

THE NOVENA

NOVENA  
IN HONOR OF  
SAINT  
COLUMBAN

1. THE DAILY PRAYER
2. LIFE OF COLUMBAN
3. REFLECTION ON THE SAYINGS OF COLUMBAN
4. PRAYER OF SAINT COLUMBAN
5. PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL
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WRITTEN BY:  
SISTER INDAY BERNAD, MSSC  
REV. DONALD H. KILL, MSSC

# FIRST DAY

## DAILY PRAYER

O Blessed Columban, because of the fervor of your desire to spread the Good News of the Kingdom of God and of salvation to all of God's people, you gave yourself to a life of hardship and journeying, help us and protect, we humbly ask you, the missionary men and women of our day who have given their lives to preach the Gospel to the whole world.

Intercede for them that they will be given the grace to carry on in the face of adversity, the grace that helped you to overcome all of the hardship that crossed your path on your missionary journey, and also the strength of faith and fire of love that helped you to suffer joyfully all the sorrows of life because of your love for Christ.

Stand also with us and help us, O Beloved Columban, so that we might be able to live for the glory of God so that, when our journey is done, we can share with you the fullness of life in heaven through Christ our Lord. Amen!

## LIFE OF SAINT COLUMBAN

Christianity was still quite new in Ireland, but the fervor and zeal of the early Irish converts helped the Church to grow. Many monasteries were built where monks lived, worked and prayed together. One of those monasteries was built in Bangor. That is where Columban entered religious life.

Columban was probably born in 543, although the exact date is uncertain. When still a young boy he left home to study in the monastery near his home. Later, he returned home to tell his parents that he wished to leave home forever in order to give his life to God. His mother refused permission for him to go into religious life, but Columban would not change his mind. It is said that Columban stepped over his mother who had thrown her body across the door way to stop Columban's leaving. Once he had left home, he never returned.

## REFLECTION ON THE SAYINGS OF COLUMBAN UNITY OF CHRISTIANS

Let us follow Christ, Our Lord in mutual peace and love. We are all members of one body, whether we are Franks or Britons or Irish or any other nationality.

Let us be united, therefore, in understanding of the faith and knowledge of the One God. Let us hasten to approach perfect maturity and the fullness of Jesus Christ.

Let us all love one another in Jesus Christ, correct one another, praise one another and pray for one another so that, united to Him, we may triumph and reign with Him.

## PRAYER OF SAINT COLUMBAN

Most loving Savior, show yourself to us who call upon you so that, knowing you, we might love you above all, seek you alone, look to you day and night and keep you always in our thoughts.

So inspire us with your love that it may invade our hearts, fill our senses and possess us so completely with such a great flame that it can never be quenched even by all the waters on the face of the earth. May this be accomplished by the gift of yourself, Our Lord, Jesus Christ. To you be glory forever. Amen!

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

(THE GOZOS ARE SUNG OR RECITED.)

### GOZOS

In land of Ireland, filled with bounty  
Faith a' flourish in town and county,  
Monk enclosed in walls abound  
To give faith strength and keep it sound.

Saint Columban, Missionary of Christ,  
Help us to spread our faith! **Response**

In Bangor's School you first appeared,  
Your wisdom known and soon revered.  
But stayed you not as monk to tarry,  
Called by God as missionary. (**Response**)

Your journey forth to many nations  
Brought many trials and tribulations,  
But this to you was joy each day,  
Your life lived out in God's own way. **(Response)**

The Kings of power in sin were living,  
No fear in you, correction giving.  
Their fearsome judgments on you given  
Were for you but grace from heaven. **(Response)**

The earth, the trees, the deer, the bird,  
Your gentle voice so often heard,  
And hand to save so often lifted  
To them, your Godly life was gifted. **(Response)**

Europe's nations your path did cross  
The Gospel message restored from loss.  
In Italy's mountains, Bobbio's place,  
Your mission done, you died in grace. **(Response)**

# SECOND DAY

## DAILY PRAYER

### LIFE OF SAINT COLUMBAN

The monastery at Bangor was one of the great monastic institutions. For centuries it was the home of thousands of monks, the school of scholars, the seminary of missionary priests and saints. Here, Columban entered and he and his fellow monks, motivated by the love of God, submitted themselves to the discipline of the Bangor rule of monastic life. By continued prayer, fasting, work and study they were molded into the image of Christ.

