



Quon Stothers Journey

Berkeley / Los Angeles / Ireland

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Newsletter September 2009

Columba went in 563 AD . . .

Our journey started at seven in the morning and we arrived at the hotel in Iona at half six in the evening. How could it take us so long to get to Iona? Only 120 miles from Belfast as the crow flies, but we are not crows. So we drove to the airport, flew to Glasgow, Scotland, bused to the Queen Street Station, took a 3 hour train to Oban, a ferry to Fionnphort on Mull, a bus across Mull, and another ferry to Iona and walked the last 300 feet to the hotel. All in intermittent rain! I'm trying to imagine Columba and his followers traveling from Ireland to this wee island in 563 A.D.

Columcille, or Columba, 521-597 A.D. left Ireland in 563 and established a



Ward walking on the paved road towards the hotel and ferry dock

monastery on the island of Iona on the west of Scotland. From here the monks copied manuscripts and developed Celtic artforms. They spread Christianity in Scotland. The Book of Kells had their origin on Iona as did the Lindisfarne Gospels.

Later Benedictines established the Abbey and Nunnery on Iona in the 1200s which form the structural shell for the current buildings. The buildings were restored and maintained by the Iona Community established in 1938 by George MacLeod,

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The Abbey nave and altar restored in 1900s

Patrick came around 435

and presently managed by the National Trust and Historic Scotland.

After a rest and dinner at the hotel, we went to the evening worship and welcome tea at the Abbey. We stumbled back in the rain and the dark. The next day was Sunday so we

pressed on to return to the Abbey for worship. The morning service included communion and afterwards we attended an introduction to the aims of the Iona Community.

The rain was so persistent we stopped at the other hotel for scones to sit out

Special prayer points

PRAY for our impact in the Cross Border class at The Vine Centre

Cross community openings for dialogue have started with an invitation in November. Pray for our prep

PRAY for Tea Talk and Pray at the school, that others will come who can eventually take it over.

PRAY for wholeness for both of us. Brother Jardin, a rector with a healing ministry, prayed for Ward

Desmond and Roberta need prayer.

Crumlin Road missionaries: Mark, returning from Sierra Leone, Peter, newly married, and Rachel

College Avenue Presbyterian Church, in Oakland, Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC).

PRAY for the Drennans. Jack is Presbytery moderator this year and very busy.

PRAY for sustained support in 2009

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Stothers' Ministry: to come alongside the people, to impact the community, and to enliven faith.

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the rain. It never stopped that day and the dinner meal there was great, but fortunate for us it was intermittent for the rest of the week with rainbows and sun. There are two hotel guest houses, the Episcopal center and a few bed and breakfast establishments. The Abbey and the MacLeod Center take guests for a loosely programmed week of work and reflection in community. That program is managed by the Iona Community. The island has 100 plus permanent residents and thousands of pilgrim/tourists who come for the day and turn around to make their journey elsewhere.

We are grateful for the preservation and restoration of this very beautiful and historic Christian place. We are grateful our friends Tuey, Randy and Evelyn came with us. We spent a wonderful four days there and would return again to walk and talk and pray, think, read and enjoy weather.

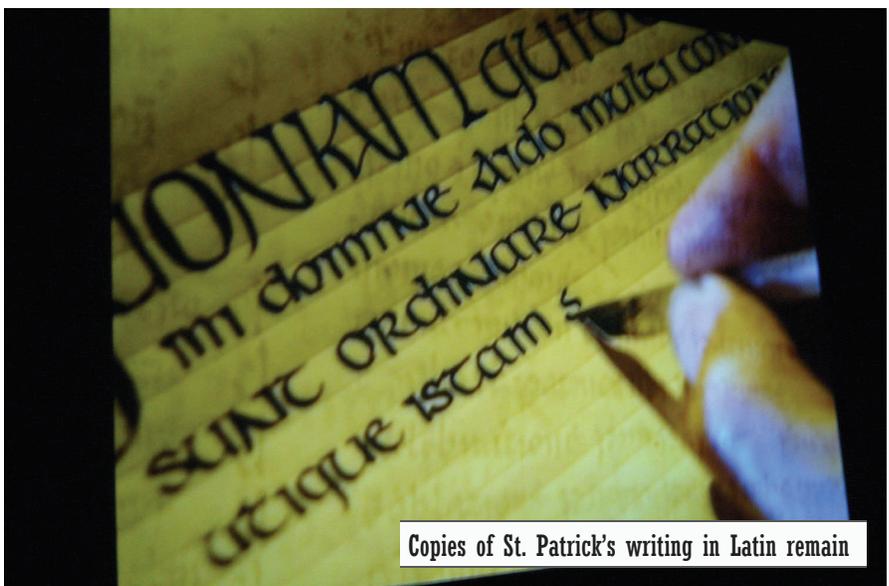
Columba went out from Ireland and Patrick, came to Ireland about 125 years earlier.

On an early morning run before the Crumlin Road church Summer Outreach, we drove to Downpatrick

and visited the St. Patrick Centre. From the educational display, we learned that Patrick was kidnapped when he was 16 and made a slave in Ireland and tended sheep for six years after which he escaped and went back home to Great Britain. He became a monk and much later felt called to return to Ireland and converted the people to Christianity. Two works remain attributed to Patrick, his Confessions and Letter to Coroticus. He was born sometime around 390 AD came back to Ireland as a Bishop

around 435. Two hundred years later mythical Patrick was created by medieval scholars. They turned the humble missionary into a heroic super saint who could banish snakes and perform great miracles. St. Patrick is the most prominent of all the saints but little is known about the true Patrick.

However it is clear that Columba and Patrick were called to live the Christian life. They went out so many years ago and impacted our history.



Copies of St. Patrick's writing in Latin remain