



Colmcille – Ireland’s First Missionary

In 2021, we celebrate the 1,500th anniversary of the birth of the saint variously known as Colmcille (the Dove of the Church), Columba or Columb, the secondary patron of Ireland. Colmcille, son of Felim, belonged to the Cinel Conall branch of the Northern Ui Neill and, as he was within the Deirbhfinne, he was entitled to become chief of Cinel Conall or even High King of Ireland. Colmcille was born, according to most historians, in Gartain in North Central Donegal. He was fostered by Cruithenechan, the local priest. He went to St. Fintian’s Monastery at Movilla in County Down and to St. Fintian’s Monastery at Clonard on the Boyne, where he was ordained a priest. When doing further studies at St. Mobhi’s in Glasnevin, the Bui Conall plague struck, which killed the founder. The community dispersed and Colmcille’s kinsmen gave him some land beside the Foyle. According to the Annals of Ulster, he founded his monastery in 546AD.

On St. Patrick’s national journey to the northwest in the fifth century, he entered Tir Chonaill at Ballyshannon, spent a Lent on Lough Derg and went north via Barnesmore Gap. Most of the area westward wasn’t Christianised until the middle of the sixth century. Colmcille and his monks converted much of the area – Tory Island, Drumholm and Raphoe were among the monasteries he founded. Many of the prominent early Christian sites were originally pagan places, such as Patrick’s, Armagh and St. Brigid’s, Kildare. When Colmcille was in the Donegal Bay area, he visited Disert, nestling under Carnaween, a mountain which is still climbed on Heat herberry Sunday as a remnant of the old Baal worship. There, he looked through a stone and blessed all the places he could see. He also blessed the well and, thus, founded a turas and hermitage, which was in keeping with the Celtic spirituality of the Irish saints. Clay from Disert, like the clay from other Columban sites of Tory and Gartan, was said to banish rats. Colmcille also founded monasteries in other territories of the Ui Neill as far south as Durrow.

“Why, Oh Why, did he go?”

In 563AD, accompanied by the biblical number of twelve monks, ‘sailed down the Foyle’, their coracles’ stern turned upon Dery ‘and scholars have debated the reason for his exodus since the ninth century. Adamhnan (624 -702), his earliest biographer, stated that he went as a pilgrim for Christ. In 721, the Venerable Bede wrote of Colmcille, who came from Ireland to convert the pagan Picts. Adhamhnan tells us that he went two years after the Battle of Cul Dreimhne. This has led to the story that he was responsible for this clash between the Southern and Northern Ui Neills, where the latter blocked the High Kings attempted advance into Ulster at Cul Dreimhne between Benbulbin and the sea. The Preface to the tenth century’s Liber Hymnorum tells us that Colmcille was responsible for the battle because he refused to obey the King’s judgement and surrender the manuscript he had surreptitiously copied from St. Fintian’s recently acquired Vulgate (other writers say it was a copy of the psalter later known as An Cathach the O’Donnell’s Battler).

The twelfth century Leabhar na hUidhre says it was because the High King broke sanctuary and killed a prince who was under Colmcille’s protection. Colmcille was excommunicated at the Synod of Telltonn. However, this was lifted when he agreed to go and convert as many souls as had been killed in the battle. Other sources say that was the penance imposed on him by his confessor, St. Molaise of Devenish, then at his monastery on Innismurray in Donegal Bay.

In Alba

In the late fifth century, Gaels from The Dal Riada in north east Ulster had founded a colony in Argyll (Iar Gaeil). With the permission of their kind, Gabhran Mac Dumangart, Colmcille founded a monastery on Iona, an island on the border between the Gaelic and Pictish territories. From this base, the Columban monks began preaching to the Gaeil. Later, they went north to Inverness in the territory of the Picts. On this journey, Adhamhnan reported seeing a huge monster in the lough – the first recorded sighting of the mythical Nessie. In 574AD, Colmcille consecrated Aidan Mac Gabhran as the new kind of Dal Riada in his monastery of Iona. This added greatly to the abbey’s prestige as a religious, cultural and political centre, both in Scotland and in Ireland.

The Convention of Drumcat

Because of Colmcille’s family connections and his political astuteness, his advice was often sought. When the Convention of Drumcat (near Limavady) was being convened, Baoithin and two other saints from the Templeboy area of Sligo were sent to Iona to bring him to the convention. He was accompanied by the kind of Dalriada. Kings, chiefs and bishops from all over Ireland attended. Among the matters settled was the relationship between Dal Riada and the Irish kings, and that women would be exempt from military service.

