

January 2

Munchin, abbot. Limerick diocese, 7th century

Munchin, affectionately known as "the wise" is honoured in Limerick and is called that city's patron.

Source of all wisdom,
you so inspired your servant Munchin
that he became affectionately known as 'The Wise':
Renew in your church the tradition of prayer and study,
that we may for ever honour you with heart, soul and mind;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Proverbs 4:1-9
Psalm 119:57-64
1 John 2:12-17
Luke 10:1-9

January 31

Edan, bishop, Ferns diocese, 632

This bishop, the founder of Ferns in County Wexford, is variously spelt as Edan. or Aedan, or M'-Aed-oc (Mogue). He symbolises the close link between Ireland and Wales: Ferns might be said to be twinned with Menevia.

God,
in the persons of your bishops Edan and David
you linked the young churches of Wales and Ireland:
Help us to rejoice in the spiritual relationships
we enjoy in the fellowship of your church;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ezekiel 34:11-16
Psalm 1
1 Peter 5:1-4
John 10:11-16

March 5

Kieran of Seirkeiran. Ossory diocese. circa 545

Kieran or Ciaran was both bishop and monk. Born in West Cork, but from an Ossory family in the midlands of Ireland, he appears to have travelled to Europe where he was ordained. On his return to Ireland he settled at Seir (Saighir) near Birr, first as a hermit and then as abbot of a large monastery there. He also had a hermitage on the island of Cape Clear, off West Cork. Fascinating tales of his life surrounded by the animals of his neighbouring woods have often been re-told.

Lord God,
maker of all things wise and wonderful,
all creatures great and small:
We recall with thanksgiving your servant, Keiran,

who lived close to your creation.
Make us mindful of our responsibility for the good earth
in which you have placed us,
and guide us to preserve that which you have given
for the well-being of the world;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 49:8-10, 13
Psalm 103:8-15
2 Corinthians 1:3-7
John 10:10-16

March 24

Macartan, bishop. Clogher diocese. circa 505

Tradition names Macartan as the "strong man" of Saint Patrick, who established the church in Clogher and spread the Gospel in Tyrone and Fermanagh. An eighth century manuscript of the gospels, associated with a silver shrine, Domnach Airgid, in the Royal Irish Academy, is linked with the early Christian life of Clogher diocese .

Heavenly Father,
we thank you for Macartan, faithful companion of Saint Patrick,
and builder of your church in Clogher:
Build up your church through those whom you call to leadership
in this generation,
and strengthen your church to proclaim the gospel
of reconciliation and peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ezekiel 3:16-21
Psalm 67
Romans 15:17-21
Matthew 9:35-38

April 18

Laserian, abbot. Leighlin diocese. 639

Laserian, often called affectionately Mo-laise, was abbot of Old Leighlin. The cathedral, sheltering among the hills of County Carlow, is a place of peace and beauty. It is said that Laserian may have received his training in Iona. His name is certainly honoured in Scotland (Arran) as well as in other parts of Ireland (Inishmurray, of the coast of County Sligo).

God of peace and beauty
who called Laserian to minister in Scottish islands
and in the rolling land of Carlow:
Bless the ministers of your church
wherever they are called to serve,
making them ministers of reconciliation and of peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jeremiah 17:7-10
Psalm 123
Philippians 3:7-14
Luke 12:32-34(-37)

April 27

Assicus (or Tassach) bishop. Elphin diocese. 470.

Tassach (or Assicus) was a close friend of Patrick, and as bishop of Raholp, near Saul in County Down, attended Patrick on his death bed. Tradition ascribes to him the skills of a brass-worker and coppersmith.

God our Father,
your servant Tassach brought the sacrament of Holy Communion
to Saint Patrick as he was dying:
Support us all through our lives
and at the last give us safe lodging and rest in you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jeremiah 23:1-4
Psalm 31:1-5
2 Corinthians 1:3-7
Mark 10:42-45

May 10

Comgall of Bangor, abbot. Down diocese. 602

Comgall was the founder and first abbot of Bangor Abbey in County Down, said to have been the largest monastery in Ireland, with as many as three thousand in the community at one period. Comgall visited Columba in Iona and worked closely with him in spreading the Gospel. Columbanus was trained at Bangor before setting out on his missionary journeys to Europe. There was a strong family-spirit in the community life at Bangor. Counselling, as well as instruction, was an important part of the training. To Comgall is attributed the saying, "A man without a soul-friend is a body without a head."

