. Whenever he stopped to preach, he would put his walking stick in the ground. One day, he preached so long that the stick grew roots and became a living tree!

In another story, Patrick challenged pagan tradition by lighting a bonfire before the Celtic Feast of Beltaine. Druids and even Ireland's high king tried to put out Patrick's fire, but they could not. The King thought Patrick had better magic, and allowed him to convert the Irish.



Legends of Saint Patrick: Word Search

Find and circle these words in the puzzle below.
Words can be found horizontally, vertically, and diagonally.

PATRICK	ASPATRIA
DRUID	IRELAND
TRINITY	LEGEND
SHAMROCK	BONFIRE
CROAGH	CHRISTIANITY

K F W F E K M B E Z Z Y N H C L Q I G L
C Z M Q H C K N O N W I C H J Z F B V W
C A J C D I A H U N T J R X G U Z T U F
V J V P M R F D K G F I S M B H R M Q C
Y Q L F J T Q E B S S I Z E J I U U K R
X K U B G A M B F T O X R S T N K G I Q
Z Y D V I P E Z I X U B T E T C U S J W
V V T S S H E A G Y U H U T O G G T V A
U Z O L P R N Q T H D V B J A E G P C V
Y X N T P I U I M C D Q U X U V A A F M
S K W D T X N N T A X A F E G T A E C V
A Y X Y Q I J G P W V Q H Q H I G W L O
X I E B R D V N X K F G J G H L C X Q G
H K R T F I Y Z D I R E L A N D R B O T
F Z N T D L G Y J N Z L E L Q J O D O X
J B I L A N K E H Y O S E B U X A F E T
G X J V F P I D P D G G S H Y I G G P N
N E I C O T S P G M E E C R R M H S O E
B I B W H W F A N N J R S M D I U R D O
K C O R M A H S D D H Y N K J M X M O R



Story Mix-Up

These pictures of Saint Patrick's story are all mixed up.
Number the pictures in the correct order.



Cathbad and Patrick face the fire.



God gives Patrick peace.



Cold and alone, Patrick tends sheep.



Patrick receives Holy Orders,
becomes a bishop.



Patrick prays for Chief Sesenen's son.



Patrick preaches the Good News to Ireland.



Pirates kidnap Patrick!



Patrick runs away!



God's Under-Shepherds Interview

When we think of shepherds, we probably don't think of the pope, bishops, and priests—but did you know that's one way the Bible refers to them? Get to know a shepherd working under the Good Shepherd with the questions below!

1. What is a spiritual shepherd?
2. Why does the Church need shepherds on earth?
3. What do you do as a shepherd?
4. When and where did you become a Priest?
5. How does someone become a Priest?
6. What should someone do if they feel called by God to be a Priest?
7. What is the best part of your work as shepherd? What is most difficult?
8. Other questions:



Build a Currach

A **currach** or **curragh** is a type of boat unique to the west coasts of Ireland. During Saint Patrick's time, these crafts were made with a wicker frame and covered with stretched animal hide, making them light enough to carry on a person's back and easy to maneuver in the water. It is likely that Irish raiders used these types of boats for their expeditions to Britain. Make your own currach by following the simple directions below!

You will need:

Cardstock/heavy paper
Stapler
Duct tape
Scotch tape
Toothpicks
Popsicle sticks
Markers/colored pencils

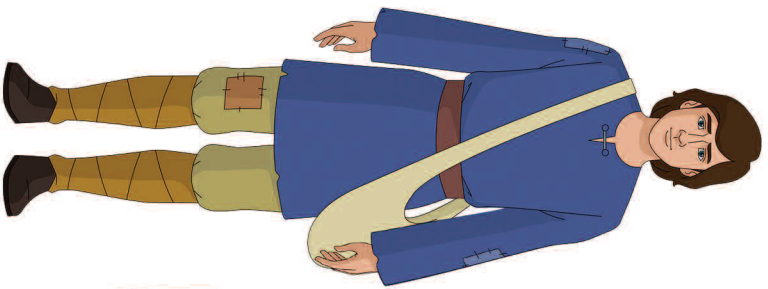
Directions:

1. Fold paper in half from top to bottom so that you have a long rectangle.
2. Staple the folded ends together to form the ends of the boat.
3. Hold the boat upright on a flat surface and smooth open the bottom so that it can stand up on its own.
4. Cover the outside of the boat with duct tape to make it water-tight. Carefully seal the ends.
5. Place two toothpicks on the inside of the boat and across its middle to reinforce a flat bottom.
6. Choose and cut out a character provided on the next page.
7. Tape your chosen character to a popsicle stick and place in the currach!

