

Naomh Calum Cille ann an Éirinn

Bha Feilimidh 'na phrionnsa de theaghlach rìoghail a bha riaghladh Dhùn nan Gall an ceann-a-tuath na h-Éireann. Phòs e bana-phrionnsa òg air an robh Eithne á siorrachd Laighean an taobh an ear na h-Éireann. Goirid às déidh am pòsaidh, bha bruadar iongantach aig Eithne: nochd aingeal dhi agus thug e dhi brat bòidheach a bha còmhdaichte le dìtheanan de gach dath. Bha fàileadh cùbhraidh nan dìtheanan sin anns an adhar gu dlùth. Dh'itealaich am brat suas dha na speuran agus thùirling e a-nuas agus dh'fhàs e na bu mhotha is na bu mhotha gus an do chòmhdaich e Éire is Alba uile gu léir.

“Tha mi cho brònach gun do chaill mi brat a bha cho brèagha!” ars ise.

Faylimee was a prince of the royal family which ruled Donegal in the north of Ireland. He married a young princess named Enya from the province of Leinster in the east of Ireland. Not long after their marriage, Enya had an amazing dream: an angel appeared and gave her a beautiful cloak that was covered in flowers of every colour. The air was filled with the fragrant smell of those flowers. The cloak flew into the sky and then it came down and grew larger and larger until it covered all of Scotland and Ireland.

“I’m sad to lose such a beautiful cloak!” she said.

“Na biodh bròn ort,” fhreagair an t-aingeal. “Se ciall do bhruadair gum bheil thu torrach. Tha mac ’nad bhroinn a sgaoileas eaglais Dhé air feadh na h-Albann ’s na h-Éireann gus an tig na Gàidheil fo bhlàth.”

Is mar sin, bha Eithne sona ’na dhéidh sin.

Nuair a rugadh mac dhaibh, chuir iad Criomhthan (“sionnach”) mar ainm air. A-réir cleachdadh na linne sin nuair a bhiodh mac no nighean aig duine uasal, rachadh am pàiste a chur gu teaghlach eile ’na dhalta. B’ e oide Chriomhthain fear air an robh Cruithneachan. Se sagart Crìostaidh a bh’ ann nuair a bha an eaglais air ùr-thòiseachadh ann an Éirinn agus bha torr phàganach ’ga diùltadh.

“Do not be sad,” answered the angel. “The meaning of your dream is that you are pregnant with a son who will spread God’s church all around Ireland and Scotland so that the Gaels will blossom.”

So Enya was glad again.

When their son was born, they named him Crivthan (*Crimhthann*, “fox”). As was the custom with sons and daughters of royalty, he was sent to be raised by a foster family. Crivthan’s foster-father was a man named Croothnachan (*Cruithneachán*, “Little Briton”). He was a Christian priest when the church still new in Ireland and many pagans opposed it.

An oidhche bha seo, bha Cruithneachan a' tilleadh dhachaigh bho'n eaglais. Nuair a choimhead e air an taigh, shaoil e gun robh an taigh 'na theine. Ghabh e iomagain mhór oir dh'fhàg e am balach òg Criomhthan ann. Nuair a chaidh e a-steach dha'n t-seòmar far an caidileadh e, chunnaic e meall-solais soilleir a' fantainn os chionn a' bhalaich. Ghabh Cruithneachan iongantas, a' tuigsinn gum b' e seo manadh gun do bheannaich Dia am balach agus gun robh mìorbhailean an dàn dha. Thuig Cruithneachan gum b' fheudar dha a dhìcheall a dhèanadh gus ionnsachadh a thoirt dha'n bhalach.

One night Croothnachan was returning home from church. When he looked at his house, it looked to him like it was on fire. He was very worried because he had left the young boy Crivthan there. When he went into the room where he slept, he saw a bright ball of light hovering over the boy. Croothnachan stood in awe, seeing this as a sign that the boy had been blessed by God and that he had a momentous destiny awaiting him. Croothnachan knew he had to do his best to train the boy.

