



Cultural Connections Ltd
Newtown, Rahan, Tullamore,
Co. Offaly, Ireland
grouptravel@libero.it
Phone 00353 57 9355050
(mornings only)

Year of St Columbanus Bangor Parish trip to Luxeuil, Bregenz, St Gallen *and* Bobbio

Led by Fr Joe Gunn, P.P. Bangor

August 24th – 31st 2015

- Dinners included for 5 of the 7 nights
- Return flights (Dublin-Zurich, Milan-Dublin)
- All coaching and baggage fees included
- Itinerary taking in the principal Columban places of Europe
- Guided tours of all places visited
- 2 nights half board in Luxeuil (France)
- 2 nights B and B in St Gallen (Switzerland)
- 3 nights half board in Piacenza near Bobbio (Italy)



EXTRAS:

- Single room supplement €30 per night. **Single rooms are limited**
- Entrance fee to library in St Gallen (€12)

Flight departs Dublin (Terminal 2) at 5.15pm on August 24th with Aer Lingus and returns to Dublin (Terminal 2) on August 31st at 1.15 pm

€1095 (about £900) p.p.s., taxes included

EARLY BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL! THIS GROUP IS RESTRICTED TO 53 PERSONS MAXIMUM AND IT WILL BOOK OUT QUICKLY

HOW TO BOOK:

1. Fill out your booking form having read our **Terms & Conditions**.
2. Submit booking form and non-refundable deposit to Cultural Connections Ltd., Newtown, Rahan, Tullamore, Co. Offaly. **The deposit of €300 must be made out to Tom Mannion Travel (plus single supplement if applicable). Card payments may be made over the phone but they incur a two percent surcharge** (debit cards from the Republic incur no surcharge)

ITINERARY

August 24th. ZURICH, LUXEUIL.

Arrive in Zurich airport at about 8.30pm. Two and a half hour drive to 3 star Hotel Les Sources (or similar) in Luxeuil. Dinner.

August 25th. ABBEY OF LUXEUIL, ANNEGRAY AND FONTAINES

Mass in the Basilica of St Peter and Paul. Tour of the Abbey, including the stained glass windows depicting the "Forty Saints of Luxeuil" (scenes from life of Columbanus, Gall and others), the old wooden statue of Columbanus, stone statue of St Gall and the bear, relics of the saints, and architectural features from the 13th to the 17th centuries. Tour of the town centre, viewing the cloister of the Abbey, the open excavations of the Church of St Martin, and the famous statue of Columbanus by Grange (unveiled in the presence of the future Pope John XXIII, Robert Schuman, DeValera, and others). Lunch in the town followed by a visit to Annegray, Saint Columbanus' first foundation in Europe. Here we will be met by a member of L'Association des Amis de Saint Columban. The site was bought by the society in 1959 and we will see the excavations of the original foundation, including many stone sarcophagi brought to light by the archaeologists. On the route back towards Luxeuil we will see the path towards the cave used by St Columbanus as a hermitage. This is not accessible by coach. We will continue through Luxeuil to the last foundation of Columbanus in the area, the town of Fontaines. Here we will visit the parish church, viewing the stained glass window depicting Columbanus directing his monks to drain the swamp and build a monastery. The Priory standing on the original site of the Columban monastery is in private hands, but we can view it from outside. Dinner and overnight.

August 26th. ST GALLEN

Check out and drive to the picturesque town of St Gallen in Switzerland (about 4 hours). Lunch along the way. Check in at Hotel Metropole (or similar). Tour of the baroque Cathedral that stands on the site of the original hermitage of St Gall with frescoes and statues of the Irish saint. Mass in the crypt in front of the relics of St Gall (including his skull). Orientation tour of this picturesque town. Free time for dinner.

August 27th. BREGENZ, ST GALLUS CHURCH, PARISH OF ST COLUMBAN, MEHRERAU ABBEY

After breakfast drive to Bregenz (1 hr) and have Mass in the Church of St Gall which archaeologists now believe stands close to the original Columban foundation. Visit the parish church of St Columban where we will be met by the parish priest. Here there is a stone from Bangor, a fine bronze statue of St Columban, and a depiction of Columbanus and his first companions leaving Bangor by boat. Free time for lunch in the centre of town. On the way back to St Gallen we will visit the Cistercian Abbey of Mehrerau. The monks here consider themselves to be continuing the monastic tradition established by Columbanus in this area. Return to St Gallen. Optional visit (€12) to the UNESCO listed library containing medieval manuscripts, including some from Ireland. Free time for dinner.

August 28th. MILAN, PIACENZA

Check out at 8am and drive to Milan (4 hour journey) with lunch along the way. The coach will drop us at the Sforza Castle. Walk to the Duomo, the largest cathedral in Italy, which was begun in the 1300s and took five centuries to complete. Celebration of Mass. Free time to visit the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele, an elegant shopping centre constructed in the 19th century, and to see Teatro alla Scala, one of the most famous opera houses in the world. Continue to Piacenza (1 hour drive) where we will arrive at about 7pm. Check in at our accommodation where we will stay three nights on a half board basis. Dinner and overnight.

August 29th. BOBBIO

Day in the picturesque town of Bobbio, including Mass celebration at the tomb of St Columbanus, tour of the St Columbanus' Museum, visit the town with the ancient bridge and Cathedral. Lunch. We will also participate in the events of "St Columban's Day 2015" organised by the Amici Internazionale di San Colombano. Dinner and overnight.

August 30th. BOBBIO.

After breakfast, return to Bobbio for the events related to the Year of St Columbanus. During the day we will take the opportunity to visit the Grotto of St Columbanus, a mountain hermitage where the Irish saint retreated during the Lent of 615. According to some accounts, this is the place where Columbanus died. Nearby are the ruins of the church of St Michael the Archangel. Dinner in Piacenza and overnight.

August 31st. Transfer to Milan Linate for our 11.30 am flight to Dublin.