

Some Reform movements

We have already noted the Cluniac reform and some honest men who held the office. Nicholas I, Leo IX, were all reformers and headed some honest efforts at correction. But the potential power and wealth afforded to the papacy made it difficult for a man to hold office honestly until the electoral ground could be based on something other than politics and wealth.

V.4
Missions

The Growth of Missions

The great work was a missionary station at Iona, an island off the southwestern Scottish coast. This was a training ground in the 6th century and thereafter and from it missionaries went through the British isles and onto the continent. Of the particular Gaelic mission workers we mention:

FINIAN, a native Celt who died in 661. His primary work was in northern England. He was responsible for the conversion of many of the Saxon tribes.

COLUMBA, (521-597) a great missionary and the man who was most responsible for the conversion of the tribes in Scotland. He was one of the Ionan workers after 563 and moved into Britain to recover territory lost to pagans after the collapse of the Roman authority structure.

COLUMBANUS (CA. 585) went to the continent and did a powerful work among Teutonic Tribes..miracle stories abound about him and it is hard to separate legend from fact.

In general we note that the Gaelic or Celtic missionaries were unexcelled in their zeal. They developed the auricular confession concept and promoted a form of the church that made more of mystery than did the Roman rites. In time they would be amalgamated with Rome but not yet in this period.

ANSGAR, (D. CA. 865) Working in Denmark and Northern Germany, his efforts enjoyed remarkable success. He was the founding father of the bishopric in Hamburg and several other northern sees as well. He did not see the total conversion of the Danes, et al but had a strong ministry among them.