

## Columba (521-597) - Lecture 3 – ‘Abbot and Leader’

### 1. Adomnan’s *‘Life of Columba’*

- Book One - *‘Of his Prophetic Revelation’*.
- Book Two - *‘Of his Miraculous Powers’*.
- Book Three - *‘Of his Visions of Angels’*.

(a) *Columba as Inspiration*

(b) *Columba as Holy man of God*

(c) *Columba as a Christ-figure*

(d) *Columba as a Biblical Saint*

(e) *Reminding Northumbria about its Christian roots.*

### 2. Other Columba Sources

- (a) COLUMBA - *Altus Prosator* (High Creator) & *Adiutor Laborantium* (Helper of the Workers).
- (b) DALLAN FORGAILL - *Amra Choluimb Cille* (The Elegy of Colum Cille).
- (c) BECCAN MAC LUIGDECH - *Fo Reir Choluimb & Tiugraind Beccain*.
- (d) ABBOT CUMMENE - *Book of the Powers of Saint Columba*.

### 3. The Irish/Celtic Church

- (a) *Autonomy instead of Authority.*
- (b) *Tribe instead of Area.*
- (c) *Monastery instead of Diocese.*
- (d) *Abbot instead of Bishop.*
- (e) *Old instead of New.*
- (f) *Initiative instead of System.*

### 4. Columba’s Island (Iona)

- (a) THE ‘GIFT’ OF IONA – Conall or Bridei?
- (b) EARLY EVIDENCES
- (c) THE MAIN MONASTIC AREA
- (d) THE BUILDINGS - **1. The Hut - 2. The Church - 3. The Great House - 4. The Guest Quarters - 5. The Work-Buildings - 6. The Corn-drying Kiln.**

### 5. Columba’s Community

1. The **Seniors** (the older monks)
2. The **Working Brothers** (Younger, fitter, monks)

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### 3. The *alumni* or pupils (Novitiates)

#### 6. Iona’s Library

- (a) Comprehensive.
- (b) Bible in both Old Latin & Vulgate.
- (c) Writing & copying of texts.
- (d) THE LIBRARY

#### 7. Reflecting, Retreat & Seclusion

It was a *coenobitic* [apart from the world but living adjacent to others] tradition rather than an *eremitic* one [apart from the world and away from others].

Iona - Tiree – Hinba – Skye – etc.

#### 8. Columba’s Worship

*‘The heart of the community was the church; its heartbeat, the life of worship and prayer to which the brothers were summoned by the ringing of a hand-bell throughout the day and night. Central to the liturgy was the chanting or reciting the psalms, which were learned by heart; the entire Psalter was read through the course of each month. Hymns were sung and the gospel read. The Eucharist was celebrated on Sundays at midday and on feast-days when, at the discretion of the abbot, a special meal was served. Fasting was normal on Wednesdays and Fridays. Easter was the great festival of the year.’<sup>1</sup>*

- (a) Emphasis on celebration of the Eucharist
- (b) Singing both Responsive and Antiphonal (See: *Bangor Antiphonary*)
- (c) Fasting – Wednesday & Friday
- (d) Resting – Celtic Sabbath until Queen Margaret (11<sup>th</sup> Century).

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### HIGHLAND CHURCH HISTORY CONFERENCE

29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> August 2016

Highland Theological College, Dingwall

Starts lunchtime Monday 29<sup>th</sup> & closes late afternoon Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup>

Speakers include: Donald Meek & Marjory Harper

Special open public lecture on evening of Monday 29<sup>th</sup> August delivered by Donald Meek

All are welcome

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<sup>1</sup> Bardsley, Warren, *Against the Tide: The Story of Adomnan of Iona*, p. 56.