After a few years in the monastery, Columban was selected to be ordained a priest while the majority of his companions remained lay brothers. Still later, Columban was placed in charge of the Monastic School at Bangor. After some time, Columban requested permission from his superior, Abbot Comgull, to go abroad as a missionary. Comgull did not agree to this request. Columban remained faithful to his work in the School. However, in spite of the refusal of Comgull, Columban continued to try to convince Comgull that his calling to be a missionary was from God. Eventually, Comgull gave his consent and allowed Columban and twelve of his companions from the community to go abroad as missionaries to Europe. Very soon after permission was given, Columban and his companions began their great adventure.

### REFLECTION ON THE SAYINGS OF SAINT COLUMBAN THE MERCY OF GOD

God's mercy is greater than our life, no matter how good that life may be. No one merits God's mercy except those who count themselves unworthy before Him.

Left to itself, human nature is powerless to conquer sinfulness and bring us to God unless we depend on the mercy of God to win the fight.

### PRAYER OF ST COLUMBAN FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Lord, Jesus Christ, help us to understand your command that we sincerely love one another. Help us to put that understanding into practice so that, through truly following this teaching, the whole

Church might move forward as one with unbounded zeal.

May your grace, freely given enable us to see beyond the things of this world so that we might love you and long for you utterly along with the Father and the Holy Spirit, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen!

### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

**(THE GOZOS ARE SUNG OR RECITED.)**

#### GOZOS

In land of Ireland, filled with bounty  
Faith a' flourish in town and county,  
Monk enclosed in walls around  
To give faith strength and keep it sound.

Saint Columban, Missionary of Christ,  
Help us to spread our faith! **Response**

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# THIRD DAY

## DAILY PRAYER

O Blessed Columban, because of the fervor of your desire to spread the Good News of the Kingdom of God and of salvation to all of God's people, you gave yourself to a life of hardship and journeying, help us and protect, we humbly ask you, the missionary men and women of our day who have given their lives to preach the Gospel to the whole world.

Intercede for them that they will be given the grace to carry on in the face of adversity, the grace that helped you to overcome all of the hardship that crossed your path on your missionary journey, and also the strength of faith and fire of love that helped you to suffer joyfully all the sorrows of life because of your love for Christ.

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## LIFE OF SAINT COLUMBAN

Columban and his companions left Bangor and crossed over to Britain. From Britain, they moved on to Gaul. They remained in Europe until the end of their lives, never to return to their home-land in Ireland.

They lived in a land that had once been ruled by the Romans. However, after the reign of the Romans, the whole area was taken over by the cruel and uneducated barbarians from the east. France became a land of spiritual desolation, still nominally Catholic, but where due to wars and negligence on the part of the bishops, the practice of religion had virtually collapsed.

Columban and his followers began to teach ways of being spiritually renewed to the people. They founded monasteries in different areas in France. As they set up in one place, others from their group moved on with Columban to start a new foundation.

After some time the people built up their houses around the monasteries. They worked alongside the monks and shared in the

life and prayers of the monks also. One of the early writers of the history of that area was Montalambert. He wrote: "Everywhere the faith of the people blossomed and grew like the flowers following the cold of winter."

## REFLECTION ON THE SAYINGS OF SAINT COLUMBAN CLOSENESS TO THE MASTER

Let us not fall under any trial, by no sorrow let us be broken, by no struggle let us be worn out, by no flattering let us be diverted from our task.