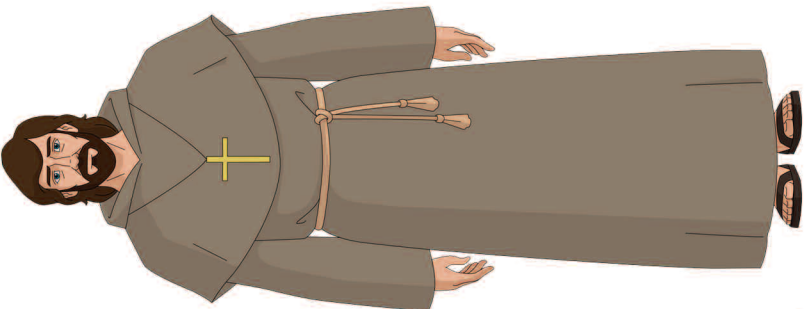
Currach Races

How seaworthy is your currach? Find out with a race! With an adult's supervision, take your currachs outdoors to a nearby stream or even a puddle. Decide where your race will begin and end before putting your boats in the water. Let the race begin! The first boat to cross the finish line without sinking wins.

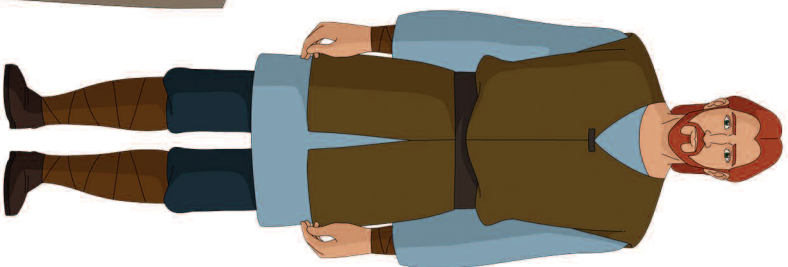
Indoor alternative: No waterways close by? Race your currachs inside! Fill a large basin with water and put your boats in it. Using straws, blow the currachs across the basin. The first currach to reach the other side wins!