The bards/poets, because of their excessive demands for hospitality, were being threatened with banishment. Colmcille, who had received training in Gemman’s bardic school before becoming a monk, managed to solve the problem satisfactory. Before returning to Iona, Colmcille visited many of his earlier foundations. Modern scholarship claims that it was only then when some of these were founded.

After Colmcille’s Death

Colmcille died in his church on Iona on 9 June and was buried there. His monks continued the work he started, evangelising all through Scotland and into Britain as far south as Mercia. The early Irish saints were noted for their sanctity, their miracles and their visions. As well as these, Colmcille is remembered for his ability to foresee the future, e.g., some of his prophecies concern mundane matters such as weather warnings, while others are of historical nature. Books have been written about these alleged prophecies. In a poem, ‘Mo Deirigin’ (My Derry), he lamented that an ‘Easpag Gallda’ (a bishop with a foreign religion) would one day rule in his beloved Derry. This came to pass in 1606 when H

James I appointed Rev George Montgomery as the first bishop of the established Church in the dioceses of Raphoe, Clogher and Derry.

The then unbelievable taxing of dogs came to pass under the 1865 Dog Licensing Act.

New challenges arose when the Viking raids began along the western coast of Europe. Iona was attacked in 795 and again in 802. It is said that his monks brought his bones and other relics to Kells for safety in 827. The rhyme, ‘One grave these three saints do fill, Patrick, Bridget and Colmcille’ in Downpatrick has no basis in fact. The final resting place of Ireland’s first and one of its greatest missionaries is unknown.

Parish of Ahamlish and Inishmurray

Grange ♦ Cliffoney ♦ Mullaghmore

Rev. Christy McHugh

Tel: 071 9163100

Web address: www.ahamlish.com Email: ahamlishparish@gmail.com

Postal Address: Parochial House, Grange, Co. Sligo. F91 HR26

Issue 228, Saturday 5th June 2021

“Corpus Christi”

Solemnity of the Most Holy Body + Blood of Christ

Do this in Memory of Me

Visit us on ahamlish.com

&

Ahamlish Parish Sligo Facebook Page.

Join us for every mass online through our FB Page at Grange Church

Masses Cliffoney		
Sun 6 th June	10.30am	Feast of Corpus Christi Vivien + Fergal + Maeve Conway Tina Currid, Mullaghmore (8 th Anniversary) Mary + Jack McHugh
Fri 11 th June	10am	Feast of The Sacred Heart Brid Kelly, Oughterard + parents Delia + Owen McEvilly + her sisters + Mary + Celia + brother Pat + deceased family.
Sun 13 th June	10.30am	Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
Sunday Collection: <i>Collection (30th May) : €871 Collection (23rd May): €289</i>		

Pope's Intention (universal) for June 2021

Let us pray for young people who are preparing for marriage with the support of a Christian community: may they grow in love, with generosity, faithfulness and patience.

Herb and Flower Growing for Healthy Living. With Richard Kennedy

Galilee Spirituality Centre Quiet Garden, Wednesdays June 9th and 16th, 7.30pm. Cost €5. Booking info@galilee.ie
This series was interrupted in March last year – so we finally hope to be able to hold the second two evenings! It will be relaxed, fun and practical – with time for planting and growing.

Richard Kennedy is a gardening expert and owner of Courtdale Horticulture, and a Christian lay minister. He will combine these roles to lead us in a journey of discovery in the world of gardening and spirituality.

NB booking is essential for these evenings. They are dependent on the COVID restrictions and we may have to postpone at short notice.

Star of the Sea Retreat Centre - Mullaghmore

Upcoming Events in Star of the Sea, Retreat & Conference Centre, Mullaghmore, are available to view on www.staroftheseacentre.com For more information and bookings please contact Louise or Frank at staroftheseacentre@gmail.com or on 071 9176722. Additional events will be added over the coming weeks.

The Poetry of Loss (before we go back...) With Anne Francis (online)

A morning to acknowledge the losses of the past year through poetry and reflection.

June 19th, 10.30am-12.30pm. €10 All welcome. Booking and link info@galilee.ie

Anne Francis is Director of Galilee Spirituality Centre.

Tarsus Scripture School

The Tarsus Scripture School Pentecost Programme consists of 3 pre-recorded presentations: "Babel to Jerusalem and beyond: Acts 2:1-11" (Jessie Rogers), "There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit: 1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13" (Kieran O'Mahony), "Breathing new life: John 20:19-23" (Sean Goan). The programme is free of charge. To register visit www.tarsusscriptureschool.ie

Grange Tidy Towns

Well done on the work achieved this week. Opposite the Garda Station the beds have been cleaned of all the undergrowth and it looks real neat. In ye old village, the flower boxes have reappeared and will be full to overflowing in the next few weeks. Congrats to all the workers + Committee.

