



Vox Clamantis

Bulletin of the Society of Saint Pius X in Scotland

March 2024

"The will to do, the soul to dare"

Dear Faithful,

Unusually, this year's March is entirely taken up with Lent and Passiontide. The Sacred Triduum is in the last week and Easter Sunday on the last day of the month. Although Easter is the aim of all our Lenten efforts, we may concentrate our contemplation of Easter Joy in our next issue and concentrate more on our theme of penance during this coming month.

Towards the end of last month we were pleased to welcome the new District Superior, Rev. David Sherry. He is no stranger to Scotland, having spent 18 months here some years ago and so many will remember him.

Over the first few weeks of this penitential season, I have often mentioned the poor example Catholics give of true austerity during Lent. It is a bit like the Marquis of Bute hoping that, with the restoration of the hierarchy, we might return to a true penitential spirit. As I mentioned last time, from the beginning of Christianity up to the 'Reformation', the requirements and practices of Catholics were extraordinarily stringent by today's standards, having been relaxed bit by bit, until they are almost nonexistent today. Archbishop Lefebvre noted this in a letter written to faithful in 1982:

"The faithful who have a true spirit of faith and who profoundly understand the motives of the Church ... will wholeheartedly accomplish not only the light prescriptions of today but, entering into the spirit of Our Lord and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, will endeavour to make reparation for the sins which they have committed and for the sins of their family, their neighbours, friends and fellow citizens".

The Eastern Christian churches stick to a more vigorous observance (though it is subject to local variations) but the days of St. Duthac's fast are long gone. No animal meats or fats, no dairy products (eggs, milk, cheese, cream, butter etc.) and even Sundays were not exempt.



The priests of the priory with the new District Superior, Rev. David Sherry on his recent visit

Essentially, mediaeval Western Christians subsisted on bread, vegetables and some salt during Lent. Fish was permitted, though uncommon. The Good Friday fast began as early as sundown on Maunday Thursday, lasting through until after the Easter vigil on Holy Saturday morning.

That is, strictly speaking abstinence, but the number of times that food was allowed was also much stricter—generally no food until the evening.

Archbishop Lefebvre did not recommend a return to the practices of the 13th century, but he did have the following to say:

"Would we dare to say that this necessity [to fast] is less important in our day and age than in former times? On the contrary, we can and we must affirm that today, more than ever before, prayer and penance are necessary because everything possible has been done to diminish and despise these two fundamental elements of Christian life".

With every good wish and blessing,

Rev. Sebastian Wall (Prior)



St. DUTHAC – Royal Patron of Tain



There is no doubt that devotion to St. Duthac of Tain by the 15th/16th century was very great. Local devotion led to the building of three churches dedicated to him in Tain and these churches became a site of pilgrimage from both the North and the King in the South.



Less well understood is why such devotion had arisen. Who was Duthac and why is his picture (the only one we have) painted onto a pillar in Cologne Cathedral?

The history of the churches is the first riddle. The former shrine church, which is the only building with a roof today, was gutted (curiously with the exception of the statue of St. Duthac on the West façade) at the 'Reformation'. It then became the Parish church and itself risked falling into ruin when it was abandoned in 1815 (it was later restored in 1877). This was probably built in the mid 14th century. Next to it is another church, the old parish church, which was built slightly earlier, possibly at the beginning of the 14th century. The oldest of the three is the original shrine church which was built in the 13th century, Tradition says, on the site of the saint's birth, by Fearchar mac an t-sagairt (son of the priest here means he is known for protecting the shrine of the saint). The 4th Earl of Ross, his descendent, would later be killed in battle wearing the shirt

