

IONA RETREAT

JULY 2020



In 563 CE, an Irish monk, Colm Cille (Columba), exiled from his native land, settled on the tiny island of Iona, off the wild Atlantic coast of Scotland. Iona had been for thousands of years from Neolithic times a sacred site, what the Celts called a “thin place,” where the distance between heaven and earth collapses and we can catch glimpses of the divine. In that place, Columba established an abbey that was to become the center for the spread of Celtic Christianity in Scotland and Northern England and the place where perhaps the most beautiful book ever produced was created, the Book of Kells. It would also become for the next 500 years where the Kings of Argyll and Scotland would be buried, including the real MacBeth.

In July 2020, a group led by The Rev. Vincent Pizzuto, Ph.D. will journey to this sacred island. Although we will explore something of the Island’s amazing history, the focus of the retreat will be on the earthy, elemental, indeed sacramental nature of the Incarnation than in the Celtic Christian tradition. The Abbey of Iona in its very history, landscape, and monastic structure, is among the most archetypal symbols of the beauty and uniqueness of Celtic Incarnational spirituality. As we make pilgrimage to the most famous of St.

Columba's abbeys, we seek to encounter for ourselves the ecstasy of Divine Presence that lie at the roots of our own spiritual home.



The ancient Abbey of Iona. The Celtic cross in front of the Abbey Church has stood there for over 1200 years.

Retreat Leader

The Rev. Vincent Pizzuto is a Professor of Christian Theology at the University of San Francisco, specializing in New Testament and Mystical Christianity. He has written and lectured on Celtic Christianity and is the author of *Contemplating Christ: The Gospels and the Interior Life* (Liturgical Press 2018). He is also the Vicar of St. Columba's Episcopal Church and Retreat House, Inverness, California.



St. Oran's Chapel (c. 1100 CE), surrounded by the graves of the Kings of Argyll and Scotland

Itinerary

Day 1: Friday evening, July 17 we assemble in Glasgow and eat our first meal together as group.

Day 2: Saturday, July 18 we travel by charter motor coach 2 ½ hours along magical Loch Lomond to the ancient town of Oban. A 40-minute ferry journey takes us to Craignure on the Island of Mull. From Craignure, an hour and a quarter motor coach will bring us to the far southwest corner of Mull, where a 15-minute ferry ride will land us on Iona. We will stay in Bishop's House, just a few hundred yards from Iona Abbey and St. Oran's Chapel, the burial ground of the Scottish kings.

Days 3-7: Sunday, July 19 to Friday evening, July 24, the Rev. Pizzuto will lead us on our spiritual journey.

Day 8: Saturday, July 25 after breakfast, we'll take the ferry to Fionphort, motor coach to Craignure, ferry to Iona, and then motor coach from Oban to Glasgow.

Accommodation

In Glasgow, we'll be staying at the ABode Glasgow, in the heart of Glasgow. On Iona, we'll be staying at Bishop's House, the retreat center maintained by the Episcopal Church of Scotland, just a few hundred yards from the Abbey.



Bishop's House, Iona

There are 6 single rooms and 8 double rooms available. None of the rooms is ensuite, but there is a wash basin in each room and bathrooms no more than 2 doors away. There'll be a continental breakfast each morning and cooked meals at lunch and dinner. All meals (except lunch in Oban on July 25) are included in the tour price.

Also included in the trip price outdoor tours and guides for the historical and archaeological sites on Iona. We will have full use of the facilities inside Bishop's House, including the chapel, library, lounge and dining room.

Prices and deposit and cancellation policy

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| Single room: | \$1600 |
| Double room (per person, twin beds): | \$1400 |



The Chapel at Bishop's House, Iona

All accommodation and meals are included from Friday evening, July 17 to Saturday morning, July 25, except for lunch in Oban on June 25. Coach service from Glasgow to Oban and from Craignure to Fionphort and return and all ferries are also included, as are several historical and archeological presentations. Air travel is **not** included.

Non-Refundable Deposit and Insurance Coverage: A non-refundable deposit of \$500 must accompany the application. Additionally, the reservation will not be confirmed unless within 10 days of the application, we receive proof of purchase of a medical evacuation insurance as described below.

The balance of the trip price must be received no later than February 18, 2020.

Refund Policy: If a retreatant cancels before February 18, 2020, all but \$500 of the previously paid amount will be refunded. If a retreatant cancels the reservation after February 18, 2020 but before April 18, 2020 all but \$500 will be refunded, provided someone from the waiting list takes that slot. If there is no person from the waiting list to fill that slot, no refund will be given. After April 18, 2020 no refunds will be given. Retreatants are urged to purchase cancellation insurance coverage in a sufficient amount to reimburse the full land and air costs of the trip. Retreatants should familiarize themselves

with the specific conditions that must be met for the insurance to reimburse them for any cancellation.

Additional Information

Carbon Offsets: Although we will not provide or arrange for air travel, a portion of the trip price will be dedicated to purchasing carbon offsets for travel by participants. We anticipate that the carbon offsets will offset approximately 200% of the carbon emissions incurred by the group.

Medical Evacuation and Trip Cancellation Insurance: There are no medical facilities on the Island of Iona, although there is a general practice surgery at Bunessan on the nearby island of Mull, about 20 minutes away by water taxi, and a regional hospital at Oban, about 20 minutes away by helicopter. All retreatants will be required to purchase a medical evacuation insurance policy covering the trip (you can purchase the Travelex medical evacuation/trip cancellation policy that we arrange, or any other policy that covers medical evacuation).

CONFIRMATION OF PURCHASE OF A MEDICAL EVACUATION POLICY MUST BE RECEIVED BY US NO MORE THAN 10 DAYS FOLLOWING SUBMISSION OF YOUR APPLICATION OR THE RESERVATION WILL NOT BE CONFIRMED.

The price of the Travelex combined medical evacuation/trip cancellation policy we have arranged depends on the dollar cost of the trip that the participant himself or herself selects: from \$250 up. If a participant selects the minimum trip coverage of \$250, the policy should cost under \$40 (depending on other factors such as pre-existing conditions). Selecting that dollar amount of coverage will still cover medical evacuation—but the trip cancellation coverage will be limited to \$250. If a participant selects the full single occupancy land cost of \$1600, then the premium amount would be a little more than double that. Retreatants should familiarize themselves with the insurance company conditions regarding cancellations.

Retreatants are urged to travel with the minimum of luggage, as they will be responsible for boarding both the Oban-Craignure and Fionphort-Iona ferries with their own luggage.