

## Brigit: Soulmith, Poet, Healer : 29th January 2022

<https://womanspiritireland.wordpress.com/2022/01/24/brigit-soulsmith-poet-healer/>

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/248697981357>

Contact email: [womanspiritireland@gmail.com](mailto:womanspiritireland@gmail.com)

**Note:** Brigit has many spellings: Brigit (Old Irish ); Brighid, Brigid, Bride (Scottish) . Woman Spirit Ireland uses the Old Irish Spelling.

### Further Resources

- **Jenny Beale**  
See [www.brigitsgarden.ie](http://www.brigitsgarden.ie) for more on Brigit's Garden
- **Rosari Kingston Ph.D**, *Ireland's Hidden Medicine* [www.drrosarikingston.com](http://www.drrosarikingston.com)
- **Mary Condren Th.D**, <https://tcd.academia.edu/MaryCondren>
- Mary Condren, *the Serpent and the Goddess: Women, Religion and Power in Celtic Ireland* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1989; Dublin: New Island, 2002). Currently out of print. Used copies available online
- Mary Condren, "Brigit: Soulmith for the New Millenium," *Concilium* vol. 5, 2000
- Mary Condren, "Brigit, Matron of Poetry, Healing, Smithwork and Mercy: Female Divinity in European Traditions," *Journal of the European Society of Women in Theological Research*, vol. 18 (2010): 5-30
- **Séamas Ó Catháin Ph.D**, "Hearth-Prayers and Other Traditions of Brigit: Celtic Goddess and Holy Woman,"
- *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 122 (1992), pp. 12-34
- Séamas Ó Catháin 'The Festival of Brigit the Holy Woman', *Celtica* XXIII, 1999, 231- 260, 238-239
- Séamas Ó Catháin, *The Festival of Brigit: Celtic Goddess & Holy Woman*, (Dublin: DBA.1995) Currently out of print, but Séamas is working on a new augmented revised edition.
- **Ruth Marshall**, "*Celebrating Irish Festivals*" (Hawthorn Press, 2003) Currently out of print. "*Clare Folk Tales*" and "*Limerick Folk Tales*" (The History Press)
- Ruth Marshall, <https://youtu.be/mvXQiGxvKcM>. "Brigit of the Oak"
- Instructions for making Brigit's crosses: <https://youtu.be/z510OPMFZeA> ; <https://youtu.be/RVWkifNibFA> Look out for a few Brigit stories on YouTube too!
- **Grace Wells**, poetry film <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4WcwaAwHcQ>
- **Jane Brideson**, artwork <http://theeverlivingones.blogspot.com/p/how-to-order.html>

## **Brigit of the Oak**

*Ruth Marshall*

Brigit was a helpful child, at home and in the fields,  
Whenever she was milking, the cows increased their yields.

Was it because she sang to them, or loved the cows so well,  
Or because her hands worked miracles - well, who of us can tell?

When she was making butter, there was more than half again,  
And when she set five loaves to bake, what came out the oven was ten!

Plenty for all when Brigit cooked or when she brewed the beer,  
No one had to go without when Brigit prayed: no fear.

Her father found it all too much when she gave away his stuff:  
His sword, his food, his money - he'd had more than quite enough!

Decided he would make her wed - her beauty was renowned -  
But when he found a suitor, well, Brigit simply frowned.

"I'd rather pluck out my own eye from out of my own face,  
Than marry any man you choose. That would be a disgrace!

I'll be a holy woman, dedicate my days to good,  
I'll build a church beneath the oaks and share all of my food.

I'll ask the king for land for this, and if he won't agree  
I'll lay my cloak upon the ground, and then we'll see!

The hills will sound with blessings, the earth itself rejoice,  
And to all in need of comfort, I will raise my voice,

To let them know that solace is surely to be found  
Within this heart, where burns a fire, that warms all around."

So Brigit did just as she said, and let that bright flame burn,  
Her sisters tended it by night, and Brigit took her turn

To feed the flame of kindness, and to keep it ever lit,  
As we can by remembering: goddess and saint, Brigit.

Now when we see a dandelion, with its face bright as the sun,  
We know that spring is here again and new growth has begun.

And so today, when spring awakes, we think of her all the more  
When we make a cross of rushes and we hang it by the door,

Remembering dear Brigit, of the cattle and the cloak.  
Who showers us with blessings: dearest Brigit of the Oak.