of St. Duthac. When pilgrimages were forcibly stopped after 1560, there was no need for two churches so close to each other and so the older building was abandoned. The reason for a second shrine church was due to the original's property of being a 'sanctuary church'. This was granted by Malcom III shortly after the saint's death in Armagh, probably in honour of the saint, but to the whole of Tain (the church had not yet been built). It was later restricted to the church in 1253 when the saint's relics were returned to Scotland. Sanctuary churches in the mediaeval period were generally held inviolate but some fifty years later, in 1306, Robert the Bruce who had recently been crowned King of Scotland, discovered this was not the case for all in Easter Ross. The war with England was not going well. Pitched battles were not the way to beat such a powerful and much larger enemy so the King decided to take his men to the hills and fight a more guerrilla style warfare. He left his wife Elisabeth, his daughter Marjorie (from his first marriage) and his sisters Christiane and Mary in the hands of his brother Neil and a few trusted men in the holy place. The Earl of Ross, however, cared nothing for sanctuary and took all prisoner, shipping them off to his ally, the King of England. Neil Bruce was hung, drawn and beheaded; the women either sent to nunneries or kept in cages hanging from fortress walls like the young Marjorie, still a girl really, at the Tower of London. The Queen was kept in Burstwick in Holderness.

Sanctuary also led to the destruction of the original church and the necessity of building another as the shrine. In 1427, during the strife between Clan MacKay and Clan Ross, the Laird of Freswick, Alexander Mowat and his kinsmen fled to the church, whither they were pursued by Thomas Mackay of Creich. Since it was a sanctuary, his pursuer couldn't enter to kill him so instead he burnt the church down. Along with the building, the ancient Charters of the girth of Tain granting sanctuary, together with the 'foundation charter, the papal bull of confirmation, and other deeds and numerous relics' of nearby Fearn Abbey.

That's where the profusion of churches comes from. The question is, why was there such a determination to keep the devotion alive. Most secular histories claim this was purely political. Tain needed to establish itself as a Royal Burgh and, therefore, needed a saint to justify it. Although it is true that the Royal Charter was granted a year after the death of Duthac by Malcolm, it is not the only motiva-

tion. Indeed, this theory was examined in an inquest in 1439. Inverness was disputing Tain's claim to be a burgh but lost in 1439 and half a dozen times later in the succeeding centuries.

To see the justification as purely political is simplistic. The devotion of the locals and later Scots from all over the kingdom is evidenced in place names and, indeed, the numbers of pilgrims to the shrine. The principal reason must lie in the life of the saint itself. So, who was Duthac? Of course, there are few sources and, other than the date of his death, no contemporary ones. The Aberdeen breviary has an account of his life and Bishop Forbes has the following account of some of his miracles.

He sprang from no ignoble family of the Scoti, and his wise instructors early imbued him with a knowledge of the Christian Faith. While engaged at his youthful studies, it pleased God to perform a wonderful miracle. His preceptor having sent him for fire to a workshop, snatching up with tongs some burning thorns, the workman cast them into the youth's bosom. His clothes even remained unscathed and unscathed, while Duthac carried the burning thorns safely to his master. By Divine direction, it is stated, Duthac crossed over to Hibernia. There, he applied to study the precepts and laws of the Old and New Testament, and on his return to Scotland, he taught these publicly with all gentleness. Shortly after, he was consecrated by his co-bishops, as universal and chief pastor. He was remarkable, for his gift of miracles. One of these throws a picturesque light, on the manners of his time. Duthac had been invited to a feast. He had sent a portion of swine's flesh, with a gold ring, by one of Duthac's disciples; but, the latter, on passing a cemetery, laid down the flesh and ring there, desiring to offer prayers, for the souls departed. Meantime, a hungry kite snatched them up and flew away across a river, towards a dense wood. Fearing the anger, both of the donor and of his master, the disciple straightway returned, with an account of what had happened. Whereupon, St. Duthac retired for a few minutes, and he prayed; when the kite soon returned, and laid what he had taken, at the saint's feet. Blessed Duthac accepted the ring, but he restored the flesh to that kite, which anon flew away. Again, in the case of a cake, made with honey and butter, food was miraculously increased, and the remains worked cures. While celebrating the feast of St. Finbarr of Cork, a canon of Dornoch Church caused a fat ox to be killed for the poor. Determining to carry a portion of it himself to St. Duthac, during a dark and stormy night; the spit, on which this food was carried, gave a light both coming and going.