Almighty God,
you raised your Son to be Lord of light and Saviour of our race:
and to your saints have given wondrous grace:
as we praise you for holy and learned Comgall
whose scholarship made this land a bright shining light in ages of darkness:
we ask you to pour out your Spirit to renew your Church in Ireland
making it once again a land of saints and scholars,
and bringing glory to your Name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ecclesiasticus 39:1-9
Psalm 34:11-17
1 Corinthians 2:6-13
Matthew 10:16-23

May 14*

Carthagh. Lismore diocese. 637

The cathedral at Lismore is dedicated to Carthagh, (or Macodi) founder of a monastery by the River Blackwater in the west of County Waterford. The graceful spire was highly praised by Thackeray on his Irish visit as "the prettiest I have seen in, or I think, out of, Ireland".

God, who formed the hills of the earth and created the valleys:
grant that as we honour you for your servant Carthagh,
founder of your Church in the hills and valleys of West Waterford,
we may in parish church and cathedral glorify your holy Name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Numbers 27:15-22

Psalm 28:7-11

Ephesians 4:7,8,11-16

John 21:15-17

** Carthage may be celebrated on May 13 except in Lismore diocese*

May 16

Brendan, "the Navigator". Ardfert & Clonfert dioceses. 577

Born in Tralee in the diocese of Ardfert and Aghadoe, Brendan founded his monastic school in Clonfert, where the present cathedral with its outstandingly beautiful West Door recalls a great tradition. Brendan's travels, not only to Aghadown (Galway), but also among many islands round the coasts of Ireland and Scotland, and further still to Iceland, have stirred the imagination of many. Inspired by his adventures they have imitated his courage. Was it a companion of Brendan that founded the monastery on the summit of Skellig Michael? Did Brendan sail even further towards the sunset?

God of sea and land,
you endowed your servant Brendan with a bold and adventurous spirit
to occupy himself for your business on the great waters,
revealing to him your wonders in the deep:
Make us, who recall with thanksgiving his life and ministry,
zealous to be pioneers and pilgrims for the faith of Christ;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalm 96:1-9

Acts 26:19-23

Matthew 26:16-20

June 3

Kevin. Glendalough diocese. 618.

"Of gentle birth", as his Irish name declares, Kevin is associated with the lovely Glendalough valley in the Wicklow hills where he lived a contemplative life, and which became the burial place of the kings of Leinster. A community gathered round this man of prayer, who was also famed as both poet and musician.

God of the quiet hills and the busy city:
we thank you for places of beauty which draw people close to you
and for those like Kevin of Glendalough who inspire us
as they communicate their love of you in music and poetry.
May we respond with deeper devotion to our Lord
and in loving service of our neighbours.
Hear our prayer in the name of Jesus.

Malachi 2:5-7
Psalm 15
Philippians 4:4-9
John 17:18-23

June 6

Jarlath, Tuam diocese. circa 550

Jarlath's life and learning lie behind the Christian traditions in the diocese of Tuam. Today Saint Mary's Cathedral, Tuam, County Galway stands on the site of the earliest place of worship.

God, whose praises are sounded from the rising of the sun to its setting:
we thank you for Jarlath
by whose life and learning you built the Church in the West of Ireland.
We pray that in that countryside of lakes, mountains and seashore
your holy Name may be for ever praised;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 49:8-10,13
Psalm 23
Ephesians 3:14-22
Luke 15:1-7

June 7

Colman, Dromore Diocese. 6th century

It is said that there are as many as 200 Colmans in the list of Irish saints. Colman of Dromore is to be distinguished from Colman of Cloyne (remembered on November 24). Dromore's Colman is included in the ancient calendars of both Scotland and Wales. Famed as a teacher of St. Finnian of Moville, Colman continued the pastoral and teaching traditions of St. Patrick.

