

Saint Brigid of Kildare

- Lived in Ireland— 451 to 525 (February 1)
- Mother was a Christian slave baptized by St. Patrick and father was a pagan chief
- Nun and foundress of several monasteries; held the rank of bishop
- Many names— St. Brigid, Brigid of Ireland, Bridget, Bridgit, Brid, Bride, or “Mary of the Gaels”



Tell us about your childhood?

Because my mother was a slave, I was born into slavery. At around age 10, I was returned to my father's house as a household servant. From a very young age I had a heart for charity and would donate anything to anyone who asked. But this annoyed my father, and he tried to sell me to the King of Leinster. While he was negotiating my sale, I gave my jeweled sword to a beggar to barter it for food for his family. Because of this, the King recognized my heart and merit before God and convinced my father to grant my mom and me our freedom.

How did you become a nun?

Originally my father wanted me to marry the King of Ulster, but I refused and eventually won his permission to become a nun. Around 480 I founded my first monastery at Kildare (Cill Dara in English meaning “church of the oak”), which was ironically on the site of a pagan shrine to the Celtic goddess Brigid for whom I was named. I founded two monastic institutions there—one for men and one for women—and also a school of art that included metalwork and illumination. I invited Conleth, a hermit, to help me as pastor and to oversee the school.

Who influenced your faith journey?

St. Patrick, even though he died when I was a child (in 461). Coincidentally, we were both slaves—I was born into slavery and he was taken as a slave from England to Ireland. But more importantly, we were of one heart and one mind regarding our love for Christ and His people—especially the poor.

Tell us about miracles attributed to you?

Most of the miracles attributed to me are related to healing or household tasks. However, one of my favorite miracles was when I asked the King of Leinster for some of his land to build a convent. He said no, but I prayed and asked God to soften his heart. I then asked the King to give me as much land as my cloak would cover. He laughed and agreed. So I told four of my sisters to take my cloak and set out in all four directions; soon the cloak covered many acres. “Oh, Brigid! What are you about?” said the King. Soon after, the King became a Christian, began to help the poor, and commissioned the building of the convent on the plot of land he gave me.

Tell us about your cross?

I was once called to the bedside of a dying pagan chief to speak to him about God and Christ's love for mankind. To illustrate the point, I picked up some of the reeds covering the dirt floor and wove them into a cross to help him understand how Christ died for us.



St. Brigid's cross

Today many use this cross to prepare and protect their home. Some use the cross to prepare for the arrival of spring, which starts on February 1 (my feast day) in Ireland by making the cross on the eve of my feast day. Others use the cross to protect their home from fire by placing it near the roof or ceiling.

How would you like us to remember you?

As a woman of great faith who was generous, gentle, and pious and loved the poor.

How would you like us to celebrate your feast day?

Whether you're Irish or not, celebrate by having a pint of beer, doing an act of charity, making a St. Brigid cross, or simply praying for Ireland and her people.



St. Brigid, pray for us!

How much do you know about St. Brigid of Kildare? Read about her in the #IamSaintBrigid article on page 6, which will help you answer some of the questions below. Most importantly, she was a woman of great faith and loved the poor. Test your knowledge below and have fun.

1. St. Brigid's feast day is on...

- a. January 29
- b. February 1
- c. March 1
- d. August 8
- e. October 20



2. Which of these saints is not a patron saint of Ireland:

- a. St. Brendan
- b. St. Brigid
- c. St. George
- d. St. Patrick
- e. St. Columba



3. What year was St. Brigid born?

- a. 210 AD
- b. 451 AD
- c. 485 AD
- d. 1076 AD
- e. 1975 AD



4. St. Brigid is frequently pictured with what animal?

- a. Lamb
- b. Pig
- c. Sheep
- d. Cow
- e. Chicken

5. St. Brigid is the patron saint of all of these except:

- a. Ireland
- b. Newborn babies
- c. Midwives
- d. Doctors
- e. Cattle



6. True or False:

The cross in our parish logo represents the woven cross St. Brigid made out of reeds to help her explain Christianity to a dying pagan chieftain.



7. True or False:

St. Brigid's father was happy she wanted to become a nun.



8. True or False:

St. Brigid was a disciple of and was baptized by St. Patrick.

9. True or False:

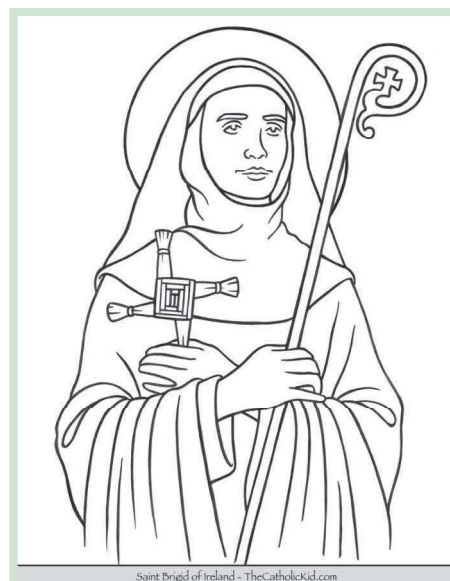
St. Brigid was born into slavery.

10. In St. Brigid's time beer was the daily drink of people because water was often polluted and beer was inexpensive. Which of these stories about St. Brigid and beer is **not** reported to be about her:

- a. Supplied beer out of one barrel to eighteen churches which lasted from Holy Thursday to end of Easter
- b. Changed dirty bathwater into beer so visiting clerics would have something to drink
- c. Ice-skating on a lake of beer in Kildare the year it froze over during Christmastime
- d. 10th century poem, attributed to St. Brigid that speaks of giving a lake of beer to God

Beer
Brigid
Butter
Children
Cow
Cross
Crozier
Disciple
Feast
February
Ireland
Pagan
Saint
Slave
StPatrick

S	E	L	M	P	Q	X	Y	S	T	E	H	T	F	B
S	Q	T	M	U	G	B	R	R	L	S	H	O	M	B
O	T	N	I	A	S	U	E	P	A	W	A	K	I	R
R	A	D	D	A	W	I	I	E	M	U	L	E	N	I
C	P	A	G	A	N	C	U	Z	R	H	R	C	F	G
C	Z	Y	A	G	S	R	P	H	C	N	N	B	Q	I
O	R	B	U	I	R	E	L	A	N	D	B	J	E	D
W	N	O	D	H	M	K	X	L	Z	U	I	C	E	F
L	E	L	Z	T	P	R	Y	G	T	M	E	V	E	N
E	R	B	A	I	T	P	S	T	I	C	A	U	N	B
P	D	K	S	P	E	X	E	V	N	L	H	W	G	P
G	L	U	H	O	O	R	I	K	S	B	N	M	G	T
D	I	X	N	T	C	H	O	G	W	H	B	N	V	J
B	H	W	A	H	A	E	Y	K	J	L	P	N	E	S
K	C	I	R	T	A	P	T	S	T	Y	D	I	U	S



Answers: 1 (b), 2 (c), 3 (b), 4 (d), 5 (d), 6 (true), 7 (false)-he arranged for her to marry, 8 (true), 9 (true), 10 (c)

Learn more about St. Brigid on our website: saintbrigidparish.org/our-patroness