

## Reflection Tuesday week 10. 2020 – St Columba

Columba (in Gaelic Colm Cille) was born in Gartan, County Donegal, and was of royal lineage. In Latin and Gaelic, the word Columba means “dove”; and the Hebrew word for dove is pronounced Iona. He studied under Finnian of Moville and Finnian of Clonard. He founded monasteries in Derry, Durrow, and possibly Kells, before leaving Ireland as a missionary, “*an exile for Christ – similar to Elijah.*” His greatest foundation was Iona, from where he converted much of western Scotland. His followers took the Gospel as far as northern England. He died at Iona in 597. He was renowned as a poet and scribe as well as a spiritual guide. In Gaelic literature he appears as Ireland’s most popular saint, noted for his great personal love of all creatures, both human and animal.

Columba was obviously salt and light to the people. And, like Elijah, went off to a foreign land - to Scotland - and led many people to the faith. It must have been the beauty of the way he preached, wrote, lived and taught the gospel that inspired the beauty found in the book of Kells. During the lockdown we have been given more time to appreciate the creation around us. We are able to breathe in its beauty and wonder. Given time we will see that creation is as beautiful and outstanding as the hieroglyphics in the book of Kells, but with a beauty that constantly evolves and changes, allowing new wonders to emerge. With a little more time, we will be able to see the parallels with our faith. That faith is something that continually evolves and reshapes itself, allowing us to discover even more of its wondrous beauty and experience the salt and light that lies within. Faith is filled with the salt and light and beauty of God.

As we thank Saint Columba, let us end with his prayer:

*Kindle in our hearts, O God, the flame of love that never ceases, that it may burn in us, giving light to others. May we shine for ever in your temple, set on fire with your eternal light, your Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer. May we receive unquenchable light from you so that our darkness will be illuminated and the darkness of the world be made less. Amen.*

### Yet another story . . .

An Italian businessman goes to Indonesia on a business trip. He hates Indonesian food, so he asked the concierge in his hotel if there was anywhere that sold Italian food. The concierge says, “You’re lucky sir, a new pizza restaurant just opened and they deliver.” The businessman asks for the restaurant’s number, goes back to his room and orders the pizza.

30 minutes later, a delivery man shows up with the pizza. The business man takes the pizza and eats it. Suddenly he’s sneezing uncontrollably and shouting to the delivery person, “What did you put on this pizza?!”

The delivery man bows deeply and says, “We made it exactly as you ordered on the phone, sir. **You said you wanted pepper only**”