Holy God,
we praise you for all who, like your servant Colman of Dromore, have taught the Faith of
Christ to young and old
and inspired others to give their lives in his service:
Continue, we pray, to give your church zeal like his for faith and truth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ecclesiasticus 39:1-9
Psalm 34:11-17
1 Corinthians 2:6-13

Matthew 13: 51-52

June 27

Richard Fitzralph. Archbishop of Armagh, reformer. 1360

Richard FitzRalph was popularly known as "St. Richard of Dundalk". A learned scholar, at one time Chancellor of Oxford University, he has been affectionately honoured in Dundalk, the place of his birth, for his compassionate and caring nature. Figuring with importance in church history, he was nevertheless deeply concerned for the sufferers during the Black Death among the people of Dundalk and Drogheda and their surroundings. He had an option for poor. This however did not prevent him from criticising the mendicants of the day. Some of his teaching and writing influenced John Wiclif, later providing insights about a Christian stewardship of possessions. It was said of pilgrims who visited his tomb : "Many a mile did walk but had never seen so good a man as Richard of Dundalk."

Holy and merciful God,
you gave Richard Fitzralph not only gifts of piety and learning
but also such compassion for those were suffering and in need
that he strove to care for them:
Enable us to seek holiness in life and integrity of intellect
with a like concern for the helpless;
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Deuteronomy 15:7-11

Psalm 82:1-4

Romans 12:9-21

Luke 10:25-37

July 6

Moninne of Killeavy, Armagh diocese. 518

Moninne, sometimes called Darerca or Blinne, founded a small monastery for women (eight virgins and one widow, according to one tradition). She continued in Killeavy, not far from Newry, the spirit of the teaching and pastoral concern of Patrick and Brigid.

Lord,
in his ministry on earth your Son accepted the devotion and service of many women.
We thank you for the devoted life of Moninne of Slieve Gullion in Armagh
and the many other women whom you used in the building of the Church in Ireland.
Bless all women in the Ministry of your Church today,
that it may be renewed and strengthened, to your honour and glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Proverbs 10:27-32

Psalm 131

1 John 2:12-17

Matthew 19:23-30

July 8

Kilian, bishop and martyr. Kilmore diocese. 689

Kilian from Cavan was a missionary to Franconia and rebuilt the Church in Baden and Bavaria. Many pre-Reformation cathedrals in Germany and Austria were dedicated in honour of Kilian, pre-eminent among them being that at Würzburg, where with two companions he was murdered in 689.

God, you called missionaries from Ireland with Saint Killian
to take the message of the gospel to Franconia and Bavaria;
Grant that the church may draw strength from their examples,
and never lack zeal to proclaim your love when the going is difficult:
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 61:1-3a
Psalm 117
Acts 13:46-49
Matthew 28:16-20

July 24

Declan, bishop. Lismore diocese. 5th century.

Declan, of Ardmore in the West of County Waterford, (now in Cloyne diocese) was a prince of the tribe of Decies among whom there were Christians prior to the coming of Patrick. It is believed that when Patrick was escaping from slavery he received Christian hospitality among the Decies.

Light of all who sit in darkness:
as we remember with thanksgiving Declan,
and those who spread your light when Ireland was in the grip of paganism,
strengthen all who bear witness to those who do not know Jesus Christ.
Grant this for his Name's sake.

Malachi 2:5-7
Psalm 32
Ephesians 6:11-18
Mark 10:42-45

August 9

Felim. Kilmore diocese. circa 560

Felim (spelt Fedilmith in Adomnán's life of Columba) was the father of Columba (Colmcille), according to tradition and a son of the king of the O'Neill clan who ruled Ulster in the fifth and sixth centuries.

Gracious Father,
you call men and women from all stations in life to your service:
Give to all parents,
after the example of Prince Felim, father of Columba,

wisdom in the upbringing of their children
to the praise and glory of your holy Name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Kings 3: 3-14
Psalm 99:1-5
1 Timothy 2:1-6
Mark 10:42-45

August 9

Crumnathy or Nathi c.610 Achonry Diocese

The monastery of at Achonry in County Sligo , founded by Finian of Clonard at some date in the sixth century, was established under Saint Nathi as a centre of prayer and study.