May no trial, no tribulation, no oppression, no hunger, no poverty, no death nothing sad, nothing sweet, nothing unjust, nothing fair, may none of the world's vanities separate us from Christ, that He may dwell within us here and we may abide with Him forever. Amen

## PRAYER OF SAINT COLUMBAN LET US LIVE FOR CHRIST

May we live for Christ who, by His dying, restored life for us. May we die to ourselves and live for Christ. May we not be proud, haughty or undisciplined, but humble, kindly and courteous, so that Christ may reign in our hearts. May Christ, Our Lord, grant us this, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit is one God forever and ever. Amen

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

(THE GOZOS ARE SUNG OR RECITED.)

### GOZOS

In land of Ireland, filled with bounty  
Faith a' flourish in town and county,  
Monk enclosed in walls about  
To give faith strength and keep it sound.

Saint Columban, Missionary of Christ,  
Help us to spread our faith! **Response**

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The earth, the trees, the deer, the bird,  
Your gentle voice so often heard,  
And hand to save so often lifted  
To them, your Godly life was gifted. **(Response)**

Europe's nations your path did cross  
The Gospel message restored from loss.  
In Italy's mountains, Bobbio's place,  
Your mission done, you died in grace. **(Response)**

# FOURTH DAY

## DAILY PRAYER

O Blessed Columban, because of the fervor of your desire to spread the Good News of the Kingdom of God and of salvation to all of God's people, you gave yourself to a life of hardship and journeying, help us and protect, we humbly ask you, the missionary men and women of our day who have given their lives to preach the Gospel to the whole world.

Intercede for them that they will be given the grace to carry on in the face of adversity, the grace that helped you to overcome all of the hardship that crossed your path on your missionary journey, and also the strength of faith and fire of love that helped you to suffer joyfully all the sorrows of life because of your love for Christ.

Stand also with us and help us, O Beloved Columban, so that we might be able to live for the glory of God so that, when our journey is done, we can share with you the fullness of life in heaven through Christ our Lord. Amen!

## LIFE OF SAINT COLUMBAN

From Brittany, Columban and his companions walked to Rheims where they were received by King Gunthram. The king begged them to remain in his kingdom and promised to give them whatever they might need. They went out to explore the mountainous region of the Vases. They came upon the ruins of a Roman fort and, in the forest surrounding it, they found plentiful wild beasts. They decided to make their home in the village of Annegray. There, they repaired a ruined temple to the goddess Diana to serve as a Church that was then dedicated to Saint Martin of Jesus. They cleared a small part of the forest and used the timber to build their cells. For food they had nothing but herbs, roots and the bark of trees. Then, one day, a stranger suddenly arrived at the gate of their enclosure, his horse laden with fruits, vegetables and bread for the monks. More and more pilgrims came and the number of monks increased. Annegray is one of the most famous monasteries built by Saint Columban and his companions.

## REFLECTION ON THE SAYINGS OF SAINT COLUMBAN LETTER TO A YOUNG DISCIPLE

Be helpful if you are at the bottom of the ladder and be honest when you are in authority. Be simple in faith but well trained in manners, demanding of yourself in your own affairs, but unconcerned in those of others. Be guileless in friendship, astute in the face of deceit, tough in times of ease and tender in hard times. Keep your options open when there is no problem, but dig in and be strong when you must choose. Be pleasant when things are unpleasant and sorrowful when they are pleasant. Disagree only when it is necessary, but be in agreement about the truth. Be strong in trials, weak in dissensions. Be slow to anger, quick to learn, slow to speak, but quick to listen. Be friendly with people of honor, stiff with rascals, gentle to the weak, firm with the stubborn, steadfast to the proud, humble to the lowly.

## PRAYER OF SAINT COLUMBAN FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Lord God, cut down and root out whatever the adversary plants in me. With my sins cleared away, may You sow good sense in my mind and goodness in my heart so that I can seek You and serve You completely, in word and deed, and understand how to carry out Christ's will. Amen.