Bha Criomhthan glé ghlic agus dileas dha'n eaglais. Chaidh e gu gach tìdsear a b' fheàrr, a' sìor-fhaighinn tuilleadh foghlaim. Mu dheireadh thall, bha cothrom aige manachainn a chur air bhonn air a cheann fhéin: bha fearann le caraid dha air bruthaichean na h-aibhne Feabhal is bha coille bheag air siud ris an canadh iad Doire Calgach far an robh teampall pàganach. Chuir Criomhthan teine ris an teampall agus thog e manachainn an-siud. Se "Doire" an t-ainm a tha air fhathast. Agus leis an obair a rinn e às leth na h-eaglaise, thòisich daoine air "Calum Cille" a chantainn ri Criomhthann. Se "calman na h-eaglaise" as ciall dha'n ainm.

Crivthan was very smart and dedicated to the work of the church. He went from teacher to teacher, getting more and more education. Eventually, he got the chance to found his own monastery: one of his relatives had land on the banks of the river Foyle on which was an oak-wood called Derry Calgach (*Doire Calgach*, "Barbed Oak-thicket") where there was a pagan temple. Crivthan burnt down the temple and built his monastery there. It is still called "Derry." And because of his work for the church, people started calling Crivthan "Calum Cille," which means "church dove." He is commonly known in English by the Latin form of his name, "Saint Columba."

Ged as e duine naomha diadhaidh a bh' ann an Calum Cille, bha e déidheil air òrain is bàrdachd cuideachd agus se seinneadair gleusta a bh' ann. Latha bha seo, bha Calum Cille a' siubhal nuair a dh'amaid e air còmhlan bhàrd air an rathad. Thuir am prìomh-bhàrd ri Calum Cille, "S fheudar dhut biadh is tìodhlacan a thoirt dhuinn!"

"Thigibh còmhla rium dha'n taigh agam fhéin," fhreagair Calum Cille, "is bheir mi sin dhuibh."

Although Columba was a very holy man of church, he also loved songs and poetry and was a great singer. Saint Columba was travelling one day when a band of poets came upon him on the road. The chief poet said to Columba, "You must give us food and gifts!"

"Come with me to my own house," answered Columba, "and I will give those things to you."

"Cha téid sinn dhachaigh còmhla riut," ars am prìomh-bhàrd. "Mur toir thu dhuinn biadh is tìodhlacan a-nis fhéin, nì sinn òrain a chumas a-mach gum bheil thu spìocach is nach eil beusan uasal agad idir!"

“We will not go home with you,” he answered. “If you do not give us food and gifts here and now, we will make songs that say you are stingy and do not behave like a nobleman at all!”

“Mas e toil Dhé,” fhreagair Calum Cille, “bheir E fuasgladh dhomh bhuaibh.”

Bha Calum Cille iomagaineach gum milleadh na bàird a chliù, ach smaoinich e ris fhéin, “Chan eil tì nas uaisle no nas fhialaidh na Dia.” Is mar sin, rinn Calum Cille ùrnaigh do Dhia, “A Dhé, on a chruthaich thu mi ’nad choltas fhéin, na leig le duine tàmailt a chur air a’ choltas sin a-nis. An cuidich thu mi gus an t-urram sin a chumail?”

“If it is God’s will,” answered Columba, “He will save me from you.”

Columba was worried that the poets could ruin his reputation, but he thought to himself, “There is no one more noble, or more generous, than God.” And so Columba prayed to God, “O God, since you have made me in your own image, do not let shame be put on that image now. Please help me to keep that honour.”

Chaidh Calum Cille gu fuaran fìor-uisge agus bheannaich e e, agus dh'atharraich Dia uisge an fhuarain sin 'na fhìon. Se mìorbhail a bh' ann ach dh'fheumadh Calum Cille cuachan cuideachd anns an cuireadh e am fìon gus an òladh na bàird e. Is mar sin, ghabh e ùrnaigh eile.

Columba went to a spring of fresh water and blessed it, and God turned the water of that well into wine. It was a miracle, but Columba also needed cups into which to pour the wine so that the poets could drink it. So he prayed again.

Nuair a dh'fhosgail e a shùilean, thàinig aingeal gu Calum Cille agus thuirt e, “A Chaluim, gheibh thu na cuachan a dh'fheumas tu fo leacan a' chùirn mhóir a tha romhad.”

