National Emblems of the United Kingdom
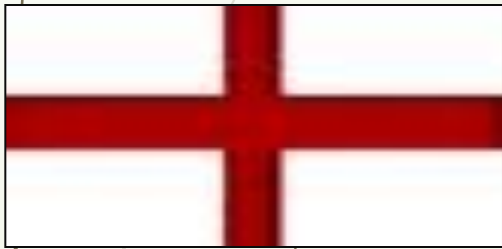
The Union Jack

St. George's Cross, the flag of England

St. Andrew's Cross, the flag of Scotland

St. Patrick's Cross, the flag of Ireland
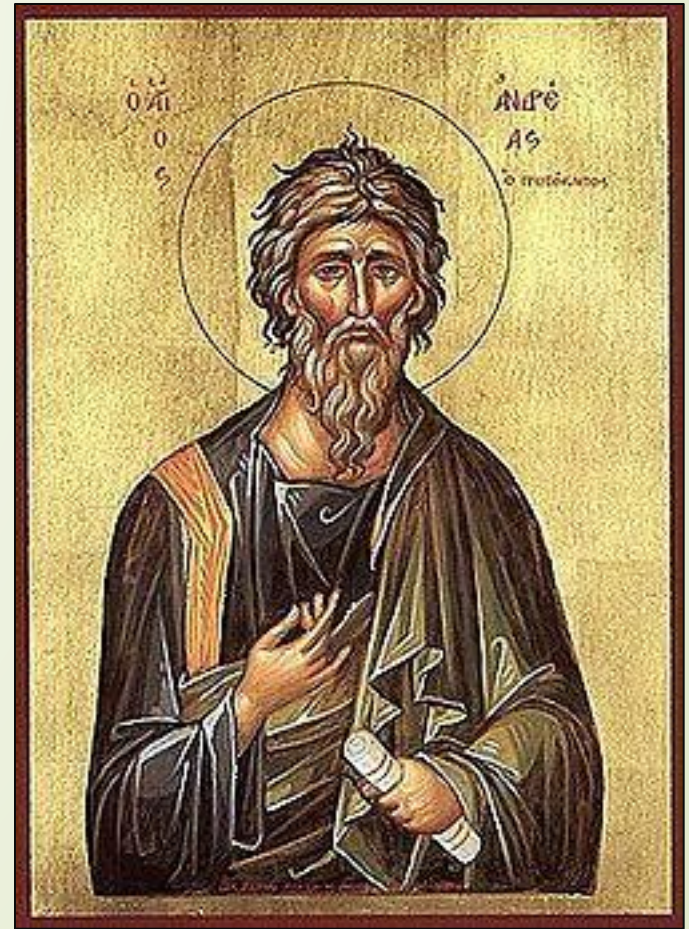
The Welsh flag

"the Welsh Dragon"

England

St. George's Day falls on 23 April and is regarded as England's national day. On this day some patriotic Englishmen wear a rose pinned to their jackets. A red rose is the national emblem of England from the time of the Wars of the Roses (15th century)

The **Tudor rose (the Rose of England)** was adopted as a national emblem of England around the time of the Wars of the Roses (1455-1485) as a symbol of peace. It is a symbol in that it merged the white rose of the royal house of York and the red rose of the royal house of Lancaster.

Scotland

St. Andrew's Day (the 30th of November) is regarded as Scotland's national day. On this day some Scotsmen wear a thistle in their buttonhole. As a national emblem of Scotland, thistle apparently first used in the 15th century as a symbol of defence.

The **thistle** has been the national emblem since it was adopted by King James III, in the 15th century. The thistle is an ancient Celtic symbol of nobility of character

Northern Ireland

St. Patrick's Day (the 17th of March) is considered as a national day in Northern Ireland and an official bank holiday there. The national emblem of Ireland is shamrock.

Shamrock is a three-leaved plant similar to clover. An Irish tale tells of how Patrick used the three-leafed shamrock to explain the Trinity. He used it in his sermons to represent how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit could all exist as separate elements of the same entity. His followers adopted the custom of wearing a shamrock on his feast day.

Wales

St. David's Day (the 1st of March) is the church festival of St. David, a 6th-century monk and bishop, the patron saint of Wales. The day is regarded as the national holiday of Wales, although it is not an official bank holiday. On this day, however, many Welshmen wear either a yellow daffodil or a leek pinned to their jackets, as both plants are traditionally regarded as national emblems of Wales.

The **daffodil** and the **leek** are symbols of Wales.

Royal coat of arms of the United Kingdom since 1837

Three lions symbolize England, a lion rampant — Scotland, and a harp — Ireland. The whole is encircled and is supported by a lion and a unicorn. The lion has been used as a symbol of national strength and of the British monarchy for many centuries. The unicorn, a mythical animal that looks like a horse with a long straight horn, has appeared on the Scottish and British royal coats of arms for many centuries, and is a symbol of purity.