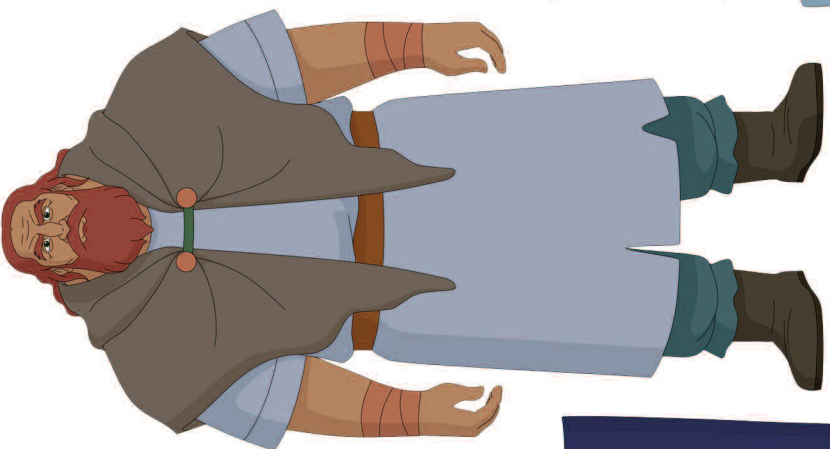
Patrick



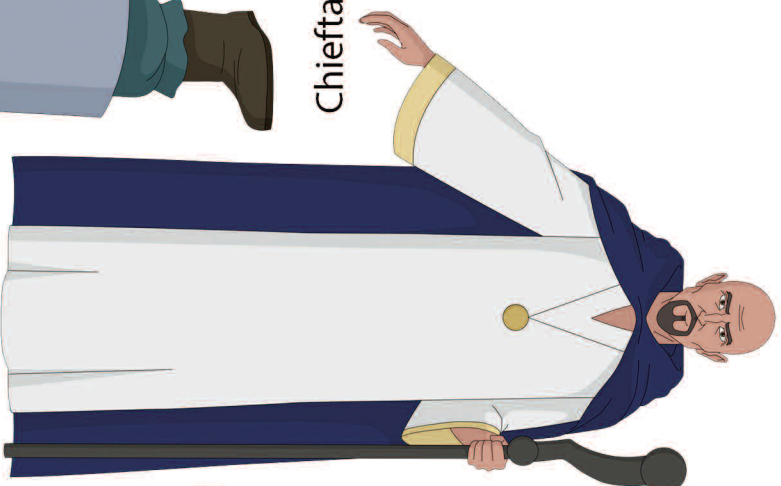
Patrick



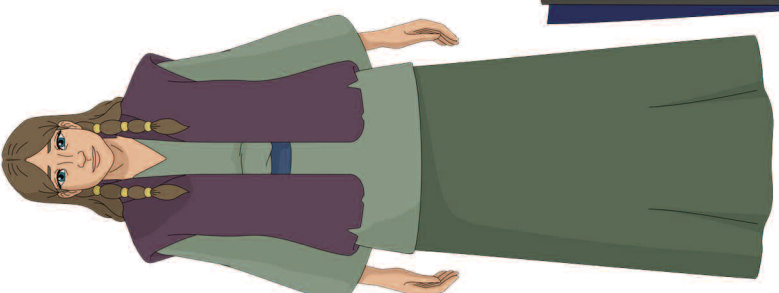
Aeden



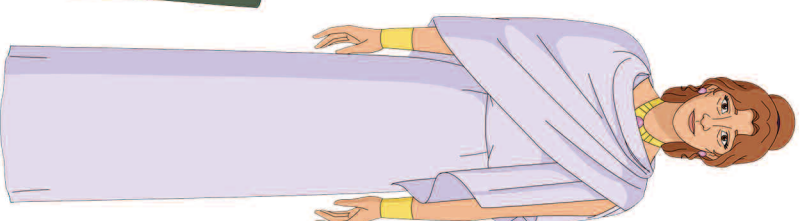
Chieftain Sesenen



Cathbad



Oonagh



Conchessa



Decode the Quote

Use the key below to decode the following quotation from Saint Patrick.

