

The Kaiserslautern Lutheran

Irish Missionaries in Europe

By
Pastor Nathaniel Jensen

Most people are familiar with the festivities of St. Patrick's Day, coming up this month on March 17. Many are also aware of something of the life of St. Patrick, a Roman Britain living in the 5th century AD who was enslaved and taken to Ireland, where he later evangelized the Irish people. St. Patrick even has a hymn in our hymnal, LSB 604: "I Bind unto Myself Today," known as "St. Patrick's Breastplate." Most people, however, know little to nothing of the results of St. Patrick's work, especially for the rest of European Christianity.

After St. Patrick brought Christianity to Ireland, the Church there flourished so much so that they began

sending missionaries to England and continental Europe in what is known as the "Hiberno-Scottish mission." St. Columba (521–597) left Ireland around AD 563 and with his companions established a monastery at Iona to be used as a base for the spreading of Celtic Christianity. You might be familiar with St. Columba's hymn in our hymnal, LSB 539: "Christ is the World's Redeemer." Iona became famous for its scholarship and reproduction of religious texts. A monk at Iona named Aidan (d. 651) later founded a monastery at Lindisfarne Island to convert the Anglo-Saxon peoples, which

paved the way for the later Anglo-Saxon missions to continental Europe, under figures such as St. Boniface (675–754). Lindisfarne also became famous for its illuminated manuscripts, especially the Lindisfarne Gospels.

One early Irish churchman,



St. Columbanus

Columbanus (543–615), taught at Bangor Abbey in Ireland before traveling to the continent with twelve of his disciples to convert pagan tribes in what is today France. At Anegray in the Vosges mountains, the Irish monks turned the ruins of a Roman fortress into a school. The school became so popular, it was moved to Luxeuil (est. c. AD 590). Columbanus came under suspicion after a dispute with the governing authorities

for maintaining the Celtic dating of Easter. He also called out Theuderic II for having a concubine and was imprisoned at Besancon. Columbanus found sanctuary at Soissons under Chlothar II, who in AD 611 granted him safe passage to the court of Theudebert II in Metz. Theudebert II then gave land to Columbanus in what is today Bregenz, Austria. One of Columbanus's 12 disciples, Gallus, preached the Gospel in the language of the local

people, many of whom were converted to the Christian faith. Gallus remained in the Alps and St. Gallen monastery was later built over his cell. Columbanus continued on to Milan, where the Lombard rulers granted him land near Bobbio, in modern day Italy, where he established a monastery in AD 614, where he would work to convert the Lombard people. There, Columbanus died the following year.

Other Irish monks established monasteries all over the continental Europe. Just 23 miles north of Kaiserslautern, in Odernheim, are the ruins of cloister Disibodenberg, founded by an Irish monk in the 7th century. Disibod (619–700) came to the continent with three disciples in AD 640 and wandered through the Vosges mountains and Ardennes forest before establishing a monastery called Disibodenberg at the confluence of the Nahe and Glan rivers. The Bishop of Mainz, Boniface, later called "the Apostle to the Germans,"

visited the remains of Disibod at Disibodenberg in AD 745.

Boniface himself was sent from southwestern England as part of the Anglo-Saxon mission (the continuation of the Hibern-Scottish mission) to serve as the missionary archbishop to the Germans. Disibodenberg's most



Page from the Lindisfarne Gospels

famous resident was Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179), a Benedictine abbess during the High Middle Ages.

Another monk associated with the Hiberno-Scottish mission was Pirminius (670–753), after whom the city of Pirmasens is named. Pirminius established monasteries in St. Gallen and Reichenau (in what is today Switzerland), as well as monasteries in the Black Forest, the Alsace, and in the Pfalz. The last monastery he founded was Hornbach abbey, less than an hour from Kaiserslautern. There he was buried until his earthly remains were moved to Innsbruck, Austria.

Irish and English monks continued to influence Christianity in continental Europe for centuries to come. Native populations were converted to the Christian faith and rulers such as Charlemagne utilized the scholarship and ability of the monks to copy and transmit texts quickly, leading to

the “Carolingian Renaissance” of the 9th century. Without the Christian influence coming from Ireland, it is hard to imagine how

the necessary foundation would have been laid for the later accomplishments of Medieval Europe, the fruits of which we still enjoy to this day.



Pirminius in the crest of the city of Glan Münchweiler, settled by monks from Hornbach Abbey.

Happy St. Patrick's Day!

A Letter from the Mission Field
Pastor Christian Tiewws

As we were sitting down to a Bible study recently, when one of my Iranian parishioners declared, "Pastor, could you please pray that all the mullahs in Iran will go to hell?" His wife rolled her eyes at his comment. "Here we go again," I thought... I have so often explained to this man and to many others that our Lord commands us to **love** our enemies (Mt 5:44, etc.), as difficult as that may be. "OK... let's open our Bibles to the book of Jonah," I suggested. We read key passages and I pointed out how Jonah was allowing his hatred for evil Nineveh to rule over him—even wanting to prevent God from giving the Ninevites the opportunity to repent and be

forgiven. At the end of the book, God exposes Jonah's self-centeredness and hardness of heart, as Jonah is consumed with the death of the plant, while ignoring the astonishing grace that God has just extended to the repenting Ninevites. The wife turned at her husband and blurted out, "You're just like Jonah! Jesus wants us to **love** our enemies!" The room exploded with laughter. The conversation then moved to another ubiquitous topic: "Why is God still allowing the mullahs to strangle Iran?" At that point, another man, who has been a Christian for several years, replied, "Pastor has answered this question so