Is mar sin, rùraich Calum Cille air feadh nan leacan agus lorg e trì cuachan dìreach mar a dh'inns an t-aingeal dha. Lìon e na trì cuachan le fìon agus bha cuirm mhór aig na bàird anns an tobhta sin, agus sheinn iad òrain a chuir ri cliù Chaluim Chille. Agus bho'n latha sin a-mach, se “Ràth an Fhleatha” a chanas daoine ris an àite sin, a' ciallachadh “càrn na cuirme.”

When he opened his eyes, an angel appeared to him and said, “O Columba, you will find the cups you need under the stones of that ancient burial mound before you.”

So Columba dug through the stones of the ancient burial mound, and he found three cups just as the angel had told him. He filled up the three cups with wine and the poets had a great feast in that ancient ruin, and they sang songs to praise and honour Columba. And from that day on, people called that place “The Burial Mound of the Feast.”

Bha Naomh Fionntan 'na thidsear aig Calum Cille. Chaidh e dha'n Ròimh air taistealachd agus thug e leis dhachaigh leth-bhreac de Leabhar nan Salm. Aig an àm sin, bha leabhraichean glé ainneamh agus daor. Rinneadh gach duilleag de bhian bà, agus thug daoine uairean is uairean de thìde a' sgrìobhadh gach facail le peann agus dubh. Thug e togail mhór do Chalum Cille leabhar prìseil nan òran diadhaidh seo fhaicinn agus thug e air Fionntan an leabhar a thoirt dha air iasad.

Saint Fintan was one of Columba's teachers. Fintan went on a pilgrimage to Rome and bought back a copy of the Book of the Psalms with him. In those days, books were very rare and expensive. Each page was made from the hide of a cow, and it took hours and hours for people to write out each word with a pen and ink. Columba was very excited to see this precious book of religious songs, and he convinced Fintan to let him borrow it.

Bha an leabhar aig Calum Cille fad móran làithean gun fios a chur gu Fionntan, is mar sin, thòisich Fionntan air iomagain a ghabhail uime. Dh'iarr e air manach òg a dhol a choimhead air Calum Cille gun fhios dha feuch dé bha e ris.

Columba had the book for many days without sending word to Fintan, , so Fintan started getting worried about it. He asked a young monk to go and spy on Columba to see what he was doing.

Chaidh am manach òg a-mach an oidhche sin fo sgàil an dorchadais agus nuair a ràinig e bothan Chaluim Chille, bha aitealan a' tighinn tro'n chléith-uinneig. Chunnaic e Calum Cille 'na shuidhe aig deasg a' sgrìobhadh leth-bhreac de Leabhar nan Salm, agus coinnean a' soillseachadh an t-seòmair. Thill am manach òg is dh'inns e do dh'Fhionntan na chunnaic e.

The young monk went that night under the cover of darkness and when he arrived at Columba's hut, there was light pouring out through the window slits. He could see Columba sitting at a desk writing out a copy of the Book of Psalms, with candles lighting up the room. The young monk returned and told Fintan what he had seen.

Ghabh Fionntan an caothach agus chaidh e gu Diarmaid mac Cearbhaill, Rìgh na h-Éireann, gus casaid a thogail. Chruinnich an triùir aca gus an càs a réiteachadh.

Fintan was furious and went to Diarmaid son of Carrol, the King of Ireland, to voice his complaint. All three of them met to resolve the argument.

“Sgrìobh Calum Cille leth-bhreac de’n leabhar a tha ’nam shealbh fhéin gun chead,” ars Fionntan ris an Rìgh. “Feumaidh e an leabhar fhéin agus an leth-bhreac a rinn e thilleadh thugam a-nis.”

“Columba copied the book that belongs to me without my permission,” said Fintan to the High King. “Now he must return the book and the copy he made of it to me.”

“Chan eil sin cothromach!” fhreagair Calum Cille. “Tha facal Dhé anns an leabhar sin agus tha E air son ’s gun sgaoil sinn e air feadh an t-saoghail. Cha d’ rinn an leth-bhreac a rinn mi cron sam bith air an leabhar leatsa.”