“

z ,xzm yTZi,* TcxZBaC ,

◆zacT* mTxyraTc TcxZBaC

wy ⊕zyj zr TcyTcxyr ymm

TcxZBaCeZ r jymm zZr ZjTcy

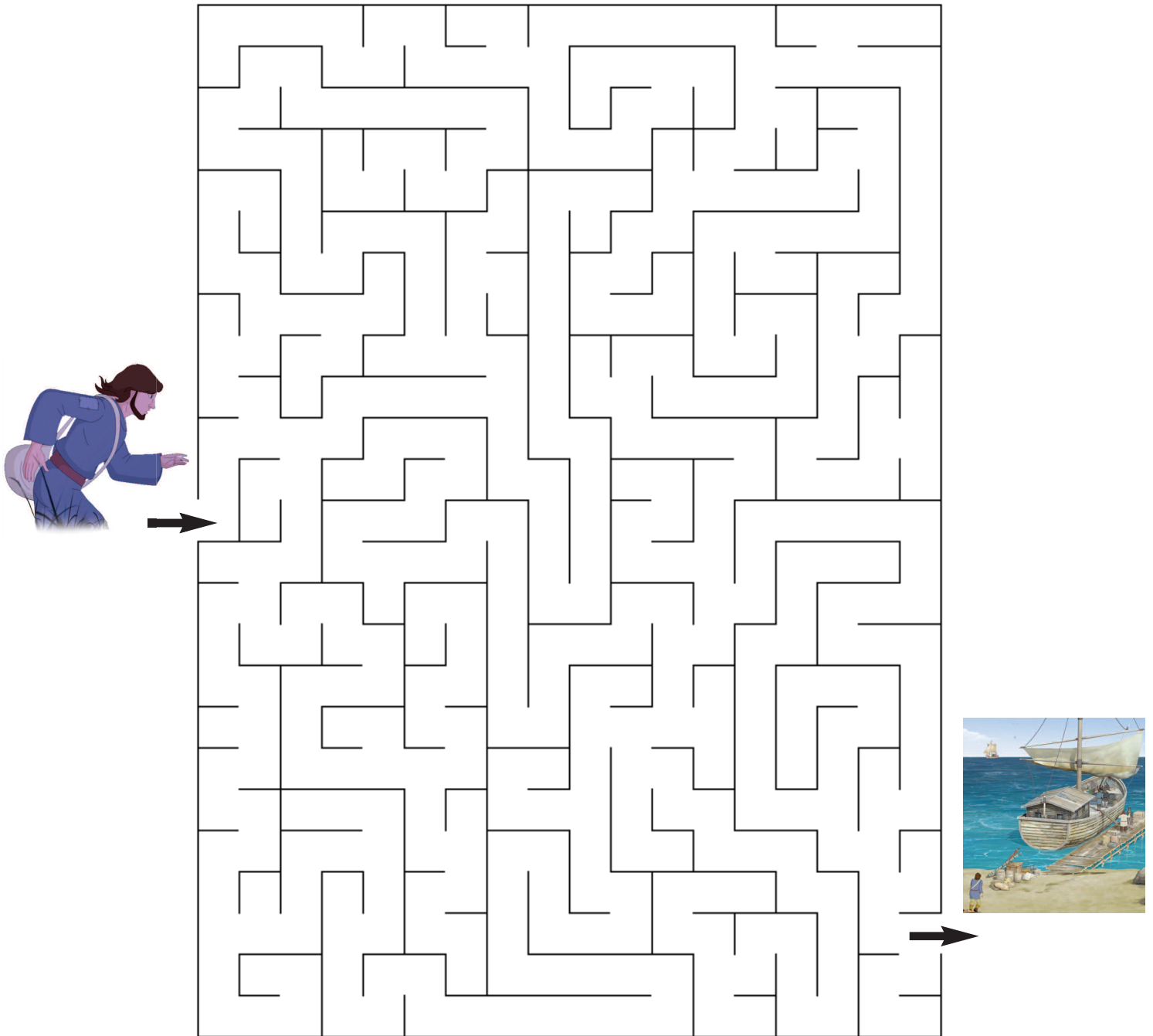
Zryrymm ZjTcy exy,TZx

,	w	e	i	y	j	a	C	Z	s	⊕	⊕	◆
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
r	Z	S	e	x	m	T	B	U	◆	+	*	☆
n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z



Get Patrick Home Maze

Help Patrick escape Ireland and find his way home!





Encourage Your Shepherd Service Project

Being a priest can be a lonely and difficult job at times, but knowing that their congregation cares about them and appreciates them can be a huge blessing! Here are some ideas to encourage your shepherds!

Write a note

Many times priests can feel like their work doesn't really matter. Telling them that you are thankful for their service can show them otherwise! Here are a few ways to send an encouraging note:

- Make a giant card out of construction paper thanking them for their ministry
- Cover their office doors with thankful post-it notes and encouraging Bible verses
- Write a personal letter explaining how their ministry helped you
- Thank the priest for your First Confession or First Communion or the Mass

Pray

Did you know your prayers help your priest? Ask your shepherds how you can pray for them! Consider going on a prayer walk through your church or gathering in small groups to lift up their requests to God. Or pray a rosary for his intentions.

Serve

Giving your time and energy to another person—no matter who it is—is always a great way to show you care! Just as your shepherds serve the church, you can serve your shepherds by:

- Inviting him over for dinner after talking about it with your parents
- Volunteering to help out as an altar server, reader at Mass, greeting people at the doors on Sunday, or help clean the church

What else can I do?

With your group, brainstorm some ways you can encourage your shepherds below:



What is the Trinity?

As Catholics we worship one God in Trinity: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each is a distinct person but at the same time, They are One. As human beings, this is hard for us to understand, but you can think of it this way: The Father loves. The Son is beloved and loves the Father back. The love between them is the Holy Spirit. The Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Spirit Almighty. And yet, they are not three Almighty's but One Almighty.

One story says that Patrick once used a three-leaf clover, or shamrock, to explain the Trinity to the Irish, showing that though there were three leaves, it was still one clover. Similarly, God exists in three persons, but remains one God.



Patrick may or may not have actually used this specific example, but we do know that he became well-known as a defender of the Trinity by correcting misunderstandings about God. Patrick's teachings on the Trinity became an integral part of Irish culture. For example, the Celtic Trinity symbol to the right shows the oneness of God (all the lines are connected) but also express the three persons on each point.

Now it's time to think through this on your own! Draw a line from the word on the left to the correct definition on the right. Check the Leader's Guide for the answer key.

Father	Divine nature
Son	Third Person of the Godhead
Holy Spirit	Sacred Scripture
Trinity	First Person of the Godhead
Bible	An analogy to explain the Trinity
Godhead	God, three-in-one
Shamrock	Second Person of the Godhead

¹ See **Keach's Catechism**, Questions 8-10. For verses specifically used in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, see 1 Cor. 8:6; John 10:30; John 14:9; Acts 5:3,4; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14)



Trinity Craft

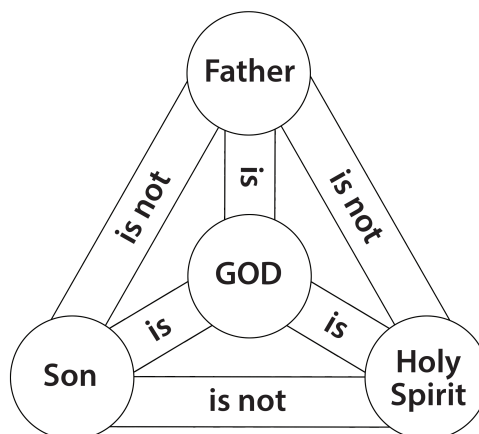
Now that you've learned a little about the Trinity,
make this craft to remind you of our unique and awesome God!

