

On Line Irish History Course

Island of Saints and Scholars

Thursdays 7:30 – 9pm / Oct 8, 15, 22, 29



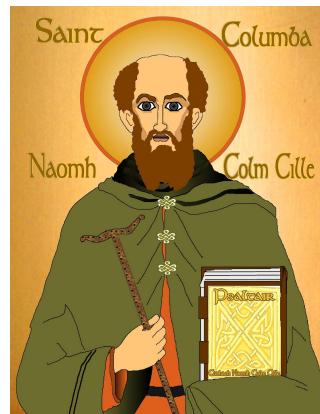
Early Medieval Ireland (500-800 C.E.) became known as the *Insula Omnia Sanctorum* - the Island of Saints and Scholars. Monasteries and convents dotted the island, not only as sites for prayer but also for learning and scholarship. The number of people in Ireland in the 6th century was not surpassed again until the late 18th century

The collapse of the Roman Empire occurred as tribes from northern and eastern Europe overran and displaced the people in Christianized western Europe. Many Christians came to Ireland as refugees and asylum seekers bringing with them their skills, books, and mobile wealth. Along with the Christians in Ireland they participated in the building of settlements around monasteries. This laid the ground for a renaissance in Ireland that lasted till the Vikings arrived in 795. The Vikings ransacked and destroyed the monasteries, enslaved or killed the occupants and brought an end to Irelands "Golden Age".

One of the most significant developments at this time was the role played in bringing Christianity back to Britain and Europe in the face of the pagan disruption following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire. This began with the work of Saint Colmcille/Columba. Colmcille founded some 30 monasteries in just 10 years. He left Ireland and built a monastery at Iona in Alba (Scotland). From this beginning Christianity was spread throughout northern Britain and Europe by people educated in a string of monasteries established by Irish missionaries.

In 498 Fergus the Great, king of Dalriada, entered Argyll and, in time, became the first Christian king of Alba.

The most important political development in this period was the emergence of the Ui Neill dynasty.



There were two main plagues in Ireland during this time; the first in 545 and a second in 664. This led to a surge in the building of ring forts as people sought security from the disease and the social disorder that ensued.

To enroll, email seanmurphy630@gmail.com. One course fee: \$80