

Society of Saint Pius X



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In Principio

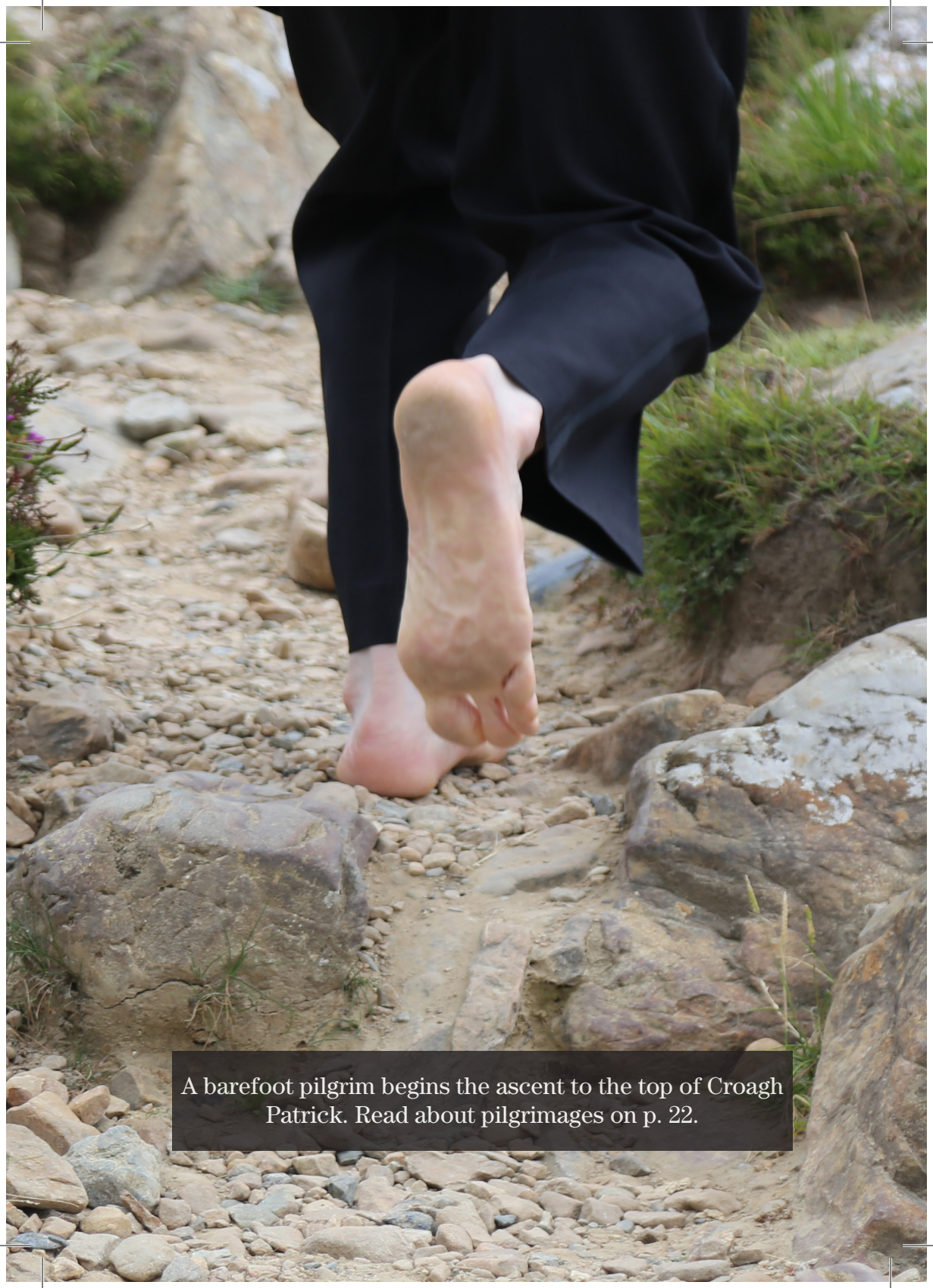
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Autumn 2018

Newsletter of the SSPX in Ireland



Romanesque arcade, west wall of Ardmore cathedral (left), and round tower (right). Read about these ruins on page 15



A barefoot pilgrim begins the ascent to the top of Croagh Patrick. Read about pilgrimages on p. 22.

In Principio
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In Principio

Letter from the Superior

Rev. Fr. Vicente A. Griego, SSPX Superior of Ireland

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

If any man love not Our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema... (I Corinthians 16:22).

These words are strong and plainly condemn the rejection of Christ, which brings ruin. Sin, the rejection of God and His good order, is committed when men misuse their liberty and act contrary to God's Will. God demands obedience to His Will, which is good and all-knowing and which alone brings obedient men to genuine happiness.

The Faith teaches us about God what we cannot know simply with our limited human intelligence. The Church was divinely instituted to teach God's truth and to administer Christ's grace, which are necessary for us to obtain God's happiness, now and forever. To reject God and His wisdom

is to choose unhappiness – eternal damnation. Saint Paul's words emphatically state the consequences of rejecting God.