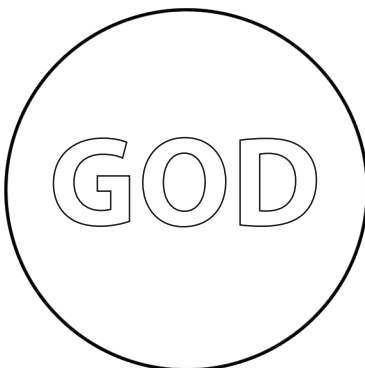
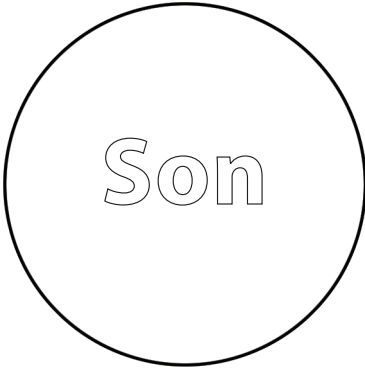
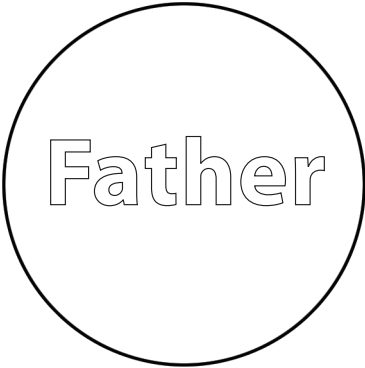
You will need:

Wood craft sticks or tongue depressors (5 per person)
Scissors
Glue
Permanent marker
Markers/colored pencils

Directions:

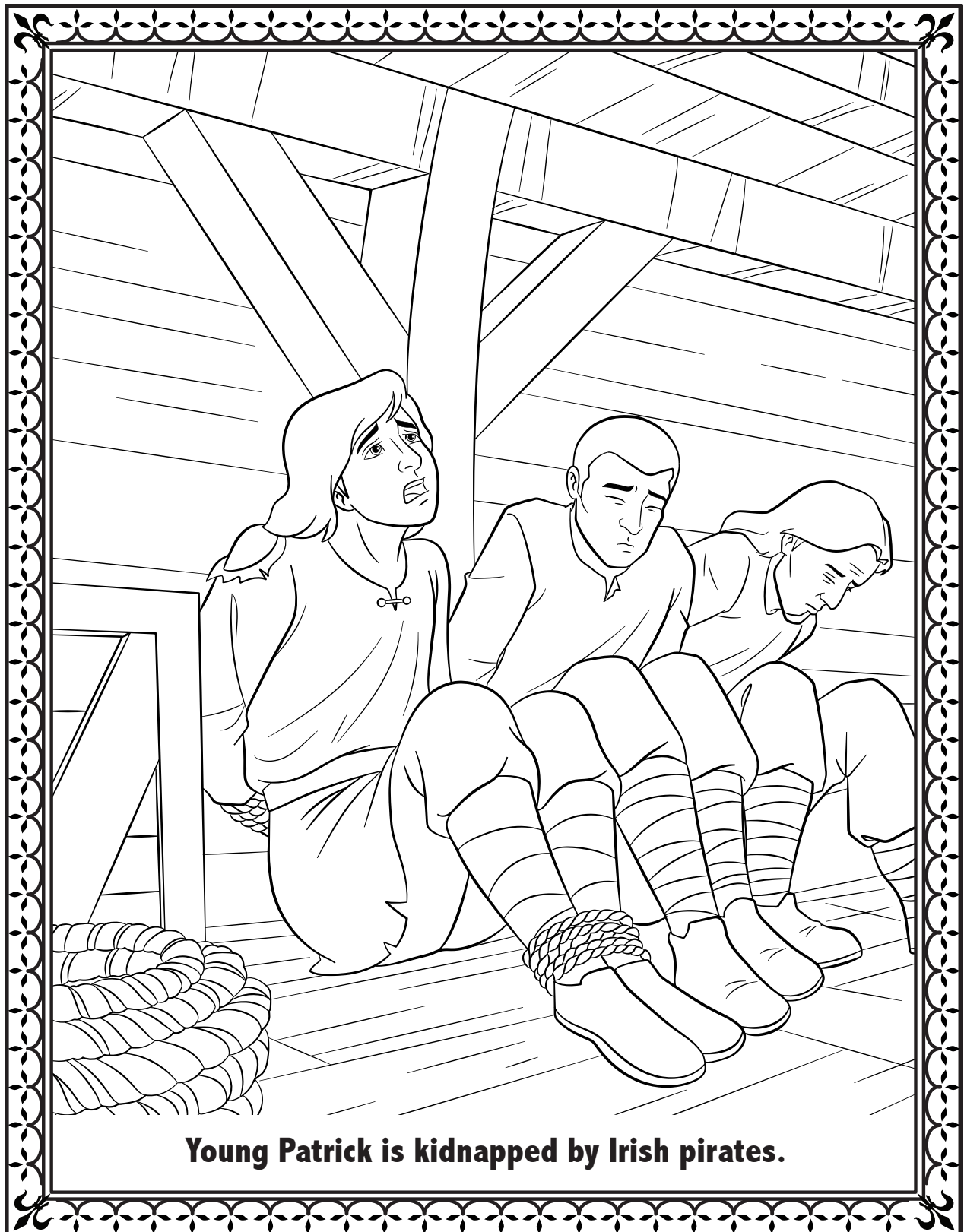
1. Color and cut out the templates provided on the next page.
2. On three of the craft sticks, write, "is not" in permanent marker.
3. Cut the other two craft sticks in half. Discard one half; write, "is" on the three remaining sticks.
4. Make a triangle with the three full-length sticks and glue together.
5. Turn the triangle over. Making a "Y" with the half-length sticks, glue each to the angles of the triangle so that they meet in the center of the triangle.
6. Glue "Father," "Son," and "Holy Spirit" templates to the three corners of the triangle. Glue "God" in the center of the "Y".