many times... we can't read God's mind and He grows our faith in tribulation. But there's another issue we rarely bring up..." "What's that?" everyone wondered. "We Iranians brought this mess upon ourselves. Ayatollah Khomeini was a liar—promising free busses and free electricity. It was all lies, and yet we took him in with open arms back in 1979. God allows free will in matters of the world—and so He also allows us to make mistakes too. We **wanted** the Islamic Revolution, and now we are reaping what we sowed. But... our Lord works all things for good for His people." Wow... Thank you, Holy Spirit, for working such strong faith in the hearts of so many Iranians—both here in Germany and in their homeland.





Elder's Corner

Insights, thoughts, and inspirational messages

Spotlight Verse

Jesus shows how much you are worth.

⁴⁴ The Kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.
Matthew 13:44

Your Worth by Jeff Peterson

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Matthew 13:44

You are worth more than you can ever imagine to the God of the Universe, you are His treasure, and He gave up everything just for you, so that you could spend all eternity with Him!

The field is the world, the treasure is you (the hearer/reader/believer), and the man is

Jesus, who gave up the glory of heaven to win, purchase and redeem you with His precious blood on the cross!

Just look at John 3:16 - ¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

So, the next time you have a bad day, or bad week, or even a bad month, and nothing seems to be going right, just remember you are **worth everything** to Him.

Remember, you are loved, and you are forgiven!



Lenten Worship Schedule

Wednesday Evenings at St. Michael's
March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Soup Supper at 5:30 PM
Vespers Service at 7:00 PM
Choir Rehearsal to follow

March Birthdays



1 Cedric Kumar

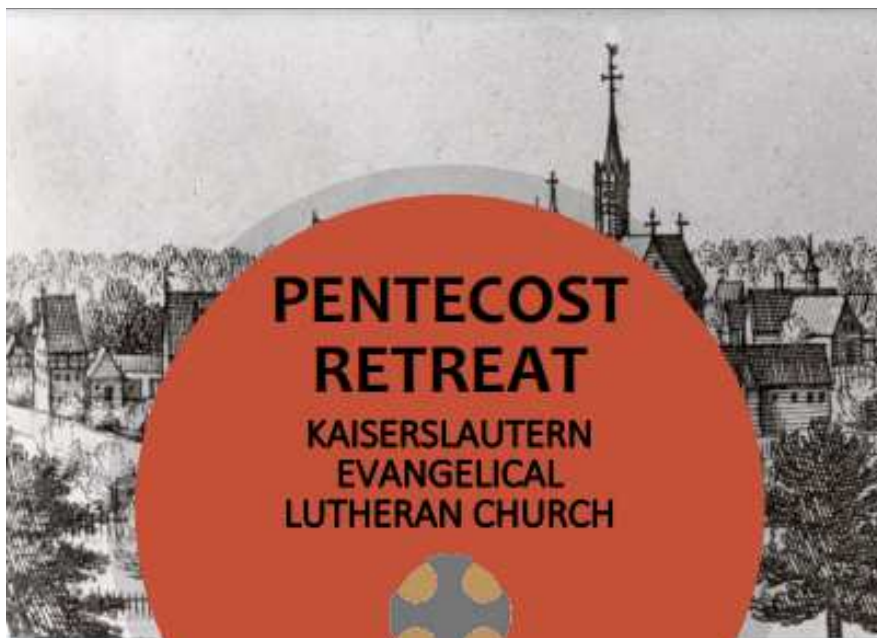
14 Markus Busenius

15 Jonathan Ponziano

18 Shaheen Mouammar

19 Shanley Allen

26 Emily Young



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May 26–29, 2023

For pricing and more information, send inquiries to:

Nathaniel.Jensen@lcms.org

Registration Deadline March 26

Sundays at KELC

Divine Service

Sunday Mornings
8:30–9:30 AM

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Fellowship Time

Sunday Mornings
9:30–10:15 AM

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Sunday School & Bible Study

at Kirche Mittendrin
10:15–11:15 AM

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Catechesis

St. Michael's Basement
11:30 AM–12:30 PM



KELC volunteers will be serving dinner to the Ukrainian refugees on Friday, March 10th, at Rhema Café, beginning at 5:30 PM.

We will also assist the children with crafts and games. We hope to see you there!

If you are unable to attend but would still like to help, please consider donating individual chip bags, Capri Sun drinks, or craft supplies. Donations may be brought to church this Sunday or dropped off directly at Rhema Café.

Thank you to all who came out and helped with the February dinner at Rhema.

A cordial invitation is extended to the saints at

Kaiserslautern Evangelical Lutheran Church

to join the Jensen family at their home

on Palm Sunday, April 2,

to listen to the Passion according to St. John by J. S. Bach.

Text, translation, and light refreshments will be provided.

CONFESSIONS

STUDY

On Thursday nights will resume after Easter



Hail & Farewell

Welcome to the Ponziano Family. Jim and Emily Eloise, Jonathan and Jacob are joining us from Hawaii.

Also, a warm welcome to Linda Ribeth Kraus.

It is a joy to have you all with us.