God of all ages:
we pray that, encouraged by the example of Saint Nathi,
we may devote time and prayer to study the Holy Scriptures,
which may make us wise unto salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jeremiah 17:7-10
Psalm 119:57-64
Philippians 3:7-14
Luke 12:32-34(-37)

August 12

Muredach, or Murtagh c. 480 Kilalla Diocese

Muredach was an "old man", perhaps a presbyter or priest, in Saint Patrick's household. At the conclusion of his mission to the West Patrick left his companion to be bishop in what is now the West of County Sligo and the North of County Mayo. One tradition says that at the end of his life he went to live as a hermit on the island of Innishmurray.

Powerful God,
whose power holds us and leads us in the service of Christ
and whose ear hearkens to our needs:
like Muredach of Patrick's household, may we find Christ
in the hearts of all that love us
and in the mouth of friend and stranger.
We ask this in Jesus' Name.

Numbers 27:15-22
Psalm 1
1 Peter 5:1-4
John 10:11-16

August 13

Jeremy Taylor, Bishop of Down and Connor and Dromore. Writer. 1667

Jeremy Taylor, the distinguished Anglican theologian, who wrote devotional and theological books in the difficult days of the Commonwealth in England, came to Ireland in 1658 and is gratefully remembered in Lisburn and Ballinderry in County Antrim. In 1660 he became Bishop of Down and Connor. Although the times were controversial, he maintained, as was said at the time much "largeness and freedom of spirit". His books Holy Living and Holy Dying are still in print. A study of his teaching on the Holy Communion by H.R.McAdoo (Archbishop of Dublin 1977-1985) has drawn attention to the importance of Taylor's teaching in the book, The Real Presence (1654).

Almighty God,
your servant Jeremy Taylor found in Ireland
a grove of peace in time of conflict
before being called to be a bishop to bring order at a time of reconstruction:
Grant that we who give thanks for his holy life and legacy
may be strengthened by your Spirit in holy living and for holy dying;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Kings 3:6-10

Psalms 119:33-40

Titus 2: 7-8, 11-14

Matthew 7:17-20

August 14

Fachtna (or Fachanan) bishop. Ross diocese. 6th century.

Fachtna was described as being "a wise and upright man" and one with a great gift for preaching. He was the founder of the community of Rosscarbery in West Cork.

God,
from of old you have given wisdom to your prophets and preachers:
grant to all, who like Fachtna, are sent as heralds of the kingdom,
wise words and strength of character
that the world may believe you sent your Son to be Saviour of all:
even Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ezekiel 34:11-16

Psalms 28:7-11

Ephesians 4:7,8,11-16

John 21:15-17

August 16

Charles Inglis, bishop. 1816

Charles Inglis was the son of a rector of Glencolumbkille in County Donegal (diocese of Raphoe). After ordination, he served in New York at the down-town Trinity Church, and later had the distinction of being consecrated at Lambeth Palace as the first bishop of Nova Scotia and first bishop in the British Empire overseas (1787).

Almighty God,
as we remember with thanksgiving Charles Inglis,
first bishop of the Anglican Church in Canada,
we thank you for the sons and daughters of the rectories of the Church of Ireland
whom you have called to the ministry of your Church.
We pray that in whatever parts of the world
your ministers serve
they may lay firm foundations for faith, worship
and nurture in the things which belong to the Spirit;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 67
Acts 26:19-23
Matthew 28:16-20

September 3

Oengus Mac Nisse of Dalriada. Connor diocese. 514

Oengus Mac Nisse (or Macanisius) the first bishop of Connor is thought to have been at Kells, County Antrim as a hermit earlier in his life. A story told of him may reveal his sense of dedication; instead of carrying his Gospel book in his satchel as was customary, he bore it on his shoulders "hunched up or on all fours!"

