



RESURRECTION UNIVERSITY CATHOLIC PARISH

Land Stewardship Committee

THE WREN THE WREN

On St. Stephens day, in the west of Ireland on the day after Christmas there is a tradition called the Wren Parade. Today In Gaelic traditional culture today people dress up and chase a symbol of the wren through town in a parade. It is a festive, merry affair, much like the American tradition of Trick or Treat at Halloween. But the origins of the wren parade is clouded in history and mystery. It has pre-Christians origins but was later stamped with a Christian overlay and assigned the day after Christmas.

In the past the dressing up involved young men painting their faces black and taking long sticks or rocks and tracking down the wrens in the fields and bushes (called furze) outside of towns. When a wren was found it was killed. The dead wren was placed in a holly bush branch. This was a tradition in Ireland dating from pre-Christian times, hunting and parading with the Wren on St. Stephen's Day (December 26th)

For some Irish people the Wren Parade is more celebratory than Christmas.



If the wren is called the King of all Birds in Irish tradition why kill it?

Seems that the wren, a beautiful song bird but one that scolds with a terrible racket when disturbed, gave away the hiding place of St. Stephen who was captured by his enemies and stoned to death. A very bad thing to do in Catholic Ireland.--- no not scold but give away a hiding place!

Stay focused.

Message From the Editor

"The wren, the wren, the king of all birds
on St. Stephen's Day got caught in the furze
So it's up with the kettle and down with the
pan
give us a penny to bury the wren."

FRESH LEAF



So the fitting punishment was to find a wren before Christmas, kill it with a stone, and then the day after Christmas (the day assigned for St. Stephen's feast day) parade the dead bird around the village and plead for a penny to "bury the wren". Funerals were not that expensive in those days.

A great deal of money was collected in this dubious funeral rite so it was only right, fitting, proper, meet, and just, that there be a party to celebrate the good will of the villagers, the deadly aim of the young men from the village and satiate a terrible thirst brought on by all the shenanigans. If you are Irish you will have absolutely no trouble with that logic. Especially during the holiday season.



DID YOU KNOW?

Wrens are native to Montana and easily heard and spotted in late May and early June.

Did you also know that the Land Stewardship Committee is in need of volunteers to assist in the programs of Resurrection University Catholic Parish. No? Well it is the truth. To find out what you can do to join this merry group call Ellie Weber at 954-609-5612, or Paul Gore at 587-2001.



The Irish no longer kill wrens but costumes, bands and dancing still prevail on St. Stephen's feast day.

Many of the costumes mimic birds or holly branches but other "wilder" schemes are becoming popular.



NEW FROM THE COMMITTEE

The tree survey for the parish campus grounds is complete and a report with recommendations for

Fr. Val and the Parish council will be sent out in early 2020.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR





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In Jewish tradition, kindness to animals
is a purer act of goodness than helping one's neighbor.
There is no hope of receiving a return!

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Day light will peep through a little hole.
-- Scottish Proverb