Lough Derg 2021

Lough Derg regrets that it will not be possible in 2021 to reopen Station Island for the Traditional Three Day Pilgrimage or even for the autumn programme of Day Retreats. Lough Derg will again offer the opportunity to "Do Lough Derg from wherever you are" on 3rd – 5th July. The outdoor Pilgrimage on the Lough Shore Pilgrim Path will also be available as the summer goes on. Further information from Lough Derg office 071-9861518 or www.loughderg.org

Knock Shrine

Believing and Belonging: Biblical perspectives on the Community of Faith. The popular Scripture Summer School will take place online from June 1st to 22nd 2021. This year's theme is Believing and belonging: biblical perspectives on the community of faith. The Scripture school will consist of 15 pre-recorded lectures that you can follow at your leisure. Online registration is necessary to attend. The flexible structure of these online events means that you can take part at your own pace, at a time that is suitable to you. Register at www.knock-shrine.ie

Back to Church

Everyone is welcome to come to Mass. There will be an upper limit of 50 people in attendance. Please maintain social distance when in the church, sanitise your hands on the way in and the way out and wear a mask.

Masses Grange - All these masses available on Facebook		
Sat 5 th June	12.00 8pm	Baptism Jack Hoey Janett Duffill Months Mind
Sun 6 th June	12.00 1pm	Patsy Currid, Lislary (17 th Anniversary) + parents Winifred + Patrick John Gillen, Newtownward Tom + Eileen Kerins Baptism
Mon 7 th June	9.30am	Feast of St. Colman Eddie Fallon (died 23 rd May) Rahara
Tue 8 th June	7.30pm	Fr. Martin Mulvaney (1 st Anniversary)
Wed 9 th June	9.30am	Feast of St. Colmcille (1500 th Anniversary) Donal Connolly
Thur 10 th June	9.30am	Feast of St. Ephrem Canon Kevin Earley (1 st Anniversary)
Sat 12 th June	8pm	Feast of The Immaculate Heart of Mary Jim Costello Carol McGowan Months Mind
Sun 13 th June	8pm	Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Feast of St. Anthony of Padua Patsy Barry Months Mind Mary McMahan Grange (4 th Anniversary)
Sunday Collection: <i>Grange Collection: €700</i>		

Please remember in your prayers:

Nancy Murphy, Bohernabreena, Dublin, formerly Swinford, Co. Mayo, died at her residence on 31st May. Our sympathy to sons, daughter and sister Eileen McGowan, Streedagh, brother Paddy, grandchildren. Funeral took place in St. Anne's Church, Bohernabreena.

Mary White, Bandon, died on June 1st. Our sympathy to her daughter Aileen + sons Declan + Brian (Milk Harbour, Carns) + family. Funeral took place at St. Patrick's Church, Bandon on June 2nd with burial in adjoining cemetery.

Annie Duffy (Carey, Egan) nee Ruddy, died 31st May at Sónas Nursing Home, Belmullet, formerly of Geesala in her 93rd year. Our sympathy to her son Liam Carey, daughter-in-law Yvonne, grandson Michael + his wife Ann; brother Tony Ruddy, nephews, nieces + friends. Funeral Mass took place at Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, Glencastle on June 3rd with burial in Glencastle Old Cemetery.

Eamon Tolan, R.I.P. 30th May, former principal of Grange Post Primary School. Our sympathy to his wife Eileen + children Eamon, Colm, Paul, Emer, Clare + family. Funeral Mass was celebrated on June 2nd at St. Comcille's Church, Rathcormac with burial in adjoining cemetery.

Dust if you must - By Rose Milligan

Dust if you must, but wouldn't it be better
To paint a picture or write a letter,
Bake a cake or plant a seed,
Ponder the difference between want and need.
Dust if you must, but there's not much time,
With rivers to swim and mountains to climb,
Music to hear and books to read,
Friends to cherish and life to lead.
Dust if you must, but the world's out there,
With the sun in your eyes, the wind in your hair,
A flutter of snow, a shower of rain.
This day will not come around again.
Dust if you must, but bear in mind,
Old age will come and it's not kind.
And when you go – and go you must –
You, yourself, will make more dust.

Congrats to Charlie Clay

On the success so far of the film he took part in a few years ago. The film has been showed at over 20 Film festivals. Charlie has always been the most lovable character and we are so happy for him.