God,
for whom Oengus Mac Nissa gladly bore the burden of leadership
as bishop among the hills of Antrim:
Keep those whom you call as leaders in Church and State
always mindful of their duty to Jesus Christ,
whose servants they are,
and to whom be glory in the Church to all generations, for ever and for ever.

Ezekiel 34:11-16
Psalm 1
Acts 20:28-35
John 21:15-17

September 9

Ciaran of Clonmacnois. circa 545

Ciaran from Connaught was the founder of a great monastery at Clonmacnois on the east bank of the river Shannon, where the ancient chariot-road through the centre of Ireland crossed the

river. It was an outstanding centre of prayer and study and monastic life from whence many missionaries went out from here to the European Continent, including Virgilius (Fergal), Archbishop of Salzburg, and Alcuin's teacher, Colgu.

High King of Heaven,
we give thanks for the ministry of Ciaran
and for the centre of learning he established at Clonmacnoise:
Keep before your church such a vision of yourself
and a sense of your abiding presence
that we may worship you in spirit and in truth here on earth
and through Christ receive heaven's joy at the last;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ecclesiasticus 39:1-9
Psalm 34:11-17
1 Corinthians 2:6-13
John 16:12-15

September 10

Finnian of Movilla in the Ards. Down diocese. 579.

Finnian was educated at the abbey of Nendrum on Mahee island on Strangford Lough in County Down. After spending twenty years in Scotland as student and missionary he came to Movilla (5 miles from Bangor) to found his monastery. There is a tradition that the Psalter, called the Cathach ("the battle-book"), now in the Royal Irish Academy, was one of Finnian's books. Some scholars say that Finnian introduced to Ireland its first copy of Jerome's Vulgate version of the scriptures.

Heavenly Father,
your Son Jesus Christ prayed and taught the people
in the hills above the Sea of Galilee;
and you led Finnian to establish on the hill above Strangford Lough
a place of prayer and learning:
Help us to draw closer to you in prayer and by study of your word,
and thereby equip us for service in the world;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ecclesiasticus 2:1-9
Psalm 119:1-8
Ephesians 6:11-18
Mark 10:42-45

September 12

Ailbhe bishop. Emly diocese circa 526

Much of the recorded life of Ailbhe is a confusion of valueless legends and contradictory traditions. Yet the tradition of a holy man, a powerful preacher in teacher in the region of Cashel,

cannot be set aside. There is just a possibility that Ailbhe may represent an evangelistic initiative arising from a Christian British colony in Ireland independent from that of Patrick.

Glorious God,
you answered of the prayer of your bishop Ailbhe
to know you, the Creator of all things
and to serve you, Maker of heaven and earth:
empower your Church to proclaim you
as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier,
that your kingdom of love may grow in every land.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Ecclesiasticus 39:1-9
Psalm 34:11-17
1 Corinthians 2:6-13
Matthew 13: 51-52

September 23

Eunan, Abbot. Raphoe diocese. 7th century

Adomnán (or Eunan) was born near Raphoe, in County Donegal, in 627. His Life of Columba gives us a vivid and warmly human account of the famous saint of Iona and the community life there. Adomnán also wrote about the Holy Land, hearing from Arculf, a visitor to Iona, about the sacred sites of the Gospel. Through his visits to Northumbria, Adomnán accepted the Roman way of dating Easter and abandoned the Celtic style of tonsure. He died in 704.

Lord God,
your servant Eunan / Adomnán recorded the grace you gave to his mentor, Columba.
We thank you for all who have handed on the teaching of faithful men and women
so to encourage us in following the example of all that has been true and good in their lives;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jeremiah 17:7-10
Psalm 131
1 John 2:12-17
Luke 12:32-34(-37)

September 25

Fin Barre. Cork diocese. 623

From his hermitage at Gougane Barra in west Cork, he travelled down the river Lee to found his school and monastery among the "marshes" of what is now Cork city. In his lifetime he was honoured as a teacher and described as "this loving man, Barre of Cork".

