**St. Columban’s Legacy: Faith that Travels Through Time**

### **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, children will:

* Understand how St. Columban’s legacy continues in Ireland and across Europe.
* Learn about the **Columban Missionaries** today (priests, sisters, and lay people).
* Reflect on **Columban’s sayings** and what they teach us about God, nature, and community.
* Appreciate how one life of faith can impact the world for centuries.
* Connect with the idea of being **modern-day pilgrims of hope**.

## **Teacher Background**

St. Columban (Columbanus) founded influential monasteries in **Luxeuil (France), Bregenz (Austria), and Bobbio (Italy)**. He died in 615 AD, but his writings, monastic rules, and missionary example lived on.

Today, his name lives through:

* **Missionary Society of St. Columban** (founded in 1918 in Ireland, serving in 16+ countries).
* The **Columban Sisters** and **Lay Missionaries**.
* The **Columban Way** – a European pilgrimage trail following his route.
* Irish churches, schools, and religious groups named in his honour.

He is remembered for his **wisdom**, love of nature, **courageous preaching**, and **missionary zeal**.

## **Cross-Curricular Integration**

| **Subject** | **Activity** |
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| Religious Education | Exploring sainthood, vocation, and mission |
| Geography | Mapping Columban-linked places in Ireland and Europe |
| History | Monastic Ireland; European legacy |
| SPHE | Reflecting on vocation, service, legacy |
| English | Exploring Columban’s quotes through creative writing |
| Visual Arts | Designing symbols of legacy or hope |
| Drama | Role-playing modern missionaries |

### **: What Is a Legacy?**

Ask:

* What do you think “legacy” means?
* Can one person’s actions change the world?

Brief recap of Columban’s life (use map of Ireland–Europe).

Introduce:

* The **Missionary Society of St. Columban** (Priests, Sisters, Lay Missionaries)
* The **Columban Way** walking route through Europe
* **Places in Ireland** named after him (schools, churches, e.g., Columbanus Church in Dublin)

**Map Task**: Locate:

* Myshall, Co. Carlow
* Bangor, Co. Down
* Luxeuil (France), Bregenz (Austria), Bobbio (Italy)

**Religious Education: Wisdom from St. Columban (10 mins)**

Explore some **sayings of St. Columban**:

**“A life unlike your own can be your teacher.”** **“If you want to know the Creator, learn about creation.”** **“Let us be as eager to be good as the others are to be evil.”**

**Discussion Questions**:

* What do these sayings mean?
* How do they help us follow Jesus today?
* Which one speaks to you most?

Optional: Create a **Quote Wall** in the classroom with children’s favourites and interpretations.

**English: Creative Writing or Poetry**

Prompt:

“If St. Columban came back today, what would he say to young people in Ireland?”

Choose one:

* Write a short poem or letter as if you are Columban speaking to us today.
* Begin with:  
    
    
   “My name is Columban. I travelled by foot and boat. I trusted God, even when…”

**Geography / History: Tracing His Legacy**

* Identify places in **Ireland and Europe** where Columban's name is remembered.
* Show pictures of **Bobbio Abbey**, **Luxeuil**, **St. Columban’s Church** in Dublin, or a modern **Columban mission**.

Activity: Create a mini fact file titled: **“Where in the World is St. Columban Remembered?”**

### **Visual Arts: Create a Symbol of Legacy**

Ideas:

* Design a **logo** or **crest** for the Columban Missionaries.
* Draw or colour a **pilgrim’s cross**, path, book, or globe to represent his legacy.
* Create a stained-glass window design with the quote:  
    
    
   “A life unlike your own can be your teacher.”

### **Reflection & Prayer**

Discussion:

* What does Columban teach us about following Jesus?
* How can we be missionaries of hope today?

**Prayer**:

“Loving God,  
 Thank you for St. Columban,  
 who shared your love across many lands.  
 Help us to be pilgrims of hope,  
 bringing kindness, peace, and faith wherever we go.  
 Amen.”

Optional: Light a candle and play quiet instrumental music.

**Assessment Opportunities**

* Participation in discussions and reflections
* Written poem or creative task
* Map/fact file completion
* Observation of engagement in prayer and visual art

## **Optional Homework or Extension Ideas**

* **Research a Modern Columban Mission** (e.g. in Peru, Korea, or the Philippines).
* **Interview Project**: Talk to a local priest, sister, or missionary about their vocation.
* **Create a class booklet**: *“Columban Lives On: Stories of Hope and Mission”*

**Suggested Resources**

* [Columban Missionaries Ireland – www.columbans.ie](https://www.columbans.ie)
* Virtual tour of **Bobbio Abbey** or **Columban Way** trail
* Video clips on Irish saints and missionaries (from RTÉ or Catholic Ireland)