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## Máel Máedóc (Malachy) of Armagh

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25716/amad-85394>

Lexikonartikel | Article in a reference book, 2022

### Empfohlene Zitierweise | Suggested Citation:

Jesse Harrington, Máel Máedóc (Malachy) of Armagh, in: Dictionary of Cistercian Saints, hrsg. von Mirko Breitenstein, Jörg Sonntag und Alkuin Schachenmayr, Frankfurt am Main: AMAD, 2022. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25716/amad-85394>.



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## **Máel Máedóc (Malachy) of Armagh (\* 1094/5 – † 1148)**

1. Name variants: Malachias, Máel Máedóc, Maelmhaedhoc, Maelmorhorgius, Maol Maodhóg (baptismal); O'Moore, Ó Morgair, Ua Morgair (family)

2. Places: Bangor, Down, Connor, Armagh

3. Biography: M.'s father Muirgrón was chief lector at Armagh, his brother Gilla Críst became bishop of Clogher, and Óengus Ua Gormáin, bishop of Down, may have been an uncle. M. entered the Church at Armagh as a teenager. He adopted the reform outlook of his teacher Ímar Ua hÁedacáin, his archbishop Cellach († 1129), and his mentor Máel Ísu Ua hAinmire, bishop of Waterford. Appointed Cellach's vicar c. 1120, M. introduced Roman practices at Armagh. He became abbot of Bangor and bishop of Connor, but an anti-reform party opposed him. In 1127, he fled to Lismore and became confessor to Cormac Mac Cárthaig, overking of Munster. Supported by Cellach's testament and the kings of Munster and Airgíalla, he was consecrated archbishop of Armagh by Máel Ísu and the papal legate Gille, in 1132. However, Cellach's family blocked access to his see. In 1136, he resigned Armagh and accepted its suffragan see of Down. In 1139, he attended the Second Lateran Council and was made papal legate for Ireland. On his travels, he met Waltheof of Melrose and Gilbert of Sempringham, and befriended Bernard at Clairvaux. He brought the Cistercian and Arrouaisian observances to Ireland. Four of his monks trained at Clairvaux and founded the first Irish Cistercian house, at Mellifont, c. 1142. In 1148, he convened a synod at Inis Pátraic, near Dublin. He died at Clairvaux, early on 2 Nov, while petitioning the pope for four pallia for Ireland. He had a high reputation for holiness and was the first Irish saint canonised, in 1190. Bernard, present at his death, wrote a celebrated vita. At Clairvaux and its daughter-houses, he was commemorated at daily Lauds and Vespers. A perpetual lamp adorned his tomb. The *Visio Tnugdali*, written in Regensburg, placed him and his brother among the four blessed bishops with St. Patrick in heaven. Áed of Clogher, Gilla Críst of Lismore, and Malchus of Mellifont were disciples. A set of attributed prophecies are now known to be modern fabrications.

4. Cultus:

a. Relics: Tomb at Clairvaux, beside Bernard; bones at Clairvaux, Troyes, and Irish abbeys

b. Liturgical commemoration: 3 Nov (OCist: 5 Nov) (FLANAGAN, 303)

c. Patronage: Armagh, Down, and Connor

d. Attributes: –

5. Fontes: Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Life and Death of Saint Malachy*, transl. R. T. MEYER, Kalamazoo, 1978; J. P. Migne, PL, 185, Paris 1844, 1661–1798.

6. Literature: A. MAC SHAMHRÁIN, Malachy Ua Morgair, in: *Dictionary of Irish Biography* 6, Cambridge 2009, 308–311; P. Ó RIAIN, Maol Maodhóg, in: *Dictionary of Irish Saints*, Dublin 2011, 442–444; M. T. FLANAGAN, Malachy (1094/5–1148), in: ODNB, 36, 2004, 267–269; M. T. FLANAGAN, St Malachy, St Bernard of Clairvaux, and the Cistercian Order, in: AHib, 68 (2015), 294–311; J. O'HANLON, *The Life of Saint Malachy*, Dublin 1859.

7. Illustrations: –

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