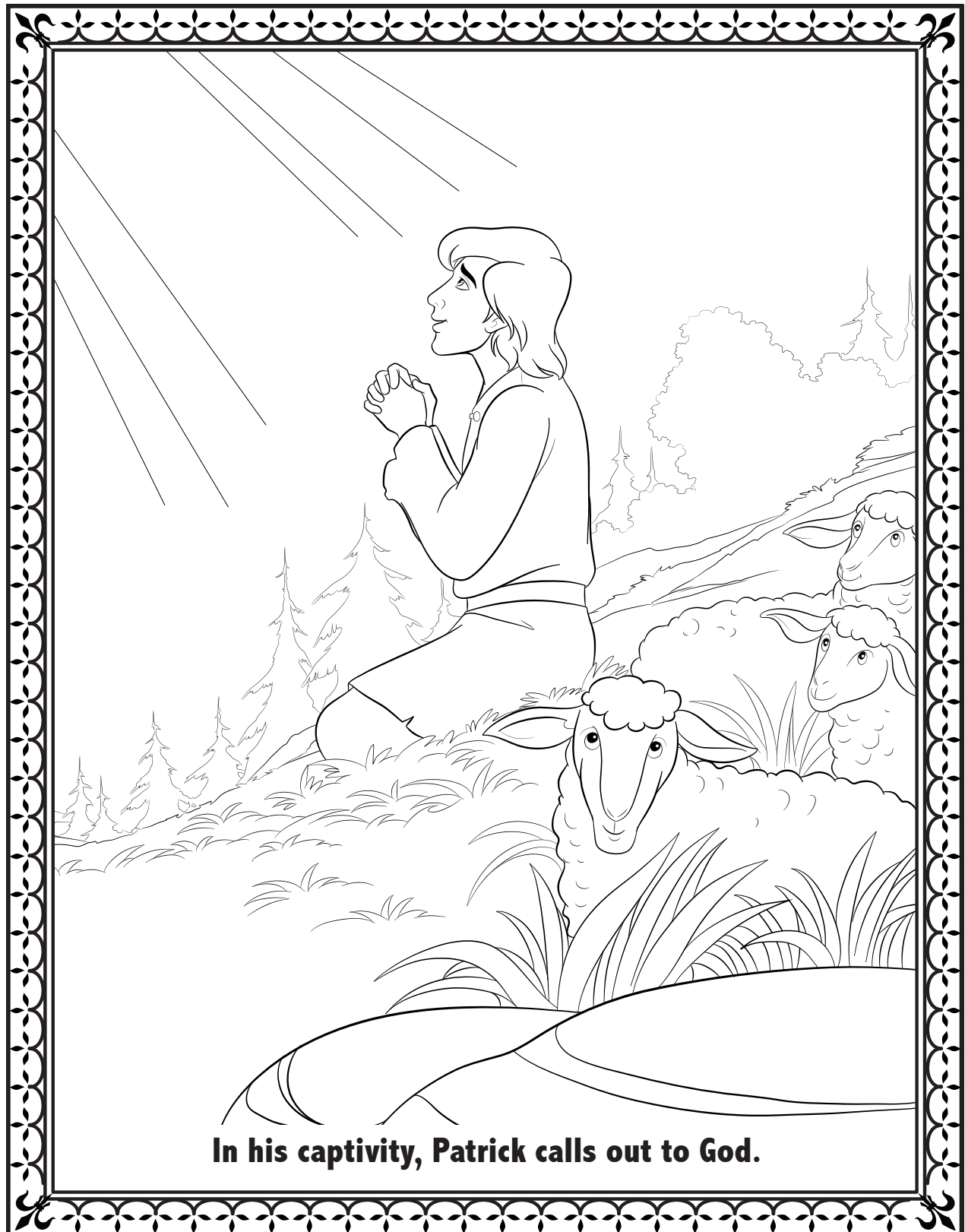
Color the Scene #1



Young Patrick is kidnapped by Irish pirates.



