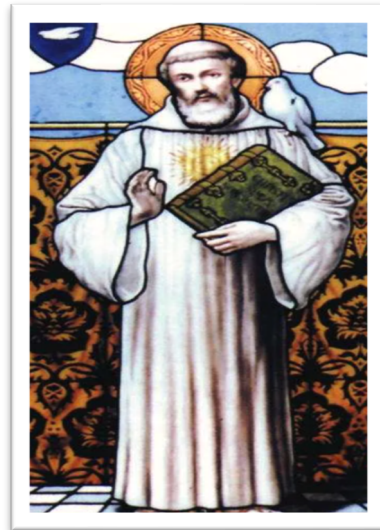


St Saint Columban (Columbanus)

Columban (commonly called Columbanus in Latin) was born in the Kingdom of Leinster, on the southeast coast of Ireland, a century after Saint Patrick brought the Catholic faith to the island. As Columban grew, he became acutely aware of worldly temptations, especially those of the flesh, and guarded himself carefully from all sin through his prayer and Scripture study. After being counseled in this area by an old and wise woman, Columban decided to heed her warnings and enter a monastery. His mother was deeply distressed by his decision and tried to stop him, even lying across the threshold of their home. Columban courageously stepped over her, exhorted her to trust in God, and informed her that though she would never see him again in this life, he would obey the will of God and go wherever God led him.



Miracles attributed to St Columbanus

1. Escaping from a pack of wolves without suffering any injuries and restoring the sight of a blind man.

2. On another occasion also, when the blessed man was living for some days in the province of the Picts, he was obliged to cross the river Nesa (the Ness); and when he reached the bank of the river, he saw some of the inhabitants burying an unfortunate man, who, according to the account of those who were burying him, was a short time before seized, as he was swimming, and bitten most severely by a monster that lived in the water; his wretched body was, though too late, taken out with a hook, by those who came to his assistance in a boat. The blessed man, on hearing this, was so far from being dismayed, that he directed one of his companions to swim over and row across the coble that was moored at the farther bank. And Lugne Mocumin hearing the command of the excellent man, obeyed without the least delay, taking off all his clothes, except his tunic, and leaping into the water. But the monster, which, so far from being satiated, was only roused for more prey, was lying at the bottom of the stream, and when it felt the water disturbed above by the man swimming, suddenly rushed out, and, giving an awful roar, darted after him, with its mouth wide open, as the man swam in the middle of the stream. Then the blessed man observing this, raised his holy hand, while all the rest, brethren as well as strangers, were stupefied with terror, and, invoking the name of God, formed the saving sign of the cross in the air, and commanded the ferocious monster, saying, "Thou shalt go no further, nor touch the man; go back with all speed." Then at the voice of the saint, the monster was terrified, and fled more quickly than if it had been pulled back with ropes, though it had just got so near to Lugne, as he swam, that there was not more than the length of a spear-staff between the man and the beast. Then the brethren seeing that the monster had gone back, and that their comrade Lugne returned to them in the boat safe and sound, were struck with admiration, and gave glory to God in the blessed man. And even the barbarous heathens, who were present, were forced by the greatness of this miracle, which they themselves had seen, to magnify the God of the Christians.

3. At the time when St. Columba was tarrying for some days in the province of the Picts, a certain peasant who, with his whole family, had listened to and learned through an interpreter the word of life preached by the holy man, believed and was baptized the husband, together with his wife, children, and domestics.

A very few days after his conversion, one of the sons of this householder was attacked with a dangerous illness and brought to the very borders of life and death. When the Druids saw him in a dying state they began with great bitterness to upbraid his parents, and to extol their own gods as more powerful than the God of the Christians, and thus to despise God as though He were weaker than their gods. When all this was told to the blessed man, he burned with zeal for God, and proceeded with some of his companions to the house of the friendly peasant, where he found the afflicted parents celebrating the obsequies of their child, who was newly dead. The saint, on seeing their bitter grief, strove to console them with words of comfort, and exhorted them not to doubt in any way the omnipotence of God. He then inquired, saying, "In what chamber is the dead body of your son lying?" And being conducted by the bereaved father under the sad roof, he left the whole crowd of persons who accompanied him outside, and immediately entered by himself into the house of mourning, where, falling on his knees, he prayed to Christ our Lord, having his face bedewed with copious tears. Then rising from his kneeling posture, he turned his eyes towards the deceased and said, "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, arise, and stand upon thy feet." At the sound of this glorious word from the saint, the soul returned to the body, and the person that was dead opened his eyes and revived. The apostolic man then taking him by the hand raised him up, and placing him in a standing position, led him forth with him from the house, and restored him to his parents. Upon this the cries of the applauding multitude broke forth, sorrow was turned into joy, and the God of the Christians glorified.