

Serpents, Saints, & Sailors' Sunglasses



It is said that St Patrick drove the snakes out of Ireland. In actual fact, there have not been land snakes in Ireland since the last ice age. So, the snakes expelled in the mythology of the saint must have been symbolic. St Patrick was not Irish. He was Roman. His family were early Christians living in England. His original connection to Ireland was that he was captured, likely by Vikings, and then sold there as a slave. He undoubtedly encountered Druids. In a mystic dream he was shown to escape by boat. He later returned to Ireland with an evangelical quest, but with much doubt about his ability to do the task, given his limited education.

St. Patrick's story is one of multiculturalism. It is in the crossroads between faiths that his quest is conceived. It reminds us in mortal terms that there is a gap between the man and the myth. There is also a gap between the traditional solemn remembrance of the saint, midway through the ascetic Lenten season and the modern drunken celebrations for St Patrick's Day. How far have we strayed?

The oral druidic tradition morphed into priests preaching in the glens. While the Druids left records using the ogham tree alphabet, early Irish Christians recorded biblical stories onto Celtic stone crosses. Monks scribed teachings using elaborate flowing writing. The Irish church was a beacon on light during the dark ages. Later saints built upon his church and brought learning to the rest of Europe in the form of illuminated manuscripts. How ironic Patrick's impact on education was, given his own self-doubts about his own education. Imagine for a moment what western civilization would be if Patrick had given into his doubts?

Celtic Consciousness

The snake is a recurring image in Celtic art. It can be said to represent rebirth. A snake sheds its skin and moves on. Out of endings come beginnings. From death comes new life. We could all do with shedding our old skin from time to time, letting go of the past, breaking old routines, exfoliating our lives. Druids often had snakes tattooed on their arms. As an archetypal image the Celtic serpent transcends geographic limitations. Celts can be traced back by archeologists to Central Europe. They were not just in the British Isles. The Irish Druids may not have lived with snakes in their backyards, but they honored the symbolism as part of their earth based spirituality, just as they did with many other creatures. All earth based and aboriginal societies do the same. The circular motif of the serpent resurrected itself in the illuminated manuscripts of the Irish monasteries. Did St Patrick drive out the Druids? Not entirely. He merged his message with theirs.

Soul Coaching by Sandy

Telephone 519 824-1507

sacredstonesforthesoul@gmail.com

WWW.SACREDSTONESFORTHESOUL.COM

A cute 2 min video about the monastic illuminated manuscripts:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81tmuA2Dddk>

A longer historical documentary for those who want more info:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGLD_Bv43vw

The Viking Compass

Iolite's name comes from the Greek "Ios" which means violet. It is sometimes called the Water Sapphire.

Iolite has pleochroic characteristics, making it appear to be of different colours depending on the angle viewed. It can appear clear blue from one side, honey from the top and indigo from another side. Vikings used it as a visual polarizing filter to help determine the exact location of the sun on cloudy days in order to navigate their ships.

Iolite is a cordierite mineral composed of magnesium, iron and aluminum. It is thought that the Vikings discovered some in Greenland as well as Norway. A large deposit has more recently found in Wyoming, USA.

As twilight coloured stone, Iolite is good for inspiration, dreams, past lives and astral travel. It is said to be a stone of the Muses and can assist in creative projects. It can also help navigate out of chaos, distraction, debt or addictions. Iolite is a good stone to give to someone going away or to ease family transitions. It instils a sense of order when venturing into the unknown territory.



Hi5vB (High Five Vibe) Collection
of Affirmative Inspiration Wear

Iolite



Rock Star of the Month

Exfoliate your Skin Exfoliate your Life

Did you know that you can create your own skin exfoliating paste using simple ingredients from your kitchen?

Try mixing brown sugar or coarse sea salt with honey. Rub it on then rinse. You can keep it for a few days in the fridge, but you might want to warm it up a bit before you put it on your skin.

Dry brushing your skin using a bath brush before you bathe is another simple way to slough off the old dead skin. It also helps increase circulation and decrease cellulite deposits of toxins in fat cells. Be sure to always brush towards the heart.

Beauty is an inside job. Be kind to you.

Coaching Questions:

- ④ Are you chasing your tail in circles?
- ④ Do you honour the shedding of the old or try to hold on for longer than needed?
- ④ What talents should you be sharing with others but think you aren't qualified for?
- ④ How do you navigate out of the chaos?
- ④ Do you avoid looking at the clouds or the shadows of your life?
- ④ Ever consider violet colored glasses?

Practice makes perfect!

Iolite encourages us to change our filters and see something old with new eyes. Do you see the shamrock leaf or do you see the clover flower? Where we put our attention is where we put our intention. Do we have to see what everyone else wants to see all of the time? What if, some of the time, we respectfully choose to not see through the eyes of group consciousness? Do we dare?

This month practice looking around your familiar surroundings to see what you never noticed before in people, objects, behaviours or even feelings. Just notice. Observe. You do not have to do anything. Resist the urge to fix. Just let it be and drink in the new insight.



Clover Flower & Shamrock

The actual clover flower is often forgotten while the trefoil leaf has become an iconic symbol.

Clover is edible and very high in protein, as it happens. Clover is prosperity and promises abundance. That is why it is linked to the proverbial pot of the gold. Finding a four leaf clover could lead to the second sight and an ability to see the fairies, who are masters of instant manifestation. "Seanrog" was the Celtic word for little clover. It became the shamrock.

The number three, as we know from fairy tales, is magical. For the Celts, the three key elements of their natural environment were earth, sky and sea. Clover grew abundantly and was forage for cattle. It was well known to the people and valued by them. It was an easy visual metaphor for St Patrick to adapt to preach about the Holy Trinity to earthy folk.



Alms for the Poor

Religious institutions have historically been the purveyors of charitable works, both at home and abroad. As society transitions, fewer folks are drawn to traditional church or temple affiliations. Personal choice about one's relationship to the divine invites a generous spirit of respect today.

We see church buildings being sold off; congregations are dispersed, long standing social connections shatter. With that also go the supports that were provided by the people of that congregation in the community. I have watched my own childhood church move from a tiny building in a working class neighbourhood to a slighter larger site, with outreach to an impoverished corner of the city and now to a merger with a congregation of an entirely different denomination. While it is sad to see the building I grew up in sold, there is hope, I believe, in the forging of new ecumenical alliances across faiths. Like St Patrick discovered, spirit can transcend cultural differences to find new meaning in old places and old meaning in new places. Interestingly, St Patrick's was the original name of my own childhood church.

Healing the world one gemstone at a time...

Sacred Stones for the Soul

Guelph, Ontario
Canada