There is nothing despotic or unfair in God, Who benevolently created and promised men a share in His perfect happiness. Our part in this divine plan is to acknowledge the truth and live according to God's Will – i.e. choose the right means to the end. Although men can misuse their God-given gift of free will and life (by rejecting God and rationalising choices opposed to God's perfect Will), they cannot escape responsibility for the gravely evil and ruinous consequences of acting contrary to God's Wisdom: *...this people hath sinned a heinous sin, and they have made to themselves gods of gold...* (Exodus 32:31).

We easily focus upon objects of nature and ignore God:



we might seek power, chase after wealth, and or desire to gratify the thirst for pleasure. Ultimately, this unlawful devotion to man-made “idols” leads to the idolisation of self. Though few would honestly claim to be God, any who have ever sinned, have presumptuously acted in the place of God, Who is Master of all creation: But you this day have rejected your God, Who only hath saved you out of all your evils and your tribulations: and you have said: Nay: but set a king over us... (I Kings 10:19).

Forgetting God’s goodness and perfection men begin to desire joys merely of the natural order, which deceptively “promise” happiness without God, without His restraint, and without His grace. What folly! Rejecting God, men inevitably seek an earthly king promising earthly joys to rule their lives: We have no king but Caesar (John 19:15). Claiming that human ingenuity and industry will bring happiness is a lie suggesting Christ’s rule is insignificant and unneeded.

Saint Pius X saw this in his time and warns us today:
...who can fail to see that society is at the present time, more than

in any past age, suffering from a terrible and deep-rooted malady which, developing every day and eating into its inmost being, is dragging it to destruction? You understand... what this disease is – apostasy from God, than which, in truth, nothing is more allied with ruin, according to the word of the Prophet: “For behold they that go far from Thee shall perish” (Psalm 72:17).¹

Living in a time of godlessness, we witness its ruinous effects upon society, family, individuals, and seemingly, even the Church – at least upon many churchmen. Rather than enumerate and lament the evils of our day perpetrated by adherents of the liberal and materialist principles that have corrupted so many Catholics (even churchmen), we would do well to guard and augment our union with Christ to persevere in rejecting these errors that warrant God’s condemnation.

To forget Christ’s victory and merely to decry the sad state of affairs in the Church and the world is to succumb to the germ of apostasy, which instils confusion, then doubt and neglect of God. The

1 Saint Pius X, E Supremi Apostolatus, §2, 4 October 1903

neglect of God's presence leads to indifference, then disdain, and eventually to the outright rejection of God.

We do well to counter the revolution that ignores God and direct our attention to the principles of the Faith that instruct, direct, and solidify us in a profound love of God, which solidify the habit of virtue. In living thus, we grow in union with God, our true and lasting happiness – not only in heaven, but even now in this life.

Saint Pius X diagnosed the evil and proscribes the remedy to the great apostasy and confusion of our day: *The interests of God shall be Our interest, and for these We are resolved to spend all Our strength and Our very life. Hence, should anyone ask Us for a symbol as the expression of Our will, We will give this and no other: "To renew all things in Christ"*.²

Our Lord tells us plainly: If you love Me, keep My commandments (John 14:15); *...If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me* (Luke 9:23);

² *E Supremi Apostolatus*, §3

Come to Me, all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you (Matthew 11:28).

Interest in Christ and all that pertains to Christ (i.e. love of Christ) urges us to remain in His company, to follow Him in joy and in suffering, which require grace and virtue – a supernatural faith and hope. Christ and His Church transcend the passing storms of this life caused by erroneously novel ideas and deviant personalities over the course of time.

Are we pre-eminently interested in God? Are we resolved to spend our all to live Christ's life? Where grace shows us lacking, let us determine to give better attention to Our Lord in our prayers. Too often we simply recite a list of devotions prescribed by our personal devotion and benefit. How well do we pray? Do we forget the importance of fostering attention and devotion in preparing for and receiving the Sacraments? Do we flee from making a worthy and sincere thanksgiving after Holy Mass? Do we firmly anchor the beginning and carefully close the end of each day with a few moments of prayer – to adore, to ask, to repent, and to



thank?

Devout attention directed to the One in Whose presence we are, is the essence of true prayer, which meritoriously unites us with Our Lord. The acts of faith, confidence, and love draw us ever closer to God, whereby we will not easily forget Him Who fortifies us for the arduous labour of our daily spiritual combat. With Christ we can successfully navigate the stormy sea of this life – without Him, we are lost.

These glorious but difficult times in which God will certainly raise champions of grace and bring Christ's victory and joy to many,

will be understood and overcome only by those who know, do not forget, and do not abandon God. Then will souls welcome God into their lives, which permits Him to share His joy: *If any one love Me, he will keep My word, and my Father will love him, and We will come to him, and will make Our abode with him* (John 14:23).

Dear friends, as we address the demands of our apostolate in Ireland, it is ever more pressing that you make good use of the availability of the priests to teach, to bless and to administer the Sacraments, which give the grace to fortify us for the spiritual combat. I wish to thank you all for

the spiritual and material support you generously offer, upon which we depend to carry out the work of Catholic restoration in Ireland. Be certain that your prayers and sacrifices are greatly appreciated and that your priests pray for you and your intentions.

