



Vox Clamantis

Bulletin of the Society of Saint Pius X in Scotland

June 2019

"The will to do, the soul to dare"

Dear Faithful,

June presents us most years with a real flowering of the Church's liturgical year. This year we celebrate Whitsun, Corpus Christi and the Sacred Heart during June as well as the feasts which always fall in that month, *viz.* St. John the Baptist and Sts. Peter and Paul.

In common with much of the developed world, Scotland had a predominantly agricultural economy until relatively recently and it may seem odd that these holy days – Whit week and the various isolated days of sanctification and, therefore, abstinence from work – occur during such a busy time on the land. Nowadays, of course, considerations of weather in the country and commerce in the towns are the principal concerns of modern man. Whit Monday was still a bank holiday in England when I was a boy though that has long since fallen to "Spring Bank Holiday" and the secularisation of modern society continues apace.

That is probably why the bishops, whose decision it is whether a holyday of obligation remains so within their jurisdiction, are probably motivated by the thought that it is better for there to be no obligation to hear Mass on certain days, if the people are not going to go, either because they cannot, due to work, or will not. This makes it quite tricky for us in Tradition, who cannot oblige our faithful under pain of sin, but would like to keep the traditional days holy (particularly Corpus Christi which always, and Sts. Peter and Paul which often falls on a day other than Sunday).

But we must be careful not to let lack of obligation lead to indifference. That is why your priests make considerable efforts to provide you with the possibility of hearing Mass on these days since a) they have been kept so for centuries, through the industrial revolution and well beyond, b) they are still holidays in the universal Church to which we belong and c)



Confirmations in St. Margaret and St. Leonard's, Edinburgh

they offer worship to God and sanctification to His people. We would like to encourage our faithful too, if it is at all possible (inconvenience notwithstanding) to make similar efforts. The retired and self-employed will obviously find it easier to get to Mass on these days but I urge everyone to make a special effort, making the act virtuous rather than merely required. God will not let Himself be outdone in generosity.

Last month saw the Sacrament of Confirmation being administered in our church in Edinburgh but with faithful from both churches joining forces to provide a worthy ceremony for this great occasion in many of our young people's lives (and that of Archie McQuater, now in his 91st year). I would particularly like to thank the Glasgow choir for their efforts in making the long journey to enrich the singing during the Mass celebrated after Confirmation.

Please remember also to pray for your priests especially this month, which sees the anniversary of their ordination.

With every good wish and blessing,

Rev. Sebastian Wall (Prior)



St. Columba and the seeds of Scottish unity



The founder of the monastery of Iona, and perhaps one of the most significant figures in Scottish history, as well as being an international figure of enormous influence is the Scot, St. Columba. Of course, he was a Scot only in the sense that the Romans thus designated the Gaelic speakers in the North Western parts of what today is Scotland, and, in fact, he was born in what they similarly called Scotia but what we know as Ulster.

Perhaps Columba has come to figure in Scottish minds rather as a benign visionary practising the gentler virtues in the misty obscurity of Iona, whereas the force, scale and achievement of the man are more in line with his physical attributes. By the time he came to Scotland in 563, at the age of 42, he was a tall, powerfully-built man with a rich, sonorous voice which could be heard from one hill to the next.

Born Crimthann (Fox) into a pagan family in 521, Columba adopted his name at baptism taking a name that means dove (much like the name Jonah from the Old Testament means dove). The form Colm Cill adds the element "of the Church" and is often the form found in Scottish place names today. He was educated at the monastic school of Moville under St. Finnian, who had himself studied at St. Ninian's *Magnum Monasterium* on the shores of Gallogway and maintained the British forms of Christianity inherited from St. David (thus bringing the mutual pollination of the two communities full circle).

It is because of his extraordinary importance that we have so much certain information about him. There was a life of him written already in the 630s, probably based on an oral tradition passed on by people who had known him while he was alive, and written down by a monk, Cummene, who later became Abbot of Iona. This was added to by a later Abbot, Adomnan at the end of the 7th century, leaving us a record unique in its detail, both



with regard to the life of the saint as well as contemporary life of the Gaels of Dalriada and the pagan Picts.

Of all the 6th century monastic founders (and there were many) Columba is the only one to have been closely connected to a royal lineage of considerable power and this seems to have played a part in his departure from Ireland. His biographer says he "sailed away from Ireland to Britain choosing to be a pilgrim for Christ". The full reasons are too complex to go into in an article of this size, but it is enough to know that, after consulting his confessor, St. Molaisse, he chose voluntary exile, landing, indeed, at Oronsay but swiftly moving further north since Ireland can still be seen from there. When he arrived at Iona and found that, even from high ground, he could not see his native land he raised a small cairn of stones: *Cam Cuil ri Erenn* – the

cairn of Back towards Ireland. The story is picturesque but doesn't change the fact that he *did* in fact return to Ireland to negotiate Dalriada's independence from Ulster and thus to take an important step in the forging of nationhood for Scotland. It is very possible



Colum Cill opening the doors of Craig Phadrig

that he chose to leave Ireland in the hope of releasing his religious commitment from the entanglement of Irish dynastic politics.

Thus, it is fairly possible that he knew the King of Dalriada, Conall mac Comgaill, who gifted him the island of Iona to found a monastery. Indeed, it is with the support of Conall that Columba and his 12 companions were able to survive on the island when there would have been no time to prepare ground, plant and harvest crops in their first year. Within Columba's lifetime, representatives of all four nations of Scotland (Britons, Englishmen, Picts and Gaels) were present on Iona and over the centuries its central position and the missionary zeal of the monks made it a religious centre without parallel.