We give you thanks, Father God,
for the example of that loving man, Fin Barre of Cork,

and pray that as he served you as a teacher of the faith
so we may always follow his example in faith, in hope and in love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Numbers 27:15-22

Psalm 28:7-11

1 Peter 5:1-4

John 10:11-16

October 11*

Canice, bishop. Ossory diocese. 6th century

Canice (Kenneth) was a friend and companion of St. Columba. Adomnán mentions him in his Life of Columcille. The son of a bard from County Derry, he later founded many monasteries in Ireland. Wales and Scotland cherish their link with him also. His foundation at Aghaboe in Leix became the principal monastery in Ossory diocese. A lonely figure, he copied the scriptures and became known as the preacher who loved the countryside and animal life.

Lord, how various are your works,
in wisdom you have made them all
and the earth is full of your creatures:
Grant that, as we praise you for the life and preaching of Canice
among the hills and rivers of Kilkenny,
so we may after his example learn to regard the heritage
we have in this beautiful land as a trust
to preserve and hand on for those who come after us,
for your glory endures for ever;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 49:8-10,13

Psalm 25:3-9

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Luke 15:1-7

**Canice may be celebrated on October 10 except in the diocese of Ossory.*

October 12

Móibhí. Teacher. 545.

Móibhí's name has a special association with Glasnevin, Dublin. Here he founded a monastery. Among his pupils was the great St. Columba.

Almighty God,
your apostle commanded Timothy to choose and instruct those
who would in turn be able to teach others.

We thank you for the life and example of your servant Moibhi, teacher of Columba, and pray that those called to be teachers of the faith today may be enabled to inspire those who will also teach those who come after them; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ecclesiasticus 39:1-9

Psalm 34:11-17

1 Corinthians 2:6-13

John 16:12-15

October 16

Gall, missionary Down diocese. 630

St. Gall came from Leinster to Bangor in County Down to be trained in the monastery there by Comgall. He set off for Europe as a missionary with St. Columbanus and others in 589. Although he did not found the St. Gall monastery in Switzerland which bears his name and is a famous reminder of his Christian evangelising, his gentle life of holiness made a deep impression both in France and Switzerland.

Almighty and everlasting God,
with whom your weak ones go forth as the mighty:
We thank you for your servant Saint Gall
who went boldly in your Name as missionary to barbarian invaders of Europe
and commended the gospel through his gentle life of holiness;
may your church ever respond to the commission to spread the gospel
and draw inspiration from the saints of old;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalm 96:1-9

Romans 15:17-21

Matthew 28:16-20

October 27

Otteran, abbot. Waterford diocese. 563

Otteran, an abbot from Meath, was one of the companions who sailed with Columba from Lough Foyle. He died soon after the landing on Iona. His burying-place on the island, the Realig Odhrain, later became also the burying-place for kings of Dalriada, Scotland and Norway. Scandinavian links with Iona explain the special place Otteran has as Patron of the see of Waterford which was founded by the Danes.

God of the whole world:
your servant Otteran died far from home
and his place of burial became that of kings as well:

Help us to know that wherever you take us
it is there that we are to help others;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ezekiel 3:16-21

Psalm 117

Acts 26:19-23

Luke 10:1-9

November 3

Malachy, bishop. Armagh and Down dioceses. 1148

To Malachy is due the restoration, re-organisation and re-unification of the Church in Ireland after the ravages of the Norsemen. In his time the dioceses of Ireland were first organized as we know them. Under his leadership the arrival of the Anglo-Normans was less of a disaster than it might have been. He co-operated with John de Courcy in the assimilation of the Norman influence in Ulster, including the re-formation of the Abbey of Down under the Benedictine order. He also undertook the rebuilding of the Cathedral of Armagh and gained the recognition of Armagh as the Primatial See.

God,
you called Malachy to be a re-builder
and restorer of the Irish Church:
Look upon your Church today,
correct what is amiss and supply what is lacking;
that it may more and more bring forth fruit to your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Deuteronomy 15:7-11

Psalm 82:1-4

Romans 12:9-21

Luke 16:19-31

November 14

Laurence O'Toole. Dublin and Glendalough dioceses. 1180

Laurence O'Toole was made abbot of the monastery in Glendalough at the age of 25. Then in 1162 he was chosen by the clergy and laity of Dublin to be their first archbishop. In the days of Strongbow with whom St. Laurence worked to restore Christ Church Cathedral in stone, there were many political problems and clashing interests. St. Laurence has been described as "self-effacing and self-denying" as he prayed and worked for the settling of differences at Eu in Normandy.