May God bless you and may Our Lady of Consolation watch over you.

In Christ the King,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vicente A. Griego". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Fr. Vicente A. Griego
Superior, Autonomous House of Ireland



Saint Declan

Apostle of the Déise

By Br. Columba CSSR

Two thousand years ago, someone wondered if anything good ever came out of Nazareth, and some might have once asked the same of Waterford before Saint Declan arrived. Little of our knowledge concerning Saint Declan is very clear, since the saint's earliest Life was written down some 600 years after he lived. Although this Life does mention his meeting Saint Patrick at Cashel, Patrick's own writings and later biographies do not corroborate this event having taken place. Declan most probably was a humble man, despite his great influence in evangelising significant parts of Waterford.

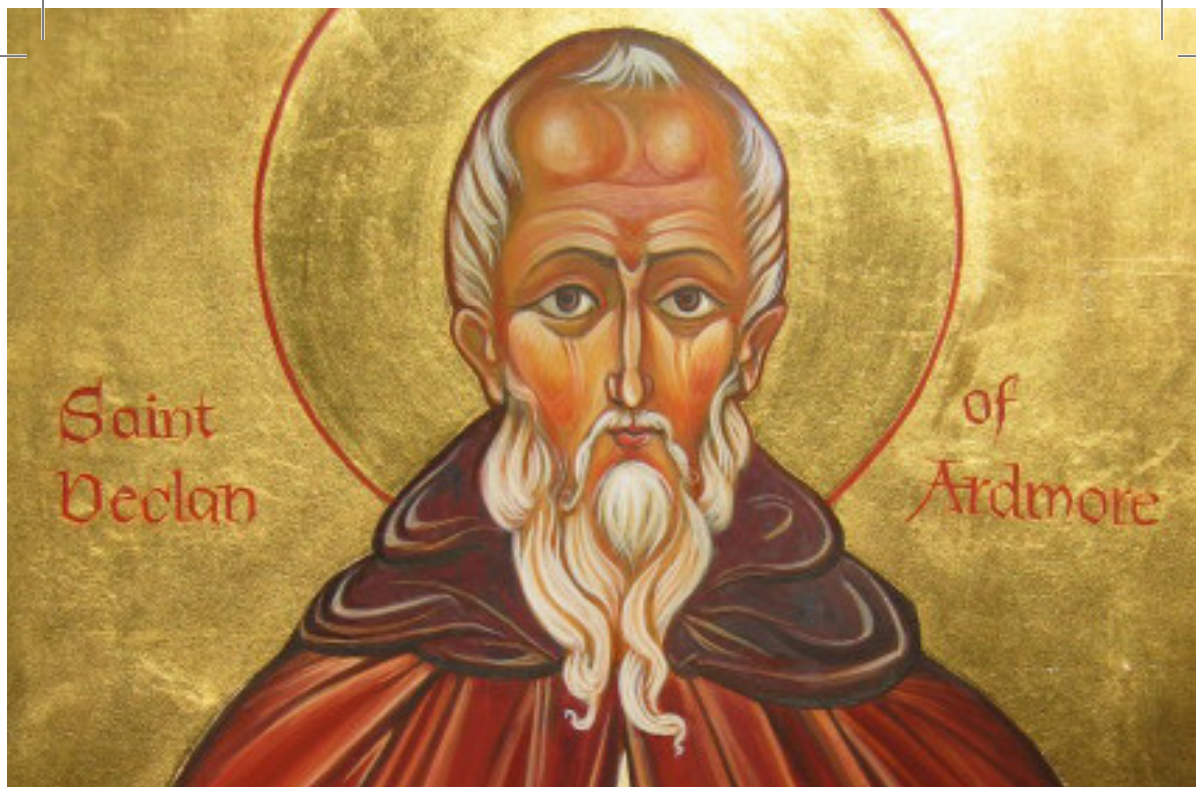
The story of Saint Declan began with a ladder appearing in the sky with angels ascending and descending at the place where he was born. A holy bishop, Colman, was drawn to the sign and baptised our saint, prophesying:

Truly, beloved child and lord you

will be in heaven and on earth most high and holy, and your good deeds, fame, and sanctity will fill all (the four quarters of) Ireland and you will convert your own nation and the Decies [a regional kingdom in Waterford and Tipperary] from paganism to Christianity.

Colman recommended that Declan's parents send their prodigy to a suitable teacher at the age of seven. Dobhran and Dioma were his teachers and the child grew in wisdom and grace with God and men; in time he himself attracted seven disciples. At this point, in the early 5th century, while the Faith did exist in Hibernia, the island was not yet formally attached to the Holy See; with this in mind, Declan made a pilgrimage to Rome.