Whereas he was familiar with, and indeed distantly related to the Scots of the Western

Isles and seaboard, there was another, far larger, kingdom (since 558 united under King Bridei) of Picts to the East. These were the Northern Picts, different from the ones converted by St. Ninian. It is particularly with the conversion of these peoples that St.



Bede credits Columba, some century after his death, when, by that time, dependencies of Iona formed a major part of the Church in Pictland. Certainly, the Pictish King Naiton writing to Bede at that time attributes the conversion of his people to our saint.

There is a story of Columba's first visit up from the Firth of Lorn, through the Great Glen to Inverness. Bridei refused to allow the missionaries into the fortress, but – it is said – at the sign of the cross being made by Columba the barred gates of the fortress simply opened. The story goes on to record that the King, overawed by this miracle, was converted on the spot, with the rest of the Picts not long after him. Preparing the ground for MacAlpin, some time later, Columba also made peace between the Picts and the Scots of Dalriada.

Another story relates how on a journey, Columba encountered several Picts who were burying the body of a man who had been killed by a monster which lived in the River Ness. The man had been swimming across the river when the “water beast” attacked him, mauling him and dragging him underwater. From a boat, they managed to rescue the body but he was already dead. Columba instructed one of his followers, Luigne Moccu Min, to jump in the water and swim to the other side. Luigne immediately stripped down and plunged in. The monster, robbed of its earlier feast, surfaced and darted at Luigne with its jaws open. Firm in the authority of the crucified Christ, Columba raised his hand and, making the sign of the cross, commanded the beast saying, “Go no further, go back at once”. The beast fled “more quickly than if it had been pulled back with ropes,” says Adomnan.

Rationalists, of course, roll their eyes at such tales but there is no denying the fact that, even while he was alive, he was widely regarded as a holy man by Christian and pagan alike and that his influence on the development of Christianity in Scotland was enormous. Place-names scattered wide over the country recall his journeys and religious foundations: the Isles, of

course, but also as far south as Strathclyde, Kilmalcolm in Renfrew, Largs in Ayrshire and into the Pictish kingdom of Galloway. Among the Northern Picts monasteries or churches were founded in Banffshire, up to Caithness and even further in Orkney, whereas in the South perhaps the most important foundation was at Dunkeld, later a diocese and for a time the ecclesiastical capital of Scotland.

The name *Mael Coluim* (disciple of Columba, modern forms: Malcolm, Callum) is still a popular name in Scotland today and starting in the 10th century became the name of four kings of Scotland. And his influence goes far beyond Scotland, as far afield as parts of Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and Switzerland.

After his death, the prestige of Iona continued. He had initiated the concept of “anointing” kings, bringing the Church into the political life of the country. This was done first with the consecration of Aidan on Iona and led to it becoming something of a sacred isle where kings of Scotland (48), Ireland (4) and Norway (8) were buried.

Over the centuries the monks of Iona produced countless elaborate carvings, manuscripts and Celtic crosses. Perhaps their greatest work was the exquisite *Book of Kells*, which dates from 800 AD, currently on display in Trinity College, Dublin. Iona had the first scriptoriums (writing offices), libraries, archives, and schools which used reading and writing. Columba's monasteries placed literary activity at the forefront of their work. Columba himself is credited with being a poet and a writer. Three surviving early mediaeval Latin hymns may be attributed to him. He was said to be copying the Psalms just before his death and the oldest Irish manuscript in existence – a copy of the Psalms known as the *Cathach* – is said to be in his hand.

His rule exhorts, “a mind prepared for red martyrdom. A mind fortified and steadfast for white martyrdom. Forgiveness from the heart to everyone. Constant prayers for those who trouble thee. The love of God with all thy heart and all thy strength. The love of neighbour as thyself”.

Et dixi, Quis dabit mihi pennas sicut Columbae? & uolabo, & requiescam? Ps. 54,7



Mass Schedule

	CARLUKE	GLASGOW	EDINBURGH
Saturday 1 st June (<i>First Saturday</i>)		11am	11am
Sunday 2 nd June — Sunday after the Ascension		10.30am	11am
Monday 3 rd June	11am		
Tuesday 4 th June			6.30pm
Wednesday 5 th June	11am		
Thursday 6 th June	11am		
Friday 7 th June (<i>First Friday</i>)		6.30pm	
Saturday 8 th June – Whitsun Eve		11am	11am
Sunday 9 th June – Whit Sunday		10.30am	11am
Whit Monday 10 th June	11am		
Whit Tuesday 11 th June			
Whit Wednesday 12 th June (Ember Day)			
Whit Thursday 13 th June	11am		
Whit Friday 14 th June (Ember Day)		6.30pm	
Whit Saturday 15 th June (Ember Day)			11am
Sunday 16 th June — Trinity Sunday		10.30am	11am
Monday 17 th June	11am		
Tuesday 18 th June	11am		
Wednesday 19 th June	11am		
Thursday 20 th June — Corpus Christi		6.30pm	12.30pm
Friday 21 st June		6.30pm	
Saturday 22 nd June		11am	11am
Sunday 23 rd June — 2 nd after Whit Sunday		10.30am	11am
Monday 24 th June — St. John the Baptist	11am		
Tuesday 25 th June	11am		
Wednesday 26 th June	11am		
Thursday 27 th June	11am		
Friday 28 th June — Sacred Heart of Jesus		6.30pm	6.30pm
Saturday 29 th June — Sts. Peter and Paul		11am	11am
Sunday 30 th June — 3 rd after Whit Sunday		10.30am	11am

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Resident priests:

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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.