Almighty God,
in Christ Jesus you were reconciling the world to yourself
and entrusted to your Church the ministry of reconciliation:
As we recall the self-effacing and self-denying ministry of Laurence O'Toole
among the clashing interests of Church and State,

we pray that in our time your church and all its members
may be committed to the same ministry of reconciliation
of men and women to you and to one another;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ezekiel 34:11-16
Psalm 28:7-11
1 Peter 5:1-4
John 10:11-16

November 23

Columbanus, abbot. Down diocese. 615

From Leinster, Columbanus went to Bangor where he spent many years in monastic life there with St. Comgall. Then, about the year 590, he set out with 12 companions for France (Gaul). He is counted as the most important of the Irish Missionaries who went out "into voluntary exile" to evangelise the European continent. Travelling through France, Germany and Switzerland, he finally settled at Bobbio in north Italy. His rule was a strict one and was largely superseded by the rule of St. Benedict. In Bobbio's monastery, which he founded is famous for its library and insular (Irish style) biblical manuscripts.

Father God,
from Bangor you sent out a great band of missionary pilgrims with Columbanus
to bring back the light of the gospel where it had been extinguished in Europe:
Grant that the church following his example may always accept
the yoke and discipline of Christ
and in faith be obedient to his call;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 96:1-9
Romans 15:17-21
Matthew 28:16-20

November 24

Colman. Cloyne diocese. 601.

There are some hundreds of saints called Colman. The Colman who built the first church at Cloyne in County Cork was ordained late in life at the age of 50. He was influenced by Brendan the Navigator as he searched for his vocation. Brendan called him a column or a pillar (columna) of the church and also a dove (columba).

Almighty God,
you called your bishop Colman to be a builder of churches in Cloyne,
giving him grace to be known as a pillar of the Church and a man of peace:
Grant to all who, after his example search for their true vocation,

constancy in their seeking and ready obedience when they discover it;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Deuteronomy 15:7-11

Psalm 82:1-4

Romans 12:9-21

Luke 16:19-31

12 December

Finnian of Clonard, Abbot Meath diocese. circa 549

Renowned as one of the great teachers and scholars Ireland has ever had, Finnian was responsible for encouraging the growth of monasticism in Ireland. His great foundation was at Clonard close to the central political "power" but it was as a centre of biblical study that it was pre-eminent. This gave rise to the title "Teacher of the Saints" being bestowed on Finnian. One of the earliest of the Irish "Penitentials", that is a book suggesting ways in which Christians could seek forgiveness for their sins with programmes of self-discipline, is associated with him but there may be confusion with Finnian of Movilla.

Wisdom from on High,
source of all knowledge, secular and sacred:
We thank you for Finnian, who was like the sun in the highest heavens,
sending forth rays of goodness and holy teaching to the world,
and we pray that in our day men and woman may be illumined
by what they learn from Holy Scripture
and come in penitence for renewal at your feet.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Ecclesiasticus 39:1-9

Psalm 34:11-17

1 Corinthians 2:6-13

John 16:12-15

December 18

Flannan. Killaloe diocese. 640.

St. Flannan's Day is also celebrated in Scotland. He is one of the many travelling Irish saints, who embarked on long journeys, often by water as well as overland, partly as missionaries but also as pilgrims, making a spiritual "peregrination" to witness on the way for Christ. Flannan succeeded Mo-Lua who founded Killaloe cathedral on the Shannon.

Almighty God,
in whose service Flannan travelled by land and water
as a missionary pilgrim to witness to Christ on the way:
Help us in our pilgrimage to be ever constant to Christ

and in your mercy receive us at last into eternal rest;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalm 96:1-9

Acts 26:19-23

Matthew 26:16-20