While in Rome, Declan was consecrated a bishop, and on his return he met Saint Patrick. A friendship was forged between the two



men that endured even until 432 when Patrick returned as Primate of Ireland. Declan and his companions continued their journey and were guided to Ardmore, then an island off Waterford's coast. 'The place of his resurrection', as he called it, would have necessitated too many trips back and forth across the sea, so Declan raised his crosier and like Moses, struck the sea, which meekly ebbed away and left the present-day promontory where Ardmore is now situated. This became the site of his monastery and cathedral. An interesting event is recorded about the monastery when Ultan, one of Declan's earliest disciples, was appointed to

defend Ardmore from sea-raiders. When enemy ships were sighted, Ultan went out to the sea to meet the boats and, holding his hand in the air against them, the sea swallowed the ships whole liberating the monks from this danger. This event gave rise to the saying, 'The left hand of Ultan against you'.

Patrick eventually called the apostles of Munster, Saints Ailbe and Declan, to meet him in Cashel and report on the progress of evangelisation. Incidentally, Saint Declan's journey from Ardmore to Cashel has now been memorialised by the Saint Declan's Way pilgrimage which still exists



today. The first apostle, Saint Ailbe, was confirmed as archbishop of Munster, while Declan was made bishop of the Munster Decies. The following couplet is attributed to Patrick: 'Humble Ailbe, the Patrick of Munster, greater than any saying. Declan, Patrick of the Deisi – the Decies to Declan for ever'. (Ailbe would later visit his kindred spirit Declan before his death.) Once he returned to Ardmore, Saint Declan continued to evangelise the people, but he had particular trouble with Ledban, his people's king. Unable to convince Ledban of the truth of the Faith, even in this time of the great Apostle of Ireland, Declan told his flock to abandon Ledban and that he would choose a new king for them, which he did in the person of Ferghal Mac Cormac.

As Declan's influence grew, he founded many churches and monasteries. Bishops too were consecrated. The hagiography attributes several miracles to the saint. One episode recalls that the king of Cashel, Oengus, had seven hostages taken from a number of the Munster chieftains. While in the king's custody, the hostages died from a plague that devastated Munster, and consequently Oengus

was worried about reprisals, and so confided in Declan. While reluctant at first to petition this favour from God, Declan finally ordered the corpses to take up life again in the name of Jesus. Thereafter, Declan went and blessed the four corners of Munster, and all the afflicted were immediately restored to good health. The king then swore to pay tithes to Declan and his successors in perpetuity. In another episode, a pagan, Dercan, invited Declan to his home one night, and for sport cooked and served dog instead of mutton. Declan, however, detecting a paw in the dish, discerned the ruse, and declined to eat. Dercan was impressed and asked the saint to bless his bell. This bell was for many years a treasured souvenir and was rung by the Decies whenever they went into battle. Other miracles included a childless couple bearing a family, and on another occasion, a desecrating thief was swallowed whole by the earth.

One incident is recorded near Clonmel, where Declan and his companions came upon a man bringing his baby boy to be baptised. Declan prophesied that the boy was destined to be a great servant of God, and urged the man

to let him be the minister. Having neither a vessel nor salt was not a problem for Declan. The saint declared, 'We have a wide vessel, the Suir [river], and God will send us salt, for this child is destined to become holy and wonderful (in his works)'. Thereupon, Declan took up a fistful of earth and, making prayer in his heart to God, he blessed the clay and it became white, dry salt; on seeing the miracle, everybody gave thanks and honour to God and Declan. The infant was baptised Ciarán and he founded two monasteries in that region; this saint is known today as Ciarán of Tubbrid.

Our saint at length foresaw his own approaching death, and after discussing with his disciples and followers the necessities attached to being truly Christian, he was taken to heaven on the 24th of July. On this date, traditionally, there is annually a great celebration which takes place in Ardmore, where the great round tower, cathedral and other ruins speak better than any word of the superior culture of those times. God be with the days. And the Déise.



Harry Clarke's stained glass window of St. Declan in the Honan chapel.



Ardmore Ruins

St. Declan's Early Church Site

The early medieval ecclesiastical site of Ardmore is located on a north-facing ridge, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, in the townland of Ardocheasty. The name Ardmore comes from the Irish *Aird Mhór* meaning 'big height', while the Irish for Ardocheasty is *Ard Ó Séasta* meaning 'the height of Uí Sheasta'. The surname Ó Seasta likely refers to a local ruling family. Christianity arrived to Ireland in the 4th or early 5th century AD, and so the church site at Ardmore is among the earliest, having been founded by Declan (*Déaglán*), a pre-Patrician saint, in the 5th century. This early saint was linked with the ruling families of the *Déisi Muman* (Munster Decies), a regional kingdom around Waterford and Tipperary.

