



Vox Clamantis

Bulletin of the Society of Saint Pius X in Scotland

July 2022

"The will to do, the soul to dare"

Dear Faithful,

If the end of May was quite busy for us here in Scotland, the liturgical activity at the end of June/beginning of this month is even more so! The month starts with 1st Friday and 1st Saturday, which this year fall on the feasts of the Precious Blood and the Visitation respectively. That weekend is also when the YRC will be visiting Edinburgh so I expect the church to be very busy. The Parish barbecue for Edinburgh was held on the 1st Saturday of last month and saw glorious weather. The follicly challenged did well to wear a hat, I spent the following day looking very much like a Belisha beacon.

The feast of St. Drostan occurs this month (on the 11th). He seems to have been a son of the royal family of Dalriada, whose father was called Cosgrach. He was one of the original 12 disciples who left Ireland with St. Columba, settling with him first on Iona and then accompanying him on his Northern missions to the Picts, particularly in Aberdeenshire and possibly with St. Fergus. Appointed to the monastery at Deer after the Pictish King relented in his initial opposition and granted them the land, he was later appointed to Dalquhongale Abbey, which some have associated with Holywood Abbey in Dumfries and Galloway. Still later he became a hermit in Glen Esk in Angus, and is said to have performed many miracles, including restoring the sight of a priest named Symon. After his death, Drostan's relics were kept in a church at Aberdour (the small village near Deer in Aberdeenshire not the village on the Firth of Forth in Fife).

There are many place names which give testimony of his missionary activity, particularly in the North East, including the confusingly similar Aberlour. As its name suggests (it's first element Pictish, the second the Gaelic name of the burn—*lobhar*, meaning loud or 'chattering'), it is at the confluence of the Lour



The Parish barbecue for Edinburgh, held in Ratho at the beginning of June



Burn and the river Spey. Originally, (i.e. before the 19th century) it was called Skirdustan, which has the same linguistic meaning. St. Drostan's spring rises here and presently is the source for the distillery of the eponymous whisky. The ruins of the church here date back to at least 900 but were probably built on an older site (the mean and ancient St. Drostan's according to the OS).

With every good wish and blessing,

Rev. Sebastian Wall (Prior)



ROBERT WISHART, GUARDIAN OF THE REALM



Reading the name ‘Wishart’ in the title of this article, the casual reader might think of the seditious preacher George Wishart, responsible for popularising the works of Zwingli and Calvin in Scotland and for being tried as a heretic, hanged on a gibbet and his body burned at St. Andrews. Of his heresy there is no doubt. At his trial he refused to accept that confession was a sacrament, denied free will, claimed that all believing Christians were priests, and rejected the notion that the infinite God could be “comprehended in one place” between “the priest’s hands”. He further proclaimed that the true Church was where the Word of God was faithfully preached and the two dominical sacraments (Baptism and Holy Communion) rightly administered. But our story this month goes back some 300 years previously.

Robert Wishart, of the same family, was born about 1240 into a family from the Mearns, and the second son of Adam Wyschard, founder of the House of Logie. Robert’s childhood and early years are unknown, however, at some point, he followed his uncle William Wishart, who had been an archdeacon of St. Andrews since 1254, into the church. William secured Robert’s promotion to archdeacon of St. Andrews in 1267 and subsequently in 1271, while holding the position of Bishop-elect of Glasgow, William resigned, and with his nephew’s backing, was postulated to the See of St. Andrews. In return, and with his previous position now vacant, William’s influence probably cemented Robert’s election to Glasgow.



Both Wisharts were consecrated in 1273. Robert at Aberdeen on 29th January, William at Scone on 15th October. During the next thirteen years, Robert became a prominent political figure during the reign of Alexander III and was the king’s representative at the second Council of Lyon in 1274. In the years immediately preceding Alexander’s death, Robert was said to have seen less activity in public affairs, instead devoting much of his energies to completing improvements to Glasgow Cathedral.

Thus far, our relation may seem a rather prosaic tale of typical (though not necessarily malign) nepotism in the mediaeval Scottish Church, but things were to change dramatically with the death of the King in 1286. Scotland was at that time enjoying a period of great national prosperity under “the Peaceable King.”

Commerce with the Continent was in so flourishing a condition that Berwick-on-Tweed, which then led the way in enterprise, was regarded as a second Alexandria. Religion also was in a healthy state with the evangelistic zeal of the two new orders, the Blackfriars and the Greyfriars, was reviving spiritual life. “The Church of Christ flourished” says Fordun, “her priests were honoured with due worship, vice was withered, craft there was none, wrong came to an end, truth was strong and righteousness reigned.”

Alexander had married the English King’s daughter, Margaret, when he was 10 (under the watchful eye of her brother, the long-legged Edward). They had three children, each of whom pre-deceased him. He had one grandchild, the three year old Margaret, the so-called Maid of Norway. At his death, this made her the last of the Canmores and the only heir to the throne. A regent was needed, but it was decided instead to appoint six Guardians, three North and three South of the Forth. Robert was one of the Southern Guardians.

Strife immediately broke out with various claimants to legitimacy struggling to take the crown. The Guardians nonetheless kept the peace and civil war was averted. At Birgham in the Borders, they agreed to the marriage of the now six year old Margaret to Edward’s son. But Wishart was adamant, Scotland by such a marriage was to remain “separate and divided from England according to its rightful boundaries, free in itself and without subjection”. All this diplomacy, however, came to naught when, on 26th September, 1290, Margaret died on her way to Scotland from Norway.

