

**SAINTS IN GLORY (PART 6)**  
**Charles Jury**

**6<sup>th</sup> June Jarlath (Iarlaith) Sixth century**

Jarlath was of noble birth and had inclinations towards a military way of life. This changed, however, when he proposed to a nobleman's daughter and had received the reply from the young lady that she had a vocation to be a nun. She persuaded her young suitor also to adopt the religious life, saying "let us both give our hearts to Christ so that one day we may be united in eternal love in heaven." Jarlath established a church at Cloonefush near Tuam where he was later joined by St Colman of Cloyne and St Brendan of Clonfert. There is a story told of Jarlath, that he planned, with the encouragement of St Brendan, to journey eastwards to undertake missionary work. However, he had only gone a few miles in the carriage he had constructed, when one of the wheels broke. This seemed to indicate divine providence and he established a monastery on the spot which later became the town of Tuam.

**7<sup>th</sup> June Colman (Colmán) Sixth century**

This Colman is associated with the diocese of Dromore, which he founded. He appears to have come from the area of south Antrim and north Down. Colman studied at Nendrum, and later with St Ailbe, bishop of Emly. He was a friend of St McNisse, bishop of Connor, and the teacher of St Finnian of Movilla. He was also commemorated in the ancient churches of Wales and Scotland. There is a legend that St Patrick, while celebrating the Eucharist one morning, possibly at Donaghcloney, saw a vision of angels hovering over the neighbouring valley where Colman would later establish his church.

**27<sup>th</sup> June Richard FitzRalph (Richard of Dundalk) Fourteenth century**

There are two traditions concerning the birthplace of Richard of Dundalk, one that he was born in Exeter, the other that Dundalk was his birthplace. Nevertheless, his career in the Church extended to both islands, culminating in the Archbishopric of Armagh in 1347. Before that he held the posts of Chancellor of Oxford University, Chancellor of Lincoln Cathedral, a Canon and subsequently Dean of Lichfield. He became caught up in the controversy of the question of poverty and the mendicant orders. These held that it was virtually a Christian precept to renounce one's property and live by begging: "Jesus Christ was a mendicant (beggar), therefore all Christians should be mendicant monks." Many of the parish clergy in England objected to this. Richard supported the parish clergy arguing their case before the Pope in 1349. His support for the secular clergy, and his opposition to mandatory voluntary poverty continued

throughout his life. He was even summoned to Avignon to answer complaints against him by the mendicants. In his defence he preached his sermon entitled *Defensio Curatorium*, attacking the concept that Christians must live by a life of wilful begging. He died in 1360 at Avignon. While at Armagh he oversaw the restoration of the Cathedral. He was also noted for his piety and learning – including the Irish language. He is popularly known in both Ireland and Britain as St Richard of Dundalk. In 1370 his body was brought back to Ireland and buried in St Nicholas' Parish Church Dundalk, where there is a chapel in his honour. There is also a stained glass window depicting him in St John's Church, Malone, Belfast.