The Ogham Stones

The ruins at Ardmore are particularly impressive and include a large Romanesque cathed-

ral, round tower, shrine chapel and historic cemetery but the earliest identifiable monuments are three ogham stones. Ogham or ogam is an ancient Irish alphabet and was the first writing form used in Ireland. It was based on the Latin alphabet and comprises 20 letters that are depicted by a series of notches and strokes; inscriptions were vertically disposed along the edges of large standing stones and read from bottom to top. Over 400 ogham stones have been recorded in Ireland, mainly in Cork, Kerry and Waterford but also in areas controlled by the Irish in early medieval times (including southwest Wales, Isle of Man and Dalriada in Scotland). Ogham inscriptions are generally commemorative but some stones also functioned as boundary markers, defining the extent of territories. The Ardmore ogham stones probably date to the 5th or early 6th centuries. One of the stones was built into the east wall of St Declan's Oratory but was removed to the cathedral in c. 1855. It bears an Old Irish ogham

inscription, now much worn, which reads 'LUGUDECCAS MAQI ... MU COI NETA-SEGAMONAS DOLATI BIGAISGOB' (translation: '[the stone] of Luguid, son of ...? the tribe of Nad-Segamon ...?'). It is thought that this stone may be a memorial to an important prehistoric king who ruled in west Waterford. Another ogham stone was found beside a grave in c. 1854 and was also removed to the cathedral. It has a small incised cross and an ogham inscription that reads 'AMADU', which comes from the Latin 'amatus' meaning 'beloved'. These two ogham stones remain on display in the chancel of the cathedral. The inscription on the third ogham stone reads '... NACI MAQI ...' (translation: '?-nach son of?'). This stone had been inserted into a low wall in the cathedral but it is now in the National Museum of Ireland.

The Enclosure

Another early, often ignored, feature of the site is its enclosure, c. 200m in diameter. While this is difficult to make out on the ground, aerial photographs and early Ordnance Survey maps show the remains of a large curved earth-

en enclosure to the north, south and west of the church site. This would have been originally roughly circular in shape and surrounded the entire site. There is also clear evidence for a second (outer) enclosure further north and north-west, and a cross known as Cloch a Datha was previously positioned on the northern tip of this enclosure. Adjacent townland boundaries and roads respect and follow the lines of these enclosures. Multiple concentric circular enclosures were a feature of large early medieval church sites but these rarely survive. The outer enclosure defined the extent of the church lands or space that offered sanctity, sometimes referred to as the limits of the 'termon'. As the early medieval period progressed, important sites like Ardmore operated less like monasteries and more like pastoral centres that facilitated a mixed community of both religious and lay residents. Because people lived and worked within this site, a series of enclosures helped to separate sacred and domestic spaces, with the holiest area confined to the centre and this is where the churches and burials are located, while craft activities like metalworking and stonework-



St. Declan's Oratory

ing were undertaken at the periphery. Archaeological excavation carried out to the southeast of the site found a hearth and evidence for some kind of domestic or industrial activity, while mid-19th- and early 20th-century accounts tell of the foundations of buildings, probably domestic in nature, to the west of the site.

The Oratory

Among the most important monuments at Ardmore is the shrine chapel known as St Declan's Oratory. Shrine chapels were the earliest type of stone-built church-

es in Ireland, with most having been erected before 900 AD. In St Declan's Oratory the floor is paved with limestone flags and a rectangular stone-lined cavity set within it marks the saint's grave; the flagstone covering this pit has long since disappeared. On the Continent, saints' remains were often removed from their graves and enshrined in jewel-encrusted reliquaries which were placed in churches; however, in early medieval Ireland there were strict rules banning indoor church burials. As a result, the corporeal remains of early Irish saints generally remained in their original graves, but small chapels or other stone

structures were often later built on top to enshrine and protect the gravesites within the cemeteries that grew up around these special graves. Given their small dimensions, shrine chapels did not operate in the same manner as congregational churches and it is unclear if Masses were offered within them. St Declan's Oratory was traditionally visited by pilgrims 'doing the rounds' during the annual 'pattern' held on the saint's feastday, 24th July. For years they collected small samples of soil from the pit containing the saint's remains. A small black cross-inscribed marble known as Duibhín Déagláin ('the little black stone of Declan') was found within the pit. This is said to have been brought to Ireland from Rome by St Declan following his journey there to receive orders from the Pope. In Ireland, saints' relics were often used for the swearing of oaths and as a mode of proof for cementing treaties, and it is thought that this stone, now lost, was used as a 'charm'.

The Cathedral & Tower

The high point in Ardmore's history came in the 12th century when it aspired to episco-

pal status and was recognised as a diocesan centre between 1170 and 1210. This prestige is reflected in the cathedral and round tower built on the site during this period. The Annals of Inisfallen tell us that in 1203 'Mael Étaín Ua Duib Rátha, noble priest of Ard Mór, died after finishing the building of the church of Ard Mór'. However, this cathedral was demoted to parish status in 1210 when Ardmore diocese was united with Lismore. The cathedral comprises a nave and chancel, and was constructed in a number of phases. The chancel, where the altar is located, was built in the late 12th century using the foundations and lower courses of an earlier pre-Romanesque church built in the 10th or 11th century. The nave – where the congregation gathered – was added in the late 12th century and soon after, in the 13th century, it was further enlarged to its present size and the chancel arch rebuilt. An impressive, highly unusual and extensively rebuilt Romanesque arcade along its west wall consists of panels depicting scriptural scenes. Weathering makes identification problematic but the scenes represented include Adam and Eve, the Adoration of the Magi, the Judgement of Solo-