If things had looked precarious before, they now seemed desperate. There were 13 separate claims to the throne, some of whom with the means to impose them with violence. In desperation, Bishop Fraser of St. Andrews (a Northern Guardian) and seven Scottish earls wrote to Edward to judge between the candidates. When Edward arrived at Norham he dumbfounded the Scots by imposing as a condition their acceptance of him as their feudal overlord. Bishop Wishart was not so cowed. He stood before the King and declared, “But where it pleased the King to speak of a right of supremacy over the Kingdom of Scotland, it was sufficiently known that Scotland from the first foundation of the State had been a free and independent kingdom, and not subject to any other power whatsoever. Howbeit, the present occasion hath bred some distinction of minds, all

true-hearted Scots will stand for the liberty of their country to the death, for they esteem their liberty more precious than their lives, and in that quarrel will neither separate nor divide... the kingdom of Scotland is not held in tribute or homage to anyone save God alone ”.

John Balliol ended up being selected (Wishart favoured Bruce). But when Edward declared war on France, Wishart's response, as one of the twelve counsellors chosen by the Parliament at Stirling was to initiate the *Auld Alliance* with France (ratified in 1296). Edward's response was promptly to invade Scotland and subdue what he saw as rebellion at Dunbar. Wishart was once more forced to swear fealty to the English King. Since, over the coming years he was to do this some eight times, each time breaking it, one might legitimately ask, is this not a serious sin? The morality (or, indeed, legitimacy) of a forced oath is another question, however, and Edward certainly only kept his own oaths until it was expedient.

With a compliant King John, Wishart now had to look for other powerful figures who could provide some effective opposition for Edward's intolerable abuse of power and military might. After Edward's triumphant progress through Scotland (exacting more oaths of allegiance), Wishart turned to William Wallace, inciting him (according to Edward's letter to the Pope) against the Southern overlord. This, however, ended ignominiously for Bruce, Douglas and Wishart, at Irvine in 1297. Wallace went on to win at Stirling while Wishart was in prison.

In 1300, after a complaint by the Pope, Wishart was released and, after the customary oath, set about energetically encouraging Bruce and Wallace putting at their disposal the arms and munitions of his diocese.

After the betrayal of Wallace (and another brief period of exile for his part in the rebellion), Wishart was back in Glasgow in 1306 when Bruce brought matters to a head by his murder of John Comyn. Comyn was originally a pursuivant of the Scottish Crown and Bruce hoped he could persuade him at a meeting in the Dumfries Greyfriars church to support a rebellion. Comyn instead professed loyalty to King John and indirectly to Edward. The impetuous Bruce ended up killing Comyn in frustration.

Hastily he repaired to Glasgow, where he sought absolution from a furious Wishart. This latter indeed gave the absolution but, realising the urgency which these events would cause, prepared in his own wardrobe the robes in which Bruce was to be arrayed for the corona-

tion ceremony. And he sent the same, together with a banner of the arms of the kingdom of Scotland, which had been long concealed in his treasury, with Bruce at the Abbey of Scone where he certainly was present at the coronation and in all probability performed the act himself.

Besides, he went about the country preaching to the people in order to excite them to espouse the cause of Bruce, assuring them that carrying on war against the King of England was as meritorious as fighting against the Saracens in the Holy Land. He defended Cupar Castle unsuccessfully and was led in chains down to England to appear before Edward who kept him in prison for eight years. He was released, blind, after Bannockburn, returning to his See to end up ruling it for 44 years, the longest of any bishop on record. He died on 26th November, 1216, and was buried in Glasgow Cathedral. The effigy was later beheaded in the mindless destruction following 1560.

Bannockburn or the War of Independence would not normally be a subject for this bulletin but it is extremely important to remember that Wallace nor Bruce would have had the success they did without the support of the Church. And in this case, it is indisputably down to the continued efforts, in good and bad times, on the part of the Bishop of Glasgow (attested by Pope and Edward alike) that the War was won at all. There is also the element of independence for the Scottish Church at play in much of his patriotism. Being assimilated into England politically would have meant losing the independent Scottish hierarchy and being subject to York or, ultimately, Canterbury. If we still have an independent hierarchy today, it is in large part due to him.



Mass Schedule

	Carlisle	Glasgow	Edinburgh
Friday 1 st July — Precious Blood (<i>First Friday</i>)		6.30pm	6.30pm
Saturday 2 nd July (<i>First Saturday</i>)		11am	11am
Sunday 3 rd July — 4 th Sunday after Whitsun		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 4 th July	11am		
Tuesday 5 th July			6.30pm
Wednesday 6 th July	7.15am		
Thursday 7 th July	11am		
Friday 8 th July	7.15am		
Saturday 9 th July		11am	11am
Sunday 10 th July — 5 th Sunday after Whitsun		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 11 th July	11am		
Tuesday 12 th July			
Wednesday 13 th July	7.15am		
Thursday 14 th July	11am		
Friday 15 th July	7.15am		
Saturday 16 th July		11am	11am
Sunday 17 th July — 6 th Sunday after Whitsun		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 18 th July	11am		
Tuesday 19 th July			6.30pm
Wednesday 20 th July	7.15am		
Thursday 21 st July	11am		
Friday 22 nd July	7.15am		
Saturday 23 rd July		11am	11am
Sunday 24 th July — 7 th Sunday after Whitsun		9am & 11am	9am & 11am
Monday 25 th July	11am		
Tuesday 26 th July			6.30pm
Wednesday 27 th July	7.15am		
Thursday 28 th July	11am		
Friday 29 th July	7.15am		
Saturday 30 th July		11am	11am
Sunday 31 st July — 8 th Sunday after Whitsun		9am & 11am	9am & 11am

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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.