



ST.
BRIGID

OF
KILDARE

Saint Brigid - a story of miracles and magic.

Brigid was a Christian nun, Abbess and, interestingly, Bishop (at least technically, if not in practice) who founded a monastery at Kildare in Ireland in the sixth century, and was an influential figure in the Irish Christianity of the time.

There are several sources for her life, the most comprehensive of which is the *Vita Sanctae Brigitae*, written by a monk named Cogitosus around the year 650, about 125 years after her death. The *Vita* tells of Brigid's early life: she was, we learn, the symbolically-intriguing daughter of a slave and a king, adopted and raised by a druid, who prophesied her future greatness. A saintly figure from a young age, her love of Christ led her early into the monastic life (she refused several offers of marriage, going so far as to pluck her own eyes out when one suitor told her how beautiful they were) and set out instead on a monastic life.

As a nun and Abbess, Brigid became renowned for giving everything she had (and sometimes things that other people had) to the poor. This was a pattern begun in childhood, when she had given her mother's entire store of butter to a poor family and her father's jewel-encrusted sword to a beggar. She once said she would give the whole of the Kingdom of Leinster to the poor if she could. The force of her personality, her love for the weak and the work done by the

monastery she founded had her considered a saint in her own lifetime, as did her miracles, of which my favourite is the turning of water into beer: a very northern European version of Jesus's wedding gift. After her death, the 'Mary of the Gael' became the centre of a cult across Ireland and further afield. Her miraculous help with childbirth, her protection of flocks and herds, and the healing power of her wells testified - still, in fact, testify - to her continued presence in the landscape.

There is plenty to learn from St Brigid. The *Vita* tells us that even the wolves of the forest loved her, and the wild ducks 'flew on feathered wings to her, without any fear', after which 'she praised highly the Creator of all things, to whom all life is subject, and for whose service ... all life is given.' So in tune with Creation was Brigid, in fact, that she could hang her cloak on a sunbeam and cause trees to move through prayer. Anything she ever found herself in possession of was given away to the poorest of the poor.

The story that Cogitosus seems eager to tell us throughout his life of this saint is, in fact, a beautifully simple one. It is of this woman's deep love for the neediest people and for the creatures of the wild, all of it springing from a love of God himself - and of how she put this love into action.

- Paul Kingsnorth "The Abbey of Misrule" Substack.



CVALA PRESS

Saint Brigid

The dandelion lights its spark
Lest Brigid find the wayside dark,
And Brother Wind comes rollicking
For joy that she has brought the spring
Young lambs and little furry folk
Seek shelter underneath her cloak.

WMLetts.