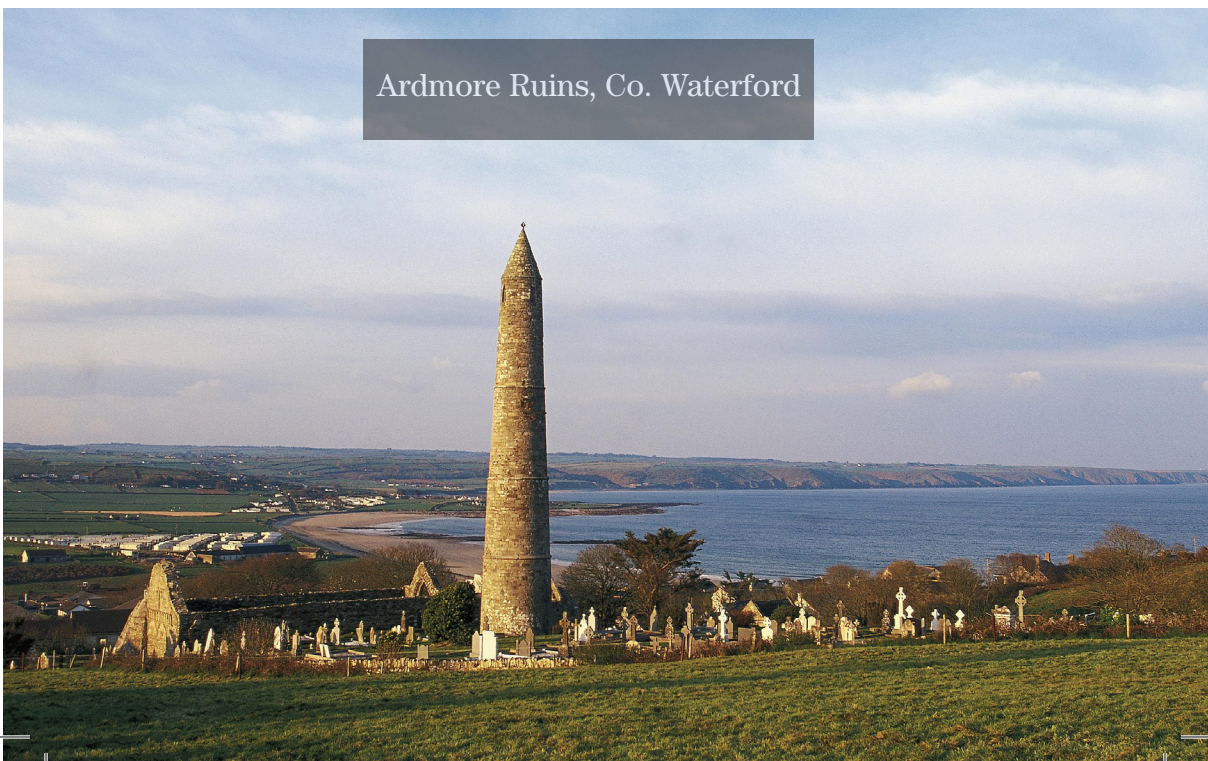


mon and the weighing of souls; a number of ecclesiastics are also depicted. The cathedral's buttresses were added in 1630 according to a date-stone. In 1642, the cathedral and round tower were besieged by an Irish garrison. The chancel was used for Protestant worship until 1838 when the present Anglican church was built nearby; a 15th-century octagonal font previously in the cathedral's nave is now stored in this 19th-century church.

The 29m high round tower has five floors and a small window on each floor, with four windows located at the top: one at each of the

cardinal points. The floors have not survived but several of the stone corbels that supported the wooden boards remain, some of which are carved with human and animal faces. The tower's round-arched doorway is positioned about 4m above ground. The building is surmounted by a modern cross while the original capstone is now stored in the cathedral. The tower was repaired in the 1840s by a local landowner during which time burials were discovered inside. An excavation in 1996 revealed a solid base of stone beneath the plinth and some recent burials. There are about 80 round towers surviving in

Ardmore Ruins, Co. Waterford



Ireland and they generally occur on church sites of considerable importance. These buildings were known in Irish as cloig teach meaning 'bell house' and so they could have operated as belfries. They were also treasuries, watch towers and places of refuge during raids. Because of their shallow foundations, doorways were inserted high up for added stability. Access was probably via a rope or wooden ladder that could have been pulled inside when needed. Because of their shape, the towers acted like chimneys and fire spread quickly within them as we know from contemporary accounts of raids.

Dysert Church

A short distance from the main ecclesiastical complex are some other monuments of interest. The most illustrious among these is Dysert Church or Díseart Déagláin, which is sited to the southeast of Ardmore church site, in the neighbouring townland, on a cliff overlooking Ardmore Bay. The Irish word díseart derives from the Latin desertum meaning 'desert' or 'deserted place'. Monasticism originated in the desert of the Eastern Mediterranean region and the

concept of the hermit in the desert was embraced by those seeking an isolated religious life in Ireland. The 'desert' placename is attached to church sites or hermitages usually founded before the 8th century. Like Ardmore, Díseart Déagláin was established in the 5th century and a description of it is provided in the Life of St Declan:

... in a small venerable cell which he [St Declan] had ordered to be built for him between the hill called Ardmore Declain and the ocean – in a narrow place at the brink of the sea by which there flows down from the hill above a small shining stream about which are trees and bushes all around, and it is called díseart declain ...

