

What exactly is St Patrick's Day as it is celebrated in the states?

By Marti Abernathey

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Abstract

What exactly is St Patrick's Day as it is celebrated in the states? Per se; it is a celebration of "Irishness" though only a certain kind. The music that will be playing in the bars, sung by irish tenors, will by and large be American in origin, a sort of faux irish with absolutely nothing [...]

Article

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The music that will be playing in the bars, sung by irish tenors, will by and large be American in origin, a sort of faux irish with absolutely nothing to do with Irish culture.

You will not hear O'Carolan, a contemporary of Bach's, played.

You will not hear any of the nation's very accomplished folk performers.

Shamrocks will be everywhere. But where will be the elaborate designs that were beauty rendered into gold and enamel that came from Ireland? Where will one see the imaginative art, architecture and creations of Irish men and women of more modern times.

We will see plenty of Barry Fitzgerald and Bing Crosby, but what station or network will play "The Magdalen Sisters?"

American St Patrick's Day remains a celebration of the oppressive dream of Eamon de Valera and Archbishop McQuaid of an Ireland of unquestioning, devout sheep. Women at home, or in the fields, men working, marginally educated, prayer rather than women's healthcare, Catholics forbidden to seek the best education, a predatory clergy.

Many St Patrick's Parades will enthrone a local prelate. Where were the Bishops on Easter Monday in 1916 when brave men and women rose to fight what they knew would be their last, hopeless battle? The same church that will be honoured forbade honours being given to the first president of Ireland, Douglas Hyde, a revolutionary. His unforgivable sin? He was a protestant. The same church also condemned Parnell and crushed Irish

Secular Nationalism and any hope of a united Ireland on “moral grounds,” he had committed adultery, while their priests were committing rapine upon the young women sentenced into the laundries.

Who on St Pat's Day will remember Connie Markiewicz kissing her gun as she surrendered after commanding part of the Rising near the General Post Office?

Who will remember Sir Roger Casement, the exposé of the Congo slave trade and the true father of independent Ireland who paid for his dream with his life? A gay man, he certainly would not be welcome at the American Celebrations now, he was a Protestant as well as homosexual.

Who will remember wild Maud Gonne, who relentlessly agitated for a forcible resistance to British rule, who inspired men and motivated women to fight and to die? No Bishop will mention her, she was a Lesbian.

Patrick Pearse, commander and chief of the forces of the Rising, will be remembered in the proclamations of the Irish Republic bearing his name in many pubs. No one will mention that he was gay.

Who will remember Eva Booth-Gore, activist, poet and rebel? Were she alive, she could not participate in a parade. She was a Lesbian.

Remove the shamrocks, remove the green, turn off the music and be honest America. You are celebrating the Catholic Church and the nightmare that it visited upon Ireland, de Valera and McQuaid's Ireland, and Ireland frankly can do without that kind of honour or attention. Hang Pictures of the Pope, play Tantum Ergo...and when the Archbishop of New York parades down the street, try and remember a predecessor of his who stated that the Hunger, the Potato Famine that killed millions, was a blessing since the migrating survivors would spread Catholicism to new lands.

As for me, I will toast Eva, Connie, Maud, Douglas, Patrick, and Sir Roger; and I will chuckle remembering that the Saint that is being “honoured” that day is buried....in a Protestant Church in Ulster, in the United Kingdom.....

Maureen McMahon

Depending upon her mood, Maureen McMahon is alternately elegant and flamboyant, brilliant and ludicrous, visionary and dissipated. Perhaps the only truism that can be applied to her is her aesthetic zeal.

Whatever Maureen does, she does with passion. Whatever Maureen truly is, she is with passion.

Anonymous

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