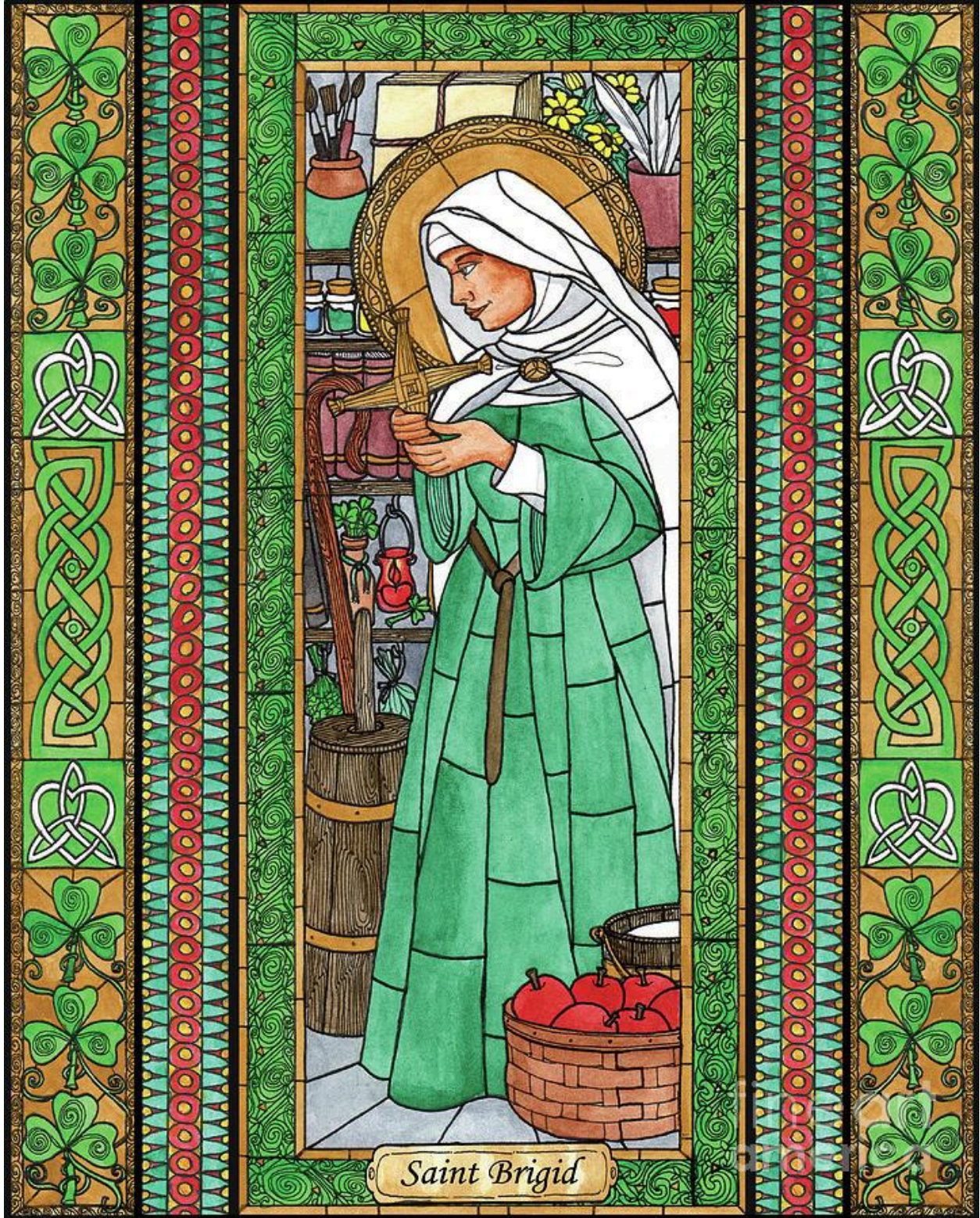
Hearth Keeper Prayer

Brigid of the Mantle, encompass us,
Lady of the Lambs, protect us,
Keeper of the Hearth, kindle us.
Beneath your mantle, gather us,
And restore us to memory.
Mothers of our mother,
Foremothers strong.

Guide our hands in yours,
Remind us how to kindle the hearth.
To keep it bright, to preserve the flame.
Your hands upon ours,
Our hands within yours,
To kindle the light,
Both day and night.

The Mantle of Brigid about us,
The Memory of Brigid within us,
The Protection of Brigid keeping us
From harm, from ignorance, from heartlessness.

This day and night,
From dawn till dark,
From dark till dawn.



Saint Brigid

Traditional Catholic Prayer to Saint Brigid

Saint Brigid.

You were a woman of peace.

You brought harmony where there was conflict.

You brought light to the darkness.

You brought hope to the downcast.

May the mantle of your peace cover those who are troubled and anxious,
and may peace be firmly rooted in our hearts and in our world.

Inspire us to act justly and to reverence all God has made.

Brigid you were a voice for the wounded and the weary.

Strengthen what is weak within us.

Calm us into a quietness that heals and listens.

May we grow each day into greater wholeness in mind, body and spirit.

Amen.

St. Brigid's Blessing

May Brigid bless the house wherein you dwell

Bless every fireside every wall and door

Bless every heart that beats beneath its roof

Bless every hand that toils to bring it joy

Bless every foot that walks its portals through

May Brigid bless the house that shelters you.



