

To bless God's creatures whom we fear

David J. M Coleman .Tune - of course - St Columba, trad.

I've come to see the many interactions of significant saints with fellow creatures as far more than a trivial or decorative detail in their 'lives' as transmitted to us, but rather a vital and authentic affirmation of God at work in these fellow humans as God's creatures amongst creatures. It might be worth looking into the stories of Mungo/Kentigern, Cuthbert, Brigid amongst others.

This hymn-poem is written to celebrate the Feast of St Columba [June 9th] : verse 1 references his blessing for the terrifying sea-monster/whale, his personal and honoured welcome for the exhausted migrating crane, and his appreciation of the mourning sadness of the monastery's cart-horse who was aware that Columba was reaching the end of his life.

Verse 2 recalls his Jacob-like involvement with angels as the connective tissue of sky and soil/ Heaven and Earth: together one unified Creation, and reminds us that the Lord's Prayer/Our Father is a prayer for the whole of our fragile, threatened world.

And although Columba did seek times of quiet and retreat, he was ready speak and sing out powerfully, 'armed' with the Psalms and spiritual song which were his non-violent arsenal for justice and transformation. The discernment of when to intervene boldly in the turmoil of / nature', and when to leave well alone is part of our discipleship. All of which can inspire us in our partnership and interaction with our fellow-stakeholders in God's Rainbow Covenant with 'All Flesh', as followers of Christ, the Word *become* Flesh.

**1) To bless God's creatures whom we fear;
to welcome those in need;
to honour care our kind receive
is following Christ indeed.**

**2) As Heaven and Earth are woven tight
by angels' warp and weft;
we pray each day that sky and soil:
be blessed and not bereft**

**3) Christ spoke as sternly to the waves
as to our chosen wrong;
to those who speak out: loud and just
Christ's blessing shall belong**

**So saints who cherished and who learned
from fellow creatures' care
shall guide commitment, prayer and deed
and bless the home we share.**