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

(THE GOZOS ARE SUNG OR RECITED.)

### GOZOS

In land of Ireland, filled with bounty  
Faith a' flourish in town and county,  
Monk enclosed in walls abound  
To give faith strength and keep it sound.

Saint Columban, Missionary of Christ,  
Help us to spread our faith! **Response**

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Your wisdom known and soon revered.  
But stayed you not as monk to tarry,  
Called by God as missionary. **(Response)**

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Brought many trials and tribulations,  
But this to you was joy each day,  
Your life lived out in God's own way. **(Response)**

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No fear in you, correction giving.  
Their fearsome judgments on you given  
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The earth, the trees, the deer, the bird,  
Your gentle voice so often heard,  
And hand to save so often lifted  
To them, your Godly life was gifted. **(Response)**

Europe's nations your path did cross  
The Gospel message restored from loss.  
In Italy's mountains, Bobbio's place,  
Your mission done, you died in grace. **(Response)**



# FIFTH DAY

## DAILY PRAYER

O Blessed Columban, because of the fervor of your desire to spread the Good News of the Kingdom of God and of salvation to all of God's people, you gave yourself to a life of hardship and journeying, help us and protect, we humbly ask you, the missionary men and women of our day who have given their lives to preach the Gospel to the whole world.

Intercede for them that they will be given the grace to carry on in the face of adversity, the grace that helped you to overcome all of the hardship that crossed your path on your missionary journey, and also the strength of faith and fire of love that helped you to suffer joyfully all the sorrows of life because of your love for Christ.

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## LIFE OF SAINT COLUMBAN

The most famous of the monasteries built by Columban and his companions was Luxeuil. Even after 1,400 years, the memory of Columban is still alive and viable there today.

Columban spent about twenty years at Luxeuil (591-610). This was his principal monastery. It was here that he wrote the Rule for his followers and it was from here that he guided some 220 monks of Luxeuil, Annegray and Fountaine.

Obedience was the cornerstone of Columban's Rule. The ideals of poverty and mortification were inculcated through constant fasting broken by only one meal per day. Six times a day the monks gathered together in the chapel for chanting the Divine Office. Prayer, fasting, work and study were the pillars of their community life.

Luxeuil became famous not merely for its monastery, but equally for the school attached to the monastery. That school was the most celebrated school during the 7<sup>th</sup> Century.

## REFLECTION ON THE WRITINGS OF SAINT COLUMBAN LETTER TO A YOUNG DISCIPLE

Be ever sober, ever chaste, ever modest. Be patient as far as it is compatible with zeal, never greedy, always generous. Be timely in fasting, discreet in duty, persistent in study, unshakable in turmoil, joyful in suffering, valiant in the cause of truth, cautious in time of strife. Be submissive to God, unbending to evil, gentle in generosity, untiring in love, just in all things. Be respectful to the worthy, merciful to the poor. Be a lover of the ordinary and do not seek after riches. Obey your elders, keep up with your juniors, be equal to your equals and emulate the perfect. Do not envy your betters or grieve because of those who surpass you, nor censure those who fall behind. Weep and rejoice at the same time out of zeal and hope.

## PRAYER OF SAINT COLUMBAN FOUNTAIN OF LIFE

Lord, you are the fountain of living water, the fountain of glory. Give us this water always, Lord Jesus that it may become in us a fountain of water that springs up to everlasting life. Inspire our hearts with the breath of Your Spirit and pierce our hearts with Your Love. Amen

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

(THE GOZOS ARE SUNG OR RECITED.)  
GOZOS

In land of Ireland, filled with bounty  
Faith a' flourish in town and county,  
Monk enclosed in walls abound  
To give faith strength and keep it sound.