The isolated location of this site, on a north-facing cliff top beside the rough Atlantic Ocean, ties in with the Irish hermit's notion of the harsh desert. St Declan chose to retire to this place to die. The present church here is late medieval in character, dating to about the 14th century but this no doubt replaced an earlier church. The church is visited on the saint's feastday and a ringed cross at the east end of the building is mounted



St. Declan's Stone

on blocks of Dundry stone, which are deeply incised with crosses made by pilgrims attending the annual pattern.

Well & Stone

Immediately to the west of the church is St Declan's Well. The structure is surmounted by two (originally three) crosses, all late medieval in character and depicting Christ crucified. By at least the mid-19th century, the well also formed part of the annual pattern and pilgrims bathed their limbs in it as it is believed to have curative properties.

On the seashore, about

0.5km northwest of Dysert and to the east of Ardmore church site is St Declan's Stone, a large conglomerate boulder. It is also visited as part of the pattern during which pilgrims crawl under it three times and this activity is believed to be beneficial for people with rheumatic pains. Tradition holds that this stone floated from Rome (or Wales) in the wake of St Declan's ship bearing a bell forgotten by the saint. Taken as a whole, the monuments at Ardmore afford us a unique glimpse at a well-preserved early medieval church site of exceptional significance, one that continues to this day to play an important role as a pilgrimage destination.

Why Pilgrimage?

Spiritual Journeys in the Church & Ireland

By Fr. Patrick Kimball

Wanderlust was a term coined in the mid-19th century to describe the increasingly popular activity of a youth leaving his native country and setting out in search of adventure in the world beyond. Although modern man's desire to wander is due largely to the fact that he suffers from a lack of stability, it is also an innate characteristic of human nature to explore and discover the unknown. The Church, as a good mother attuned to the needs of her children, recognised this aspect of human nature from the very beginning, and discovered a way to supernaturalise it by organising pilgrimages.

A pilgrimage is simply a journey to a locality which bears some spiritual significance, either due to a saintly person or the occurrence of a supernatural event. The pilgrims' intentions can be as varied as the pilgrims themselves, ranging from a debt of gratitude for

a favour received to a petition for difficulties at hand. But the benefits of a pilgrimage do not come merely from reaching the destination; the journey itself bears quite some significance. The Latin word for a pilgrim, 'peregrinus', is an indication of this; its original meaning refers to a stranger or outsider who passes through from a foreign country and pollutes the land. These 'peregrini' were initially ostracised because of this, whereas later on the religious pilgrim's status was enhanced by exiling himself from his countrymen. This is because the journey that a pilgrim treads each day towards his destination, with only the essentials on his back, is a microcosm of the baptised soul on his journey towards heaven. The physical trek, with its many similarities to the spiritual life, reinforces the reality of the spiritual journey which takes place on Earth each day.

But Christians were not



the first to promote pilgrimages. In Genesis, God speaks to Abraham with these words: ‘Go forth out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and out of thy father’s house, and come into the land I will show thee’ (Genesis 12:1). Abraham then departs and lived out of a tent for most of the remainder of his life, until he finally settles in Hebron. Similarly, the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt into the Promised Land carries on for forty years. And once the temple was built in Jerusalem, all Jewish men were obliged to travel and worship at the temple three times a year (see Deuteronomy 16:16).

It is not surprising that the early Christians soon adopted this very same practice and began making pilgrimages ‘to distant shrines well known in sundry lands’, as Chaucer relates in his prologue. The earliest record of a Christian pilgrimage dates to 333, wherein the travels of a pilgrim from Bordeaux to the Holy Land are related.¹ The first evidence of a pilgrimage does not appear until the 4th century because the practice of Catholicism in the Roman Empire was forbidden until Constantine published the Edict of Milan in

¹ Hunt, E. D. 1982. *Itinerarium Burdigalense: Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Late Roman Empire AD 312-460*.



Pilgrims make their way into Co. Tipperary on the second day of St. Declan’s Pilgrimage.

313. This not only granted the early Church the right to construct fitting edifices for divine worship, but also gave Christians the freedom to journey throughout the empire and to the land where Our Lord Himself lived, suffered and died. From the outset, the Holy Land became the choice destination for these early pilgrims but it was not long before pilgrims began journeying to other significant holy sites.

Devotions quickly spread to the tombs of those great apostles and saints whom Christians were indebted to for the spreading of the Faith in their fatherland. Pilgrimages became such a common aspect of medieval life that they were routinely given as penances (this was in fact considered a lighter penance in those days!). The Inquisition of Carcassonne in the 13th century lists four different locations a penitent could choose from when he was assigned such a penance: Saints Peter and Paul in Rome, Saint James in Compostela, Saint Thomas in Canterbury and the Three Kings of Cologne.² Still today, the Camino de Santiago stands apart as one of the most

² Lea, H. C. 2016. *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages Vol. III*. Woodstock, Ontario: Devoted Publishing, p. 188.

renowned, attracting hundreds of thousands of pilgrims every year.

