

Resource Sheet 41

The life of St. Columba as seen in the icon:

Beginning at the lower left corner, reading clockwise

- 1) The birth of St. Columba. Before his birth an angel appeared to Columba's mother and showed her a great robe of wondrous colours showing all the flowers of the world indicating that the child she was to deliver would be a great leader of souls.
- 2) Columba as a young man. Columba was a pious and devout youth and at an early age showed his spiritual depth and was soon enrolled as a monk.
- 3) Columba as Abbot. Eventually Columba became the founder of several churches and monasteries in his native land of Ireland.
- 4) Columba and companions leave Ireland for Scotland. Columba and a small group of monks left Ireland and sailed to the Island of Iona where they built a monastery to serve as a base for the evangelisation of Scotland.
- 5) Columba converts the Scottish King Dal Riada. In the year 574 the Scottish King came to Iona to receive baptism at Columba's hands.
- 6) Columba purifies a poisoned well. There were many miracles performed by Columba. While travelling in the land of the Picts, he encountered a well that was held sacred by the Druids that would cause anyone who touched the waters to become afflicted with diseases such as leprosy. Columba purified the well and made the waters holy to the dismay of the Druidic priests.
- 7) Columba confronts the Loch Ness Monster. While swimming in Loch Ness, one of Columba's companions was attacked by a monster. Columba rebuked the monster who fled and the swimmer was saved.
- 8) Columba calms the stormy sea by his prayers.
- 9) Columba's death. At the close of his life Columba knew his death was coming and prepared his monks for the event. On the day of his death, after attending Saturday Vespers he returned to his cell until the middle of the night when he suddenly returned to the Church. His monks gathered around him and he died there in the church, his soul being transported to heaven in a glorious descending light and with the angelic choir.