The collegiate church of St. Duthac in Tain

It is similarly recorded that, having died in Armagh, his body was found incorrupt after seven years. When his relics were returned to Scotland some two hundred years later, however, they consisted of his breast bone, his head and the accoutrements of a bell, a shirt and his staff. These were kept in reliquaries in the shrine until July, 1560, Nicholas Ross, the custodian of the shrine, made preparations to travel south to Edinburgh to attend the Scottish parliament. Mindful of the damage wrought since 1559 by iconoclastic crowds further south, Nicholas left the silver and gold relics belonging to the shrine in the safekeeping of his kinsman, Alexander Ross of Balnagown. They would never be seen again.

The painting on the pillar is another mystery. Building materials for the Cathedral certainly came, in part, from Scotland, particularly Angus stone. Between 1359 and c.1530 this previously local cult spread across the kingdom, with dedications to the saint found in most of the large burgh churches and as far south as Ayr and Kelso. But it is more likely due to the royal patronage that raised the saint to an international reputation. James III raised the shrine church to Collegiate Status by a charter of 1487, giving the increased numbers of clergy considerable independence and prestige. In 1492, this was confirmed from Rome by Pope Innocent VIII, whose Papal Bull conferring this privilege is still preserved on site. Even more remarkable is that his successor, James IV visited every year for 20 years, sometimes twice a year. His last visit was shortly before Flodden. There are plenty of precedents for this sort of behaviour in the middle ages. The mediæval kings of France visited the Abbey of St. Denis before going to war, while their English counterparts would visit a string of northern shrines before any invasion of Scotland. As well as patronising altars and chapels in Scotland, it is very possible that James sponsored a modest image of his favourite saint on the newly started Cathedral in Germany.

Mass Schedule

	CARLUKE	GLASGOW	EDINBURGH
Friday 1 st March (<i>First Friday</i>)		6.30pm	6.30pm
Saturday 2 nd March (<i>First Saturday</i>)		11am	11am
Sunday 3 rd March — 3 rd of Lent		8.30am & 10am	9am & 11am
Monday 4 th March			7am
Tuesday 5 th March	7.15am		Rosary — 7pm
Wednesday 6 th March	7.15am		
Thursday 7 th March	11am		
Friday 8 th March (St. Duthac)		6.30pm	
Saturday 9 th March		11am	11am
Sunday 10 th March — 4 th of Lent (Laetare)		8.30am & 10am	9am & 11am
Monday 11 th March			7am
Tuesday 12 th March	7.15am		Rosary — 7pm
Wednesday 13 th March	7.15am		
Thursday 14 th March	11am		
Friday 15 th March		6.30pm	
Saturday 16 th March		11am	11am
Sunday 17 th March — Passion Sunday		8.30am & 10am	9am & 11am
Monday 18 th March			7am
Tuesday 19 th March — Saint Joseph	7.15am	6.30pm	6.30pm
Wednesday 20 th March	7.15am		
Thursday 21 st March	11am		
Friday 22 nd March — Our Lady of Sorrows	7.15am	6.30pm	6.30pm
Saturday 23 rd March		11am	11am
Sunday 24 th March — Palm Sunday		10am	11am
Monday 25 th March	7.15am		
Tuesday 26 th March	7.15am		Rosary — 7pm
Wednesday 27 th March	7.15am		
Thursday 28 th March		7pm	7pm
Friday 29 th March		3pm	3pm
Saturday 30 th March		Vigil: 7pm	Vigil: 10.30pm
Sunday 31 st March — Easter Sunday		10am	Midnight & 11am

<p>Contact details:</p> <p>Telephone: 01555 771523</p> <p>Email: standrews@fsspx.uk</p> <p>Resident priests:</p> <p>Rev. Fr. Sebastian Wall (Prior)</p> <p>Rev. Fr. Reid Hennick</p> <p>Rev. Fr. Francis Ockerse</p>	<p>Saint Andrew's House</p> <p>31, Lanark Road,</p> <p>CARLUKE</p> <p>ML8 4HE</p>	<p>Saint Andrew's Church</p> <p>202, Renfrew Street,</p> <p>GLASGOW</p> <p>G3 6TX</p>	<p>Saints Margaret and Leonard's Church</p> <p>110, Saint Leonard's Street,</p> <p>EDINBURGH</p> <p>EH8 9RD</p>
<p>If you require any further information concerning one of these places, or need to talk to a priest e.g. in case of emergency for the Sacraments, please ring the phone number mentioned in contact details.</p>			