

Fulfill

Saturday 1st February - Bride of Kildare, Abbess, c.525



Mosaic from the crypt chapel of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington DC. Image by Lawrence OP via Flickr (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/paullew/>)

Scripture: Psalm 89.19-29

Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one, and said:

‘I have set the crown on one who is mighty,

I have exalted one chosen from the people.

I have found my servant David;

with my holy oil I have anointed him;

my hand shall always remain with him;

my arm also shall strengthen him.

The enemy shall not outwit him,

the wicked shall not humble him.

I will crush his foes before him

and strike down those who hate him.

My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him;

and in my name his horn shall be exalted.

I will set his hand on the sea

and his right hand on the rivers.

He shall cry to me, "You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation!"
I will make him the firstborn,
the highest of the kings of the earth.
For-ever I will keep my steadfast love for him,
and my covenant with him will stand firm.
I will establish his line for ever,
and his throne as long as the heavens endure.

To reflect

At the end of the Gospel for the Third Sunday of Epiphany (Luke 4.21) Jesus tells those present that the scripture of Isaiah's prophecy has been fulfilled in their hearing.

Today is the 1st February, the Feast Day of St Brigid of Ireland who fulfilled God's calling on her life in many ways, a life full of compassion, social justice, serving the poor and leadership. St Brigid is a Patron Saint of Ireland (along with Saints Columba and Patrick) and lived in the late fifth and early sixth centuries. She is thought to have founded the religious community at Kildare and communities at other locations in Ireland. In Scotland East and West Kilbride are named after Brigid and closer to our Diocese, Llanbryde near Elgin is thought to be named after St Brigid.

Depictions of St Brigid often include a reed cross – a St Brigid Cross, a crozier – for her leadership (including the story of her being consecrated Bishop), or a lamp (due to associations with fire and a perpetual fire that burned in her memory at Kildare). St Brigid is patron saint of healers, poets, beer, blacksmiths and dairy workers, as well as a figure associated with creativity and womanhood.

Recalling Brigid by Orna Ross

Queen of queens, they called her
in the old books, the Irish Mary.
Never washed her hands, nor her head
in sight of a man, never looked
into a man's face. She was good
with the poor, multiplied food,
gave ale to lepers. Among birds,
call her dove; among trees, a vine.
A sun among stars.

Such was the sort of woman
preferred as the takeover was made:
consecrated cask, throne to His glory,
intercessor.

Brigid said nothing to any of this,
the reverence, or the upbraidings.
Her realm is the lacuna,
silence her sceptre,
her own way of life its own witness.

Out of desire, the lure of lust
or the dust of great deeds,
she was distorted:
to consort, mother-virgin,
to victim or whore.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

I am not as womanly
a woman as she.
So I say: Let us see.
Let us say how she is the one.

It is she who conceives
and she who does bear.
She who knitted us in the womb
and who will cradle our
tomb-fraying.

Daily she offers her arms,
clothes us in compassion,
smiles as we wriggle
for baubles.

Yes, it is she who lifts you aloft
to whisper through your ears,
to kiss with your eyes,
to touch her cooling
cheek to your cheek.

From <https://www.ornaross.com/poem-recalling-brigid/>

To Listen (these and other suggestions can be found on a Spotify playlist at
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0F5bU2sf4OiOtQY3q78Rf2?si=a99cbbf61e7d4587>)

- 'Blessed are the Pure in Heart' by Rupert Gough, one version is by the Wells Cathedral Choir.
- 'Céad Míle Fáilte Romhat' a traditional Irish-language hymn, one version is by the Palestrina Choir. The verses are: "*A hundred thousand welcomes, O Jesus, O Jesus, A hundred thousand welcomes, O Jesus, A hundred thousand welcomes, O Saviour, A hundred thousand welcomes, O Jesus, O Jesus. Glory and praise to You, O Jesus, O Jesus, Glory and praise to You, O Jesus, Glory and praise to You, O Saviour, Glory and praise and thanks to You, O Jesus, O Jesus.*"
- 'Folk Hymn to St Brigid' by Dennis Doyle and Paula Doyle.



A Brigid's Cross
Often woven from rushes, straw or reeds.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.