We Sing a Song to Brigid

Words: Clare Maloney

Music: Patricia Hegarty

Chorus: D Am D Am D Am D



We sing a song to Bri-gid, — Brig - id brings the spring. — A -

G A Bm C D C D



wa - kens all the fields and the flowers and calls the birds to sing. —

D Am D Am D Am D



1 All were wel - come at her door, no one was turned a - way. — She

G A Bm C D C D



1 loved the poor, the sick and the sore, she helped them on their way. —

D Am D Am D Am D



2 She laid her cloak out on the ground and watched it grow and grow, In

G A Bm C D C D



2 wells and streams and fields of green St. Bri - gid's bless - ings flow. —

ST. BRIGIDS OATEN BREAD FROM IRELAND

"These chewy bread-cakes have been fed to children in Ireland for years, in the belief that vigorous chewing would strengthen their young jaws. The children of today like them because they are fun to eat. And because they are low in fat and high in fiber, they are definitely healthful. The loaf is cut in quarters, or "farms" before it is baked."

INGREDIENTS

UNITS: US

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup [flour](#)
- 1 tablespoon [sugar](#)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon [baking powder](#)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon [baking soda](#)
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon [salt](#)
- 3 tablespoons [butter](#), in small pieces
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup uncooked [oatmeal](#) (old fashioned)
 - 1 [egg](#)
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup [buttermilk](#)

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 425 degrees.
2. Grease baking sheet.
3. Combine flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt in bowl and mix.
4. Add butter bits and cut in with knife until mixture is crumbly.
5. Add oats and toss to combine.
6. In other bowl beat egg with buttermilk.
7. Make a well in the dry ingredients.
8. Pour in the egg mixture and mix with a fork until crumbs hold together.
9. Make dough into ball and transfer to floured surface.
10. Knead 20-25 times.
11. Add flour if sticky.
12. Pat dough into 8-inch round and transfer to baking sheet.
13. Score a deep cross into the bread but do not cut it through.
14. Bake 23-28 minutes till brown and a tester comes out clean (may take less time, so keep an eye on it).

Colcannon

Did you ever eat Colcannon, made from lovely pickled cream?

With the greens and scallions mingled like a picture in a dream.

Did you ever make a hole on top to hold the melting flake

Of the creamy, flavoured butter that your mother used to make?

Yes you did, so you did, so did he and so did I. And the more I think about it sure the nearer I'm to cry.

Oh, wasn't it the happy days when troubles we had not, And our mothers made Colcannon in the little skillet pot.

Ingredients

- 4 russet potatoes (2 to 2 1/2 pounds), peeled and cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces
- Salt, to taste
- 5 to 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, plus more for serving
- 3 lightly packed cups chopped kale
- 3 green onions, minced (about 1/2 cup)
- 1 cup milk or cream

Method

1. **Boil the potatoes:** Put the potatoes in a medium pot and cover with cold water by at least an inch. Add 2 tablespoons of salt, and bring to a boil. Boil until the potatoes are fork tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Drain in a colander.
2. **Cook the greens:** Return the pot to the stove and set over medium-high heat. Melt the butter in the pot and once it's hot, add the green onions and 3 cloves of crushed garlic. Add the Kale for 3 to 4 minutes, or until they are wilted and have given off some of their water.
3. **Mash the potatoes:** Pour in the milk or cream, mix well, and add the potatoes. Reduce the heat to medium. Use a fork or potato masher and mash the potatoes, mixing them up with the greens. Add salt to taste and serve hot, with a knob of butter in the center.

Chief of bountiful chiefs,
Please keep me safe
From spell and slander
And trolls up in the dark hills.

Please keep me safe
From the banshee on my back,
Wraith and ghoul camped out
In the dusking glen.

Please keep me safe
From the wolf inside,
It watches as I walk home in
The day-departing light.

*

My face will be washed
In nine rays of the sun,
Like Mary washed her child
In thick and lustrous milk.

My face will have the love-shine,
Mind benevolent and merciful,
Honey-dew on my tongue,
Breath sweet like incense.

I'm going to a bad town,
With bad people there,
But I am a white swan
& a Queen above them.
God is my banner,
I travel with the likeness of deer,
With the likeness of serpent,
Likeness of horse, likeness of king.
The Chief of bountiful chiefs
Will protect me most of all.