



Offices at Marmion Abbey for the Feast of Blessed Columba 3d October

Vigils

First reading

Philippians 3:7-4:1, 4-9

Responsory (1 Cor. 4:1-2; Provo 20: 6)

It should be clear to all that we are Christ's servants, stewards of the mysteries of God.

The great quality of a steward is to be faithful to his duty.

It should be clear...

Many are said to be merciful,

But how often do we find one who is faithful to his duty?

The great quality of a steward is to be faithful to his duty.

Glory be...

It should be clear...

Second Reading

(From *Christ, the Life of the Soul* by Blessed Columba Marmion)

Among the souls that seek God, some hardly succeed in reaching Him. Some have no precise idea of what holiness is. Being ignorant of the plan traced out by Eternal Wisdom, or setting it aside, they make holiness consist in such or such conception formed by their own intelligence. They only wish to be guided by themselves. Attached to those purely human ideas they have framed, they go astray. If they make great strides, it is outside the true way marked by God. They are the victims of those illusions against which St Paul warned the first Christians (Col. 2:8).

Others have clear notions on points of detail, but lack a view of the whole. Losing themselves in these *minutiae*, and not having any synthetic view, they are always going over the same ground. Their life becomes a real labour, subject to incessant difficulties, without zest, without fulfilment, and



often without much result, because these souls attach too much importance to their acts, or give them less value than they should relatively have.

It is therefore extremely important, as St Paul says, “to run in the race, not as one beating the air” (1 Cor. 9:26), “but so as to obtain the prize” (1 Cor. 9:24). We must know as perfectly as possible the Divine idea of holiness. We must examine with the greatest care, so as to adapt ourselves to it, the plan traced out by God Himself, whereby we may attain to Him. It is only at this price that our salvation and sanctification can be realized.

In so grave a matter, in so vital a question, we must look at and weigh things as God looks at and weighs them. God judges all things in the light, and His judgement is the test of all truth. “We must not judge things according to our own liking”, says St Francis of Sales, “but according to that of God; this is the great secret. If we are holy according to our own will, we shall never be truly holy. We must be so according to God's will”.

Divine Wisdom is infinitely above human wisdom. God's thoughts contain fruitfulness such as no created thought possesses. That is why God's plan is so wise that it cannot fail to reach its goal because of any intrinsic insufficiency, but only through our own fault. If we leave the Divine idea full freedom to operate in us, if we adapt ourselves to it with love and fidelity, it becomes extremely fruitful and may lead us to the most sublime sanctity.

Let us contemplate, in the light of Revelation, God's plan for us. This contemplation will be a source of light, strength and joy for our souls.

Responsory (1 Peter 2: 4-5; Ps 118: 21)

Come near to Christ, the living stone;
you too must be living stones,
built up in him to form a spiritual temple,
a holy priesthood to offer through Jesus Christ
the spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God.
Come near to Christ...
Jesus is the stone which has become the cornerstone.

Te Deum

Concluding Prayer

God, the Father Almighty
who bestowed on Blessed Abbot Columba
his vocation to the monastic way of life,
and revealed to him



the secrets of the mysteries hidden in your Son;
look with favour on us who serve you,
and in your kindness and at Abbot Columba's intercession
prepare in our hearts
a worthy dwelling place for the Spirit
who makes us your adopted children.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Lauds

Invitatory antiphon

Let us sing praise to God, as we acclaim Blessed Columba.
Psalm 94

Ant. 1

Faith is the foundation and root of monastic perfection and of the Christian life.
Psalm 62

Ant. 2

Behold, we have left all things to follow you.
Canticle of Daniel

Ant. 3

Christ is the image of the invisible God and the brightness of His glory.
Psalms 148; 149; 150

Benedictus antiphon

The soul has but one thing in view: the establishing in her of Christ's kingdom.
Benedictus



Vespers

Ant. 1

God is everywhere present, but He is nearest to those who love Him.
Psalm 109

Ant. 2

You are the God of my heart, and the God that is my portion for ever.
Psalm 110

Ant. 3

God destined us for adoption as His children, through Jesus Christ.
Psalm 111

Ant. 4

All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.
Psalm 112

Magnificat antiphon

Joy is the echo of God's life in us.
Magnificat