

AN ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE FEAST OF ST COLUMBA

INTRODUCTION

On 8th June, 1984, the Lower Church of Glasgow Cathedral was the locus of a unique service in preparation for the Feast of St Columba, when a short act of devotion round St Mungo's tomb emphasised the 'oneness' of the Church and paid tribute to our Christian heritage as bequeathed to our generation by Saints Ninian of Withorn, Mungo of Glasgow, and Columba of Iona.

As part of the celebrations for the Feast, a team of young athletes, comprising staff and pupils from the St Columba of Iona Secondary School in Glasgow, participated in a 'Three Saints Relay Run' from Whithorn to the Isle of Iona, in response to Pope John Paul's appeal for Scottish Christians to walk the pilgrimage of life hand in hand, and incorporated within their itinerary a fifteen minute respite at Glasgow Cathedral, for which it was requested that a brief act of commemoration be organised. Furthermore, this race was scheduled to coincide with an Ecumenical Conference in the School itself, which was attended by various leading churchmen, and to finish at an Ecumenical Gathering at Iona on 9th June - the Feast of St Columba proper.

Though the order prescribed for that fifteen minute service was formulated in the context of two important ecumenical gatherings, and for a congregation of athletes, it nevertheless conveniently illustrates what might be attempted by anyone contemplating a brief act of worship in honour of the Feast of St Columba.

SENTENCES

Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth. No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, for we have one baptism for the remission of sins, one faith for the offering of thanksgiving and praise, and one Lord who is the God and Father of us all.

OPENING PREAMBLE

This morning, we welcome you all most warmly to the Lower

Church of Glasgow Cathedral, and to the last resting-place of St Mungo, in anticipation of, and in preparation for the celebration of the Feast of St Columba on Saturday, 9th June, 1984. You who here are runners in a race spanning Whithorn Priory and St Columba's Isle of Iona, in response to Pope John Paul's earnest appeal that the various Christian communities of Scotland might make their pilgrimage through life, not in solitude or isolation, but hand in hand. In this brief service at St Mungo's tomb, our readings and prayers will focus sharply on Christian unity, and on the theme of life as a pilgrimage for, in a sense, we are all chosen athletes making our journey from here to the Heavenly City, in the hope that when our earthly labours are ended, and when the race of life has exhausted its course, we may finally reach the shrine of the Lord our God, and come to dwell in His house for ever.

READINGS

Psalm 133 (emphasises theme of unity)

Ephesian 4: 4-16 (Paul's plea for unity through diversity of gifts)

Hebrews 12: 1-6 and 14-17 (exhortations to run the race of life with perseverance, and to strive for peace and holiness)

HYMN 420 (CH3) The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING/INTERCESSION/COMMEMORATION

Almighty and everlasting God, in whom we live and more and have our being: we give Thee praise and thanks for all Thy tender mercies so richly bestowed upon us, unworthy as we are to receive them. More especially this day, we give Thee thanks for the life and witness of Thy faithful servant Columba, who brought our faith from Celtic lands to Scottish shores; for Mungo, our own saintly apostle and bishop, who didst establish here a sanctuary dedicated to Thy glory, and a house of prayer for all nations; and for Ninian, who on this sacred site didst plant a cross, and bless this hallowed ground for Christian interment, upon which is built a Cathedral for Christ the King.

O Lord most high, who hast decreed that Thy children should be one in faith and baptism, sharing the earthly promises of one gracious heavenly Father: we humbly pray Thee to send down Thy blessing upon the Ecumenical Conference of St Columba of Iona Secondary School, and upon the Ecumenical Gathering on Iona; that those who attend or participate therein may see a clearer understanding of Thy truth, a sharper vision of Thy glory, and a richer awareness of the unity of spirit which Thy dost desire for Thy universal Christian family.

Prosper with Thy Holy Spirit, O Lord, the unity and peace of Thy Church in this and everyland; that her broken body may be cleansed from every sordid stain of division, and every ugly scar of bitterness. Heal the time-worn wounds of enforced estrangement and separation, and increase within her varied communions the power of reconciliation; and grant that by so doing, the day may come when all Christians shall walk together hand in hand; that every knee shall bow before Thee, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

O God our heavenly Father, by whose command man first became flesh, by whose mercy we are each appointed to our place in the mysterious pilgrimage of life: give us grace to walk upon that unknown journey as disciplined soldiers of our risen and ascended Saviour; and so following in the noble footsteps of apostles, saints and martyrs of every age and clime, let us run with patience that race which is set before us, ever looking unto Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our faith, who with Thee, O Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, is worshipped and glorified, world without end.

AMEN

THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN 424 (CH3) Thy hand, O God, has guided
Thy flock, from age to age.

THE BLESSING

May the Lord your God protect and comfort you; the Christ of the Church reconcile you in His Father's arms; and the Holy Spirit unite you in peace; and may the blessing

of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be upon you this day, and remain with you always.
AMEN

W Gerald Jones
Kirkmichael

CAP THIS

The late Dr D P Thomson was holding a student campaign in Galashiels in 1946. At one of the evening meetings the speaker was to be a minister from Dundee, who was travelling down specially for that service only. Another minister was conducting the service from the choir area, behind the communion table. The first part of the service included special solos, and testimonies from two members of the team. Finally, after a hymn, the leader was to introduce the speaker. He looked round to where the speaker had been by his side, and found that he had disappeared. D P had told us to be ready for anything, and the leader showed his calibre by launching out into a 25 minute evangelistic address. But where had the speaker gone? Up to the pulpit, of course! He stood up to give his address, but when he saw the leader launch forth, he quietly sat down, and returned later in the evening to Dundee, his address undelivered. Two remarks of D P. To the speaker - "Serves you right for being so thirled to the pulpit!" To the leader, who was most upset when he found what had happened - "Somebody there had a word from God through you tonight, I'm sure".

The Rev Dr William G Young

The Revd John B Logan, MA, BD, STM.

An appreciation of the life and work of Mr Logan, an Honorary President of The Church Service Society, who died in January, will appear in the next issue of "The Record".

THE CHURCH SERVICE SOCIETY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING MAY 21st 1987

The Annual Business Meeting of the Society will be on Thursday May 21st at 6 pm in Greyfriars Tolbooth and Highland Kirk House (enter from Greyfriars Kirkyard or Candlemaker Row).

Supper will be served at 6.30. For this, please fill in the slip below and return with payment of £2.50 to the Treasurer by May 15th.

At 7.30 there will be a workshop in church on "WAYS OF SINGING THE PSALMS" led by the Greyfriars Choir with the Organist and Choirmaster Michael Chibbett MA, B. Mus., FTCL, ARCO, LRAM, ARCM.

This is an open meeting; all are welcome.

To: Mr. Alex Mowat,
6 Clifton Terrace,
Edinburgh EH12 5ET

I/we expect to be at supper after the Church Service Society AGM and enclose cheque/postal order for..... £2.50 per person.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

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