Color the Scene #2



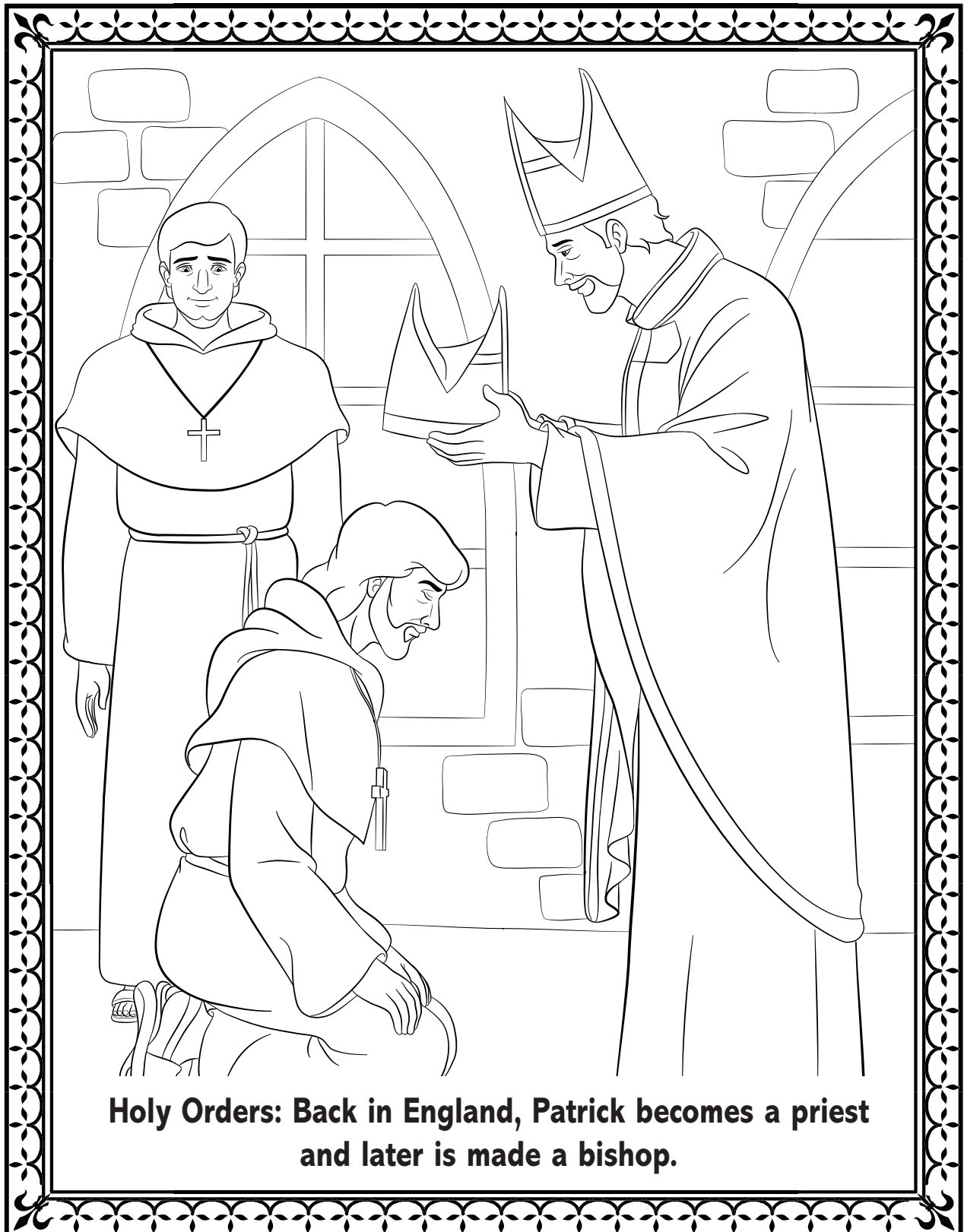


Color the Scene #3





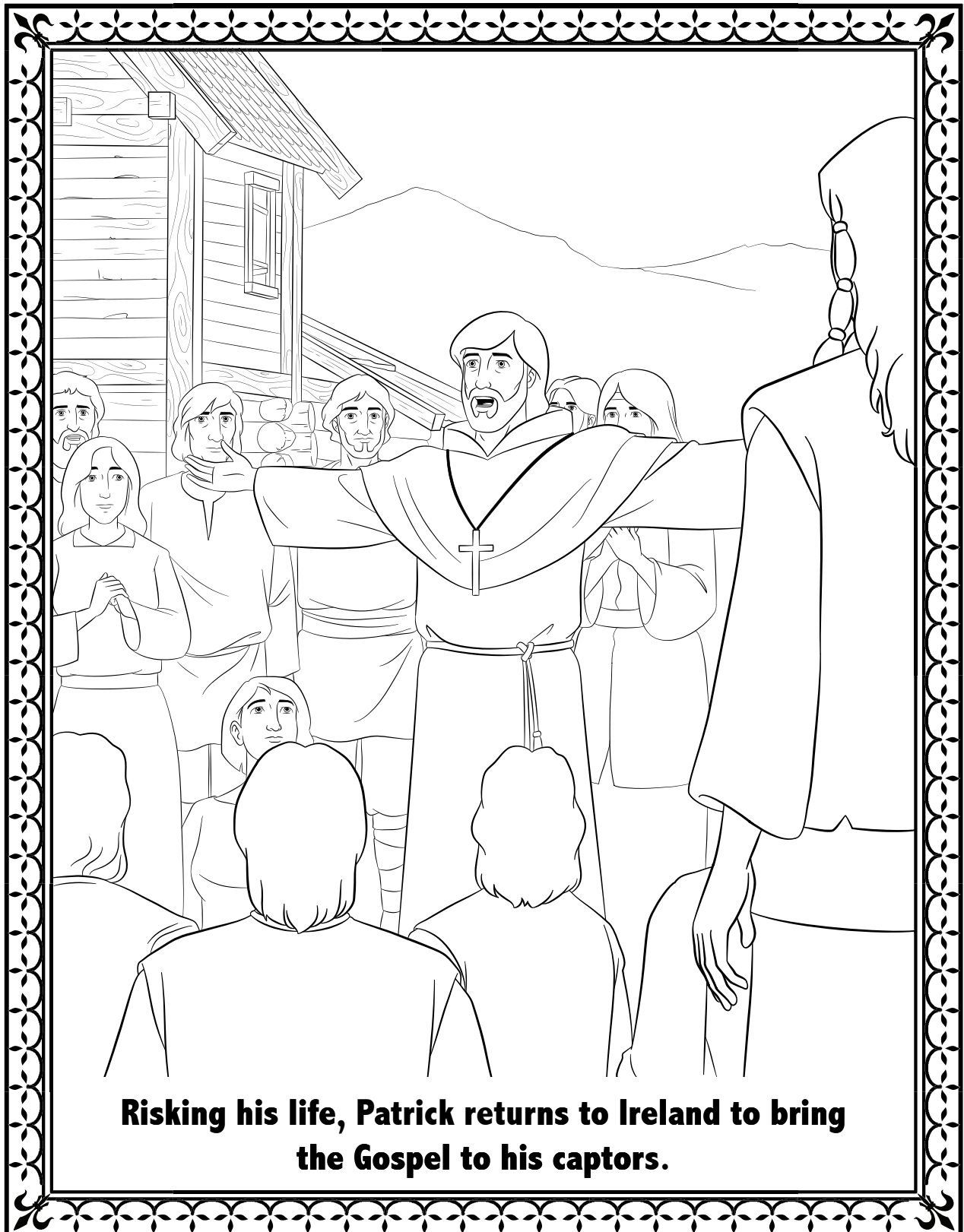
Color the Scene #4



**Holy Orders: Back in England, Patrick becomes a priest
and later is made a bishop.**



Color the Scene #5



Risking his life, Patrick returns to Ireland to bring the Gospel to his captors.