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Help us to spread our faith! **Response**

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And hand to save so often lifted  
To them, your Godly life was gifted. **(Response)**

Europe's nations your path did cross  
The Gospel message restored from loss.  
In Italy's mountains, Bobbio's place,  
Your mission done, you died in grace. **(Response)**

# SIXTH DAY

## DAILY PRAYER

O Blessed Columban, because of the fervor of your desire to spread the Good News of the Kingdom of God and of salvation to all of God's people, you gave yourself to a life of hardship and journeying, help us and protect, we humbly ask you, the missionary men and women of our day who have given their lives to preach the Gospel to the whole world.

Intercede for them that they will be given the grace to carry on in the face of adversity, the grace that helped you to overcome all of the hardship that crossed your path on your missionary journey, and also the strength of faith and fire of love that helped you to suffer joyfully all the sorrows of life because of your love for Christ.

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## LIFE OF SAINT COLUMBAN

Since his arrival in Annegray and Luxeuil, Columban was busy farming, building and developing the monasteries. He had the approval of the local Bishops who knew of his preaching, his monasteries, his school and his own life. However, because he built unauthorized foundations and because he celebrated Easter according to the Irish calendar, he met with opposition. He also encountered opposition from the State. A young king, Theodoric, installed many concubines in the royal household and soon had four illegitimate children. When asked to bless these children, Columban refused saying, "These will never hold the royal scepter because they were begotten in sin!" Soon afterwards, on the order of the king, Columban was exiled.

One morning, however, Columban stealthily returned to his Luxeuil Monastery. On learning of this, the Queen's ire knew no bounds. She persuaded the King to get rid of Columban and his men once and for ever by sending them back to Ireland.

## REFLECTION OF THE SAYINGS OF SAINT COLUMBAN

## SPIRITUAL WARFARE

The time we live in is a time of spiritual warfare. We must join ranks against all that is unjust, immoral, consumerist. We must fight and struggle with our own failings so that we will be crowned in another life. Do not underestimate the enemy's strength! The adversary lurks within our very selves and daily do battle against us. Conquer yourself and you will be conqueror of all! You do not clear rubbish out of a house by simply talking about doing it. You must act, you must clean the house! So, while we battle to purify the inner self, we need to have a lot of patience with ourselves, hard effort and a solid commitment to the work of cleansing our self. Do not rely on your own efforts alone! It is impossible for anyone to win back in this battle by their own efforts what was lost in the sin of Adam. Rely on God. The Lord's commandments are our weapons, our shield and our sword.

## PRAYER OF SAINT COLUMBAN ZEAL FOR THE FAITH

Where zeal for the faith needs be shown, what do I care about saving face before the world! It is not by works but by faith that the Triune God is known, understood but by the believing of a pure heart. What use is any outward show of religion if there is no improvement of the inner self. Lord, grant us the grace to love Christ and be ready to follow His footsteps. Amen!

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

(THE GOZOS ARE SUNG OR RECITED.)

### GOZOS

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Help us to spread our faith! **Response**

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To them, your Godly life was gifted. **(Response)**

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The Gospel message restored from loss.  
In Italy's mountains, Bobbio's place,  
Your mission done, you died in grace. **(Response)**

# **SEVENTH DAY**

## **DAILY PRAYER**

O Blessed Columban, because of the fervor of your desire to spread the Good News of the Kingdom of God and of salvation to all of God's people, you gave yourself to a life of hardship and journeying, help us and protect, we humbly ask you, the missionary men and women of our day who have given their lives to preach the Gospel to the whole world.

Intercede for them that they will be given the grace to carry on in the face of adversity, the grace that helped you to overcome all of the hardship that crossed your path on your missionary journey, and also the strength of faith and fire of love that helped you to suffer joyfully all the sorrows of life because of your love for Christ.

Stand also with us and help us, O Beloved Columban, so that we might be able to live for the glory of God so that, when our journey is done, we can share with you the fullness of life in heaven through Christ our Lord. Amen!

## **LIFE OF SAINT COLUMBAN**

The King ordered that Columban and his companions be escorted to Nantes and there placed on a ship for Ireland.

