

**Announcement of the XXVIII Columbanus Day
International Gathering of the Columbanian Communities**

Sunday, 5 July 2026
Lodi, Cathedral of Saint Mary Assumed

*Dear Brothers in the Episcopate and in the Priesthood,
Civil Authorities and all Friends of Saint Columbanus,
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

Having in 2025 paused in the region that gave birth to Saint Columbanus, the movement of his disciples in our own time returns to Ireland, this time to the place where, more than any other, he spent a great part of his life in the monastery, engaged in study and prayer, in the practice of the virtues which shaped his character and strengthened his faith, before he set forth for the Continent and made a decisive contribution to restoring and consolidating Christian roots that had grown dry.

From this contribution all of Europe continues to draw benefit, in an age in which these roots are still in need of renewed vitality!

Thus, **from 11 to 13 June 2027**, the Columbanus Day will be held **in Bangor and in Belfast**, where once again the message of fraternity will resound: "*we are members of the one body, whether we be Gauls, Britons, Iberians, or of any other people*" (Ep. II).

In addition to Bangor, Belfast too will provide an occasion to reflect upon this message of peace, proclaimed and spread by one of his sons as far back as fourteen centuries ago, yet of extraordinary relevance today: "*Let us still allow Christ Himself to fashion His image within us. He painted it when He said: 'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you' (Jn 14:27)*" (Instr. XI).

Dear brothers and sisters, your return to Ireland, where the experience of Columbanus first began and was then perfected under the demanding rule of Bangor, fills us with joy and gives us hope. Each time we return to the origins of this experience and place ourselves in attentive listening to his teachings, we strengthen our witness that we belong to Christ, so as "*to rejoice together in the unity of faith*" (Ep. II).

Thus, from Bangor, which for centuries was one of the foremost schools of monasticism throughout Europe, there resounds with renewed vigor the message of peace, of universal fraternity, and of unity that brings light to the darkness of present-day Europe.