“That is not fair!” replied Columba. “That book contains the word of God, who wants us to share it with the world. The copy I made did no harm to your book.”

Dh'fhan Diarmaid sàmhach tacan a' gabhail beachd, is an uair sin thuirt e: "Mar as leis gach bò a laogh fhéin, sann as leis gach leabhar a leth-bhreac. Is mar sin, se mo bhreith, a Chaluim Chille, gum feum thu an dà leabhar a thoirt do dh'Fhionntan."

Diarmaid sat quietly for a moment and thought, and then said: "Just as every calf belongs to a cow, so does every copy of a book belong to its original. It is my judgment, Columba, that you must give both books to Fintan."

Bha Calum Cille diombach gum feumadh e leabhar prìseil òran diadhaidh a sgrìobh e le làimh fhéin air bian bà, fad uairean is uairean a thìde, a dhìobradh. Thàinig e a-steach air gum b' fheudar dha falbh á Éirinn o chionn 's gun robh ceannardan saoghalta a' tighinn anns an eadragainn leis an t-saothair dhiadhaidh a bha e ris. Se bha fainear do Chalum Cille manachainn ùr a chur air bhonn ann an àite uaigneach far am biodh manaich dìcheallach is dileas do Dhia a-mhàin.

Columba was very unhappy that he had to give away the precious book of songs to God that he made himself of cow skin, that took hours and hours of writing by hand. He

realized that he had to leave Ireland because worldly leaders were interfering with his holy work for God. Columba wanted to establish a new monastery somewhere far away where monks could devote themselves to God alone.

Bha rìoghachd ann air an robh “Dál Riata” aig an àm ud a ghabh a-steach ceann-a-tuath na h-Éireann agus Earra-Ghàidheal ann an Albainn. B’ e Conall mac Comhghaill Rìgh Dhàil Riata agus thug e cuireadh do Chalum Cille sealbh a ghabhail air eilean beag ann am meadhan Dhàil Riata. Se “Ì” ainm an eilein sin.

There was a kingdom called “Dál Riata” at that time time that spanned from the north of Ireland to Argyll in Scotland. Conall son of Cowal was the King of Dál Riata and he invited Columba to take over a small island in the middle of Dál Riata. It is an island that is now called “Iona” in English.

Chruinnich Calum Cille dusan dhaoine de ’chinneadh rìoghail fhéin a thigeadh còmhla ris. Bha iad dòchasach mu’n àm ri teachd ach bha iad brònach an teaghlach is an dachaigh fhàgail às an déidh. Cha b’ e dealachadh ris na daoine a-mhàin a chuir bròn air Calum Cille, ach ri eòin is ainmhidhean a dhùthcha a bharrachd.

Columba gathered a dozen of the members of his royal clan to come with him. They were hopeful about their future, but they were sad to leave their families and homes behind them. It was not just being separated from the people that made Columba sad, but also from the animals and birds of his homeland.

Chuir Calum Cille agus na manaich curach – bàta beag de shlatan seilich is seichean bà orra – ann an Loch Feabhail. Nuair a bha iad a’ dèanadh sin, thàinig eòin thuca a’ rànaich is a’ gul. Thuig Calum Cille a’ chànain aca is bha fios aige gun do ghabh iad bròn cuideachd ri’n imrich. Is mar sin, thòisich Calum Cille air òran a dhèanadh is na manaich ag iomradh na curaich air an loch a dh’ionnsaigh a’ chuain. Seo toiseach an òrain:

Columba and the monks placed a currach – a boat made of wicker sticks covered in cow hides – into Loch Foyle. As they did, birds came to them, screeching and crying. Columba could understand their language and knew that they were also sad to see them leave. So Columba began composing a song as his men rowed the boat along the loch towards the sea. His song began:

Faoileagan Loch Feabhail
Romham is ás mo dhéidh
Cha téid iad leam ’s a’ churach,
Thug an dealachadh orm deur.

The seagulls of Loch Foyle
In front of me and to the rear,
They will not join me in the boat:
This parting brings me tears.