

An Litir Bheag

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 727 (which corresponds to Litir 1,031). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

The famous saint, Columba, prophesied his own death four years before he died. One day, he was in Iona and he was filled with joy. However, after a few seconds, he was filled with sadness.

Two men were at the door of the saint's bothy. They asked Columba what caused his joy and sadness. 'Don't ask,' said Columba.

The men went on their knees. They were crying. They wanted to find out what caused the saint to be happy and then sad.

He told them in secret what happened to him. But he made them promise they wouldn't say anything about it to another person while he was alive.

'On this day,' said Columba, 'I've been in Britain for thirty years. I was asking the Lord to call me to Heaven. I saw angels that came to meet my soul. But they have stopped. They are on a rock on the far side of the Sound of Iona.'

Rinn an naomh ainmeil, Calum Cille, fàisneachd air a bhàs fhèin ceithir bliadhna mus do chaochail e. Latha a bha seo, bha e ann an Eilean Ì agus thàinig aoibhneas air. Ge-tà, an dèidh beagan diogan, thàinig bròn air.

Bha dithis fhear aig doras bothan an naoimh. Dh'fhaighnich iad de Chalum Cille gu dè dh'adhbharaich a chuid aoibhneis agus bròn. 'Na faighnichibh,' thuirt Calum Cille.

Chaidh na fir air an glùinean. Bha iad a' sìleadh nan deur. Bha iad airson faighinn a-mach na thug air an naomh a bhith ri gàirdeachas agus an uair sin ri bròn.

Dh'inns e dhaibh ann an dìomhaireachd na thachair dha. Ach thug e orra gealltainn nach canadh iad càil mu dheidhinn ri duine eile fhad 's a bha esan beò.

'Air an latha seo fhèin,' thuirt Calum Cille, 'tha mi air a bhith ann am Breatainn deich bliadhna fichead. Bha mi ag iarraidh air an Tighearna gun gairmeadh e mi gu Nèamh. Chunnaic mi ainglean a thàinig airson coinneachadh ri m' anam. Ach tha iad air stad. Tha iad air creag air taobh thall Caolas Ì.'

And what caused the angels to stop on Mull? Well, Columba told the two others that God had changed his opinion on the matter. He had been listening to church congregations. They were praying to keep Columba alive. And God accepted the prayers.

Columba was ready to go to Heaven. That's the reason he was happy. But God told him that he would be alive four more years on Earth. And that made Columba sad.

'At the end of these four years,' he said, 'I'll die suddenly. I'll go to the Lord in joy.'

Columba was alive for four more years. Near the end of that time, he went to meet monks who were working on the west side of Iona. He told them he was wanting to leave this world. Next week, I'll tell you how Columba passed away a few days later.

Agus dè thug air na h-ainglean stad ann am Muile? Uill, dh'inns Calum Cille don dithis eile gun robh Dia air a bheachd air a' ghnòthach atharrachadh. Bha e air a bhith ag èisteachd ri coitheanalan eaglaise. Bha iad a' dèanamh ùrnaighean airson Calum Cille a chumail beò. Agus ghabh Dia ris na h-ùrnaighean.

Bha Calum Cille deiseil a dhol a Nèamh. 'S e sin a bu choireach gun robh e ri gàirdeachas. Ach thuirt Dia ris gum biodh e beò ceithir bliadhna eile air an Talamh. Agus dh'fhàg sin Calum Cille brònach.

'Aig deireadh nan ceithir bliadhna seo,' thuirt e, 'gheibh mi bàs gu h-obann. Falbhaidh mi le aoibhneas chun an Tighearna.'

Bha Calum Cille beò ceithir bliadhna eile. Faisg air deireadh na h-ùine sin, chaidh e a choinneachadh ri manaich a bha ag obair air taobh an iar Eilean Ì. Dh'inns e dhaibh gun robh e ag iarraidh siubhal bhon t-saoghal seo. An-ath-sheachdain, innsidh mi dhuibh mar a chaochail Calum Cille beagan làithean an dèidh sin.