



The Holy See

*DISCORSO DI SUA SANTITÀ PIO XII
AL PELLEGRINAGGIO IRLANDESE DEI «CAVALIERI DI SAN COLOMBANO» E DELLA
«LEGIONE DI MARIA»**

*Sala degli Svizzeri a Castel Gandolfo
Venerdì, 8 settembre 1950*

Go Mbeannaí Dia agus Muire dhibh, a Chlann dílis na hEireann, agus go gcoimeadtaí i gcomhnaí sibh i gcroí Eaglaise Naofa na Róimhe.

Knights of St. Columban! How that name, Columban, rings clear down the length of fourteen hundred years, an echo of the bells of Bangor, that sent that heroic figure of scholar and apostle on his way to pioneer Christian civilization in a half-barbarian Europe. France, Germany and Italy were to see Christian knowledge and culture awaken to a new life in many parts at the commanding eloquence of this saintly Irish monk. St. Columban never came to Rome, but Rome had come to him, as it does to all true Irishmen, and laid claim to the fealty of his mind and heart. More than that; when the bark of Peter was being buffeted by the rising tempest of heresy, and the waters were lapping the gunwales, it was the bold, courageous, challenging voice of Columban that resounded above the storm, — and there followed a great calm and peace.

How eminently fitting, then, that in the historic basilica, heart of the Faith he loved and preached, near to the site of St. Peter's tomb, the memory of your and Our St. Columban should be venerated. The chapel that bears his name will remain as a worthy monument to your munificence, Sir Knights, and We are happy to have this occasion to thank you; but to the world that will come there to pray, let it tell the story of a people, who after the lapse of fourteen centuries, can yet repeat the proud boast St. Columban wrote in all reverence to Pope Boniface IV: « We who live on the world's rim, we are all disciples of Peter and Paul. The Catholic Faith, such as we received it from you, successors of the Apostles, we have preserved adamant and without blemish » (cfr. *S. Columbani Abb. Ep. V ad Bonifacium IV- Migne PL. vol. 80 col. 275*).

That Faith you live under the guidance of a devoted hierarchy. It is the inspiration of the splendid work carried on by the Legion of Mary, whose representatives here We salute with heartfelt praise and encouragement; and because the Irish Trade Unions strive to apply the principles of that Faith within the vitally important field of social problems, accept them as basic in their deliberations and in the formulation of policies, We are particularly happy to welcome also their distinguished officers. Let the encyclical letters of Our Predecessors and Our own addresses and messages point for them the path, that leads to peace between Labour and Management : a peace founded on justice and charity and fraternal cooperation. Tell your legionaries, tell the members of your Trade Unions how keenly interested the Holy Father is in the success of their activities for the greater good of Ireland and the glory of her God. To them and to all here present, and to all your beloved ones, at home in dear Erin and over-seas We impart the Apostolic Benediction. Receive it as a pledge of heaven's choicest blessings, as a precious token of Our unbounded, paternal affection.

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