The early pilgrimages of Ireland began very soon after the death of Saint Patrick but took on a more ascetic nature. Perhaps the two most famous and historically significant pilgrimages are Lough Derg, Co. Donegal and Croagh Patrick, Co. Mayo, both of which retrace the steps of the great Apostle of Ireland. Station Island on Lough Derg is where, tradition says, Saint Patrick witnessed a vision of purgatory and the torments of hell. The pilgrimage here is designed to recall these realities to the mind of the pilgrim and stir up sorrow in the heart for past sins. Traditionally known as ‘Saint Patrick’s Purgatory’, by some it is referred to as the ‘ironman of pilgrimages’, and it consists of a strict 40-hour programme with nine stations, no sleep, virtually no food and little protection from the elements. The Croagh Patrick pilgrimage takes a more traditional approach and follows Saint Patrick’s footsteps to the top of the Reek where the saint prayed for forty days.

But Ireland produced many saints besides the great Apostle of



Resting in Cahir on the final day.

Ireland, which is evident from the isle once referred to as the ‘Land of Saints and Scholars’. Inevitably, pilgrimages began to crop up all over the country to various monasteries and churches where these saints once lived or where their remains now lie. One of the most notable of these pilgrimages is a route that Saint Declan took from Ardmore to Cashel. Saint Declan was the apostle of Munster and is said to have first evangelised the eastern part of this province where it seems Saint Patrick never set foot. In fact, local tradition has it that once he had converted many of the locals, he made the long trek from Ardmore to Cashel to meet Saint Patrick, by whom he was finally consecrated a bishop. In retracing Saint Declan’s

steps along this path, pilgrims hope to rediscover the great zeal and profound faith that inspired the great apostle of Ardmore.


This pilgrimage has made a resurgence in recent years, and is even known by some as the ‘Irish Camino’. Although not quite as long as the Camino de Santiago, it is nevertheless a 104 kilometre walk which can be completed in a mere three days. Beginning at Saint Declan’s seaside church site, it makes its way over the scenic Knockmealdown Mountains and finally snakes through the Tipperary countryside, before arriving at the royal site of Cashel. Not only is this walk a testament to God’s majestic creation, but it is also a crucial link

with Catholic Ireland of old which these days seems to be all but forgotten. Pilgrimages are just one of the many ways to rediscover and incarnate the same Faith of those who have gone before us.

And since any end worth achieving is difficult to obtain, this is true *par excellence* for the spiritual life. Pilgrimages afford us the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of everyday trials and contemplate how God uses suffering to bring us closer to Him. As Saint Augustine said: 'In all trouble you should seek

God. You should not set Him over against your troubles, but within them. God can only relieve your troubles if you in your anxiety cling to Him. Trouble should not really be thought of as this thing or that in particular, for our whole life on earth involves trouble; and through the troubles of our earthly pilgrimage we find God'.

INFORMATION ON ST. DECLAN'S WAY
2019 PILGRIMAGE FORTHCOMING.

A group of five men standing in a grassy field in front of the stone ruins of Hore Abbey in Cashel. The ruins feature a prominent archway. The men are dressed in casual outdoor attire, including a blue hoodie with 'COLUMBIAN -NY- ESTABLISHED 1988' and a black clerical cassock. A black text box is overlaid at the bottom of the image.

Pilgrims pose for a picture at Hore Abbey in Cashel after completing St. Declan's Way this past July.



Newly ordained Fr. Thomas O'Hart celebrated First Masses in Athlone and Dun Laoghaire.



Pilgrims climb Croagh Patrick (bottom); Our Lady of Knock Pilgrimage (top)



Newry Mass Rock Pilgrimage on 15 August (top); August Youth Outing (bottom).

Calendar of Events

October 19-21 ACSS National Outing

October 27 Young Adult Study Day

October 28 Feast of Christ the King

November 1 Feast of All Saints (Holyday)

November 8 Homeschool Day - Athlone

November 3 Eucharistic Crusade National Meeting

December 8 Immaculate Conception (Holyday)



August Youth Outing

Priestly Society of Saint Pius X in Ireland

Rev. Vicente A. Griego, Superior

Mass Centres

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CHURCH
1 Upper Mounttown Road
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A96 P793
(01) 284 2206

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Mr. McKeown (028) 9445 3654

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY
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OUR LADY OF KNOCK CHAPEL
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Fr. Leo Boyle
Fr. Patrick Kimball

*Visit fsspx.ie for complete
schedules, weekly bulletins,
and more information.*

Society of Saint Pius X



S S P X

The Priestly Society of Saint Pius X is an international society of common life without vows, whose purpose is the Priesthood and that which pertains to it.

The main goal of the Society is to preserve the Catholic faith in its fullness and purity, to teach its truths, and to diffuse its virtues. Authentic spiritual life, the Sacraments, and the traditional liturgy are its primary means of bringing this life of grace to souls.