While they were waiting at the mouth of the river Loire, a storm blew in and drove the ship onto the shore. For three days the captain and his crew tried to free the ship. When he failed to free the ship he took it as a sign that he was not to cooperate with the expulsion of the missionaries. He quietly put them ashore.

Columban and his companions headed toward Soissons in the north (present day northern France) to pay their respects to King Clothair II. The King invited them to stay in his kingdom and to found a monastery there. However, Columban declined his offer. Instead, Columban and his companions went on to Paris and then to Metz, the seat of the Kingdom of King Theudebert whose kingdom extended to both sides of the Rhine in what is present day Alsace-Lorraine and West Germany. There, Theudebert offered to Columban his choice of any site within the kingdom for the founding of a monastery. Columban headed down along the Rhine to Bregenz, on the shore of Lake Constantine. There he found a

ruined chapel. Along with his companions, Columban restored the chapel, built living quarters and remained there for two years.

## **REFLECTION ON THE SAYINGS OF SAINT COLUMBAN ON THIS PASSING WORLD**

Since we are merely travelers and pilgrims in this world, let us think only about the end of the road, because, at the end of the road is our house, our home. Do not love the road more than the home, or you will lose your home, your eternal home. Try patiently to put up with life's little sorrows so that you can know eternal joy. With Christ, let us disdain worldly honor. See how hard it is to master this passing world!

Even the saints are freed from its snares only by the death of Christ. Do not be short changed by a life that is short lived and passing. Heed the Lord's call to watch and pray, to sharpen the edge of your mind so that we are always ready for the coming judgment. What is the best thing in the world? To please the Creator!

## **PRAYER OF SAINT COLUMBAN FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**

Lord Jesus Christ, help us to understand your command that we sincerely love one another. Help us to put that understanding into practice so that, through truly following his teaching, the whole Church might move forward as one with unbounded zeal.

## **PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

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Your mission done, you died in grace. **(Response)**

# EIGHTH DAY

## DAILY PRAYER

O Blessed Columban, because of the fervor of your desire to spread the Good News of the Kingdom of God and of salvation to all of God's people, you gave yourself to a life of hardship and journeying, help us and protect, we humbly ask you, the missionary men and women of our day who have given their lives to preach the Gospel to the whole world.

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## LIFE OF SAINT COLUMBAN

Columban and his companions lived in the monastery at Bregenz for two years. Then, they heard that King Theuderick, who had expelled Columban from his kingdom, had now defeated his brother Theudebert and had extended his kingdom to Bregenz. Columban and his companions soon left Bregenz. By this time, Columban was already over 70 years old. Old and tired, but not beaten, Columban proposed to his followers that they cross the Alps into Italy. Some of his early companions, who were elderly by this time, chose to remain behind. Old friends that had sailed together from Ireland and lived together for so many years, now parted company for the last time.

Columban crossed the Alps and arrived in Milan. King Agiluff and Queen Theudelinda welcomed him into their kingdom. Columban remained there until the year 613.

## REFLECTION ON THE SAYINGS OF SAINT COLUMBAN LOVE IS HEALING

Take care! If you envy one another, snap at one another, criticize one another, you will eventually destroy one another. What has the law of God commanded more diligently or with more care than LOVE? Yet how seldom do we find anyone fulfilling this command. Love is not trouble, love is pleasant, love is healing! It is through love that we pass from death to life. Nothing is dearer to God than love. Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, freely offered himself as a Victim for Peace and as the God of Love, to Him be Glory forever and ever. Amen!

## PRAYER OF SAINT COLUMBAN FOR THE END OF THE JOURNEY

Lord, since we pass through this world merely as a pilgrim, we fix our sights on the end of the road where our real home is, with You. Spurning all wrongdoing and throwing off our half-heartedness, help us to please You who are present everywhere, so that with a clean heart and a clear conscience we can pass happily along the road to Your home, our Heavenly Father. Amen!

