

CREAGH PATRICK PILGRIMAGE - IRISH EDITION.

St. Patrick welcomes those who arrive for the annual Creagh Patrick Pilgrimage. At the foot of the Holy Mountain of West Ireland - (as they and their forefathers have done since soon after Ireland's national Saint made the difficult climb fifteen hundred years ago) - they begin their Pilgrimage. It's a wet, blowy day, but the harder the path the greater the merit. Back in the mists of antiquity the day of the Pilgrimage and the order of it was set.

There are three stations to be observed, and there is no easy way. At Leacht Bannin, after 7 pater-nosters, 7 aves and a creed, the Pilgrim must walk seven times round the Leacht. And the higher they climb, the harder is the way and longer the station.

For the young the path is hard, for the aged a trial. But one and all, the whole and the sick, upwards they climb. Faith guides their feet and sustains them.

2,510 feet up at the summit they walk where St. Patrick walked. Beyond doubt they know this from the records. And here at Leaba Phadraig is the second station. For newcomers a beary details the station to be performed. Here at the summit St. Patrick fasted a whole Lent in the days when the lonely hill was known as the Mount of Eagles.

And so to the oratory, the little shrine in the clouds. And here, where St. Patrick looked out over Ireland and prayed for her people, they find born with themselves something that will be with them always.

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