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

(THE GOZOS ARE SUNG OR RECITED.)

### GOZOS

In land of Ireland, filled with bounty  
Faith a' flourish in town and county,  
Monk enclosed in walls about  
To give faith strength and keep it sound.

Saint Columban, Missionary of Christ,  
Help us to spread our faith! **Response**

In Bangor's School you first appeared,  
Your wisdom known and soon revered.  
But stayed you not as monk to tarry,  
Called by God as missionary. **(Response)**

Your journey forth to many nations  
Brought many trials and tribulations,  
But this to you was joy each day,  
Your life lived out in God's own way. **(Response)**

The Kings of power in sin were living,  
No fear in you, correction giving.  
Their fearsome judgments on you given  
Were for you but grace from heaven. **(Response)**

The earth, the trees, the deer, the bird,  
Your gentle voice so often heard,  
And hand to save so often lifted  
To them, your Godly life was gifted. **(Response)**

Europe's nations your path did cross  
The Gospel message restored from loss.  
In Italy's mountains, Bobbio's place,  
Your mission done, you died in grace. **(Response)**

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# NINTH DAY

## DAILY PRAYER

O Blessed Columban, because of the fervor of your desire to spread the Good News of the Kingdom of God and of salvation to all of God's people, you gave yourself to a life of hardship and journeying, help us and protect, we humbly ask you, the missionary men and women of our day who have given their lives to preach the Gospel to the whole world.

Intercede for them that they will be given the grace to carry on in the face of adversity, the grace that helped you to overcome all of the hardship that crossed your path on your missionary journey, and also the strength of faith and fire of love that helped you to suffer joyfully all the sorrows of life because of your love for Christ.

Stand also with us and help us, O Beloved Columban, so that we might be able to live for the glory of God so that, when our journey is done, we can share with you the fullness of life in heaven through Christ our Lord. Amen!

## LIFE OF SAINT COLUMBAN

While in Milan, Columban first heard of Bobbio and its ruined Church of Saint Peter. The King offered him the site for a new monastery. Columban gladly accepted the King's offer. The terrain suited Columban. It was wild, well-watered, wooded and remote.

Columban's first task in Bobbio was to restore the Church of Saint Peter. One can read the moving account of seventy year old Columban out on the slopes of Mount Penice, helping his monks to provide timber for rebuilding the Church and construction of the new monastery. Before the winter of 614 set in, the new monastery at Bobbio had already taken shape in the foothills of the Apennines. Here, Columban spent the last year of his life. In the early hours of Sunday, November 23, 615, Columban died. The monk, who was to become a great missionary to Europe, had reached the end of his road, the end of his missionary journey. He was buried near the altar of his former cloister.

Pope Pius XI expressed the immense importance of Saint Columban's mission and its widespread significance for the

Church as a whole when he wrote: "The more light that is shed by scholars on the period known as the Middle Ages, the clearer it becomes that it was thanks to the initiative and labors of Columban that the rebirth of Christian Values and the return of civilization over a great part of Gaul, Germany and Italy took place."

## REFLECTION ON THE SAYINGS OF SAINT COLUMBAN SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Since the way of this world is finite, other than the way of spiritual progress, let the mind press onward, as life presses onward, and let maturity of mind increase with the fullness of old age.

## PRAYER OF SAINT COLUMBAN FOR THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Blessed are those who keep watch for God, the Creator of the Universe. We pray for the wonderful mercy of our Good God, that He might inspire us with His Love, join us to Himself, weld us together inseparably, raise us from the Earth, unite all of our senses to heavenly realities, so that when He comes we might run to welcome Him with joy, love and great confidence.

Lord, kindly kindle our lamps, Savior Most Dear to us, that we might always shine in your presence and always receive light from You, the Light Perpetual, so that our personal darkness might be overcome and the world's darkness driven from us. Amen!

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

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