**NOTE:** *This poem was written for use with primary schools - containing snippets and motifs that I would then go on to speak about with the children, or tell stories about. You are welcome to use it within this context, but please acknowledge its source. <https://youtu.be/mvXQiGxvKcM>*

## Music and Translations from the Irish

- **Eithne Ní Uallacháin: Brighid's Kiss**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTkSqmwQSYk>

### Brighid's Kiss

Gabhaim Molta Bride...  
Ionmhain í le hÉireann,  
Ionmhain le gach tír í  
Molaimis go léir í

I praise Brighid  
Beloved of Ireland  
Beloved of all lands  
We all praise her

Lóchrann geal na Laighneach  
'Soilsiú feadh na tire  
Ceann ar óghaibh Éireann  
Ceann na mban ar míne.

Bright torch of Leinster  
Shining throughout the land  
Irish women cherish her  
As do all fine women.

Tig an gheimhreadh dian dubh  
Gearradh lena ghéire,  
Ach ar Lá 'le Bríde  
Gar dúinn Earrach Éireann

The harsh dark Winter comes  
Cutting with its sharpness  
But on Brighid's Day  
Ireland's Spring is near.

Brighid of the sunrise, rising in the morning,  
Rising with the Springtime, Greening all the land,  
See you in the soft cloud, See you in the raindrop,  
See you in the winds of change, Blowing through the land.

You the red-eared white cow, Nourishing the people,  
Nourish now the hunger, Souls' longing in our land.  
Bird that is unfolding, Now the time's upon us,  
Only have we eyes to see, Your Epiphany.

*Brighid's Kiss, Lá Lugh, Gerry O'Connor and Eithne Ní Uallacháin.*

Eithne Ní Uallacháin : <https://myirishmusic.com/products/eithne-ni-uallachain-bilingua>

Lá Lugh . the voice of Eithne Ní Uallacháin ...New Album of Eithne's songs Bilingua .  
nominated for Album of the Year 2014

- **Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin: BRIGID BUACH - Gifted Brigid (translation)**

Gifted Brigid finest of kin,  
Gifted Brigid king of heaven's sister  
Gifted Brigid most noble one  
Gifted Brigid life alive.  
Gifted Brigid mother of the Gaels,  
Gifted Brigid welcomer of guests,  
Gifted Brigid seed of wisdom  
Gifted Brigid expansive flame

You are the happiness of all enchantment  
You are the light of the beam of the sun  
You are the open door of hospitality,  
You are the brightest star of knowledge,  
You are the leap of the deer in the hills  
You are the stride of the horse in the field,  
You are the grace of the swan in the water,  
Gifted Brigid expansive flame.  
Gifted Brigid life alive  
Gifted Brigid finest of kin,  
Gifted Brigid king of heaven's sister  
Gifted Brigid most noble one  
Gifted Brigid life alive.

Composer/singer: Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin ©IMRO 2022  
New Album: **'BRIGID' - honouring the goddess-saint.**  
Available on [www.irishsong.com](http://www.irishsong.com)

- **Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin: BEANNÚ - A BLESSING  
(translation)**

May the bright moon and sun bless us,  
May the east and the west bless us,  
May the north and the south bless us,  
May Great Brigid at the heart centre of life bless us.  
May Eriú bless us,  
May Fódhla bless us,  
May Banba bless us,  
May Bóann bless us,  
May Meadhbh bless us,  
May Morrígú bless us,  
May Great Brigid at the heart centre of life bless us,  
May Taitiú bless us,  
May Téa bless us,  
May Carman bless us,  
May Áine bless us,  
May Aoibheall bless us,  
May Clíodhna bless us,  
May Great Brigid at the heart centre of life bless us,  
May Mór bless us,  
May Macha bless us,  
May Bodhbh bless us,  
May Anú bless us,  
May Eibhlíú bless us,  
May Eithne bless us.  
May the bright moon and sun bless us,  
May the east and the west bless us,  
May the north and the south bless us,  
May Great Brigid at the heart centre of life bless us.

Composer/singer: Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin ©IMRO 2022  
New album '**BRIGID**' - honouring the goddess-saint,  
Available on [www.irishsong.com](http://www.irishsong.com)

## **Weaving Themes: Songs and Poetry**

*Some years ago Starhawk, the great anti-war activist, put new words to the old Irish traditional tune, "Mo Ghile Mear" that we have used at Festivals of Brigit for many years. Traditionally this translates as "my darling or gallant one."*

*The "Weaver Song" signifies the role of the peaceweaver, weaving the warp and weft of humanity, as Brigit did when she held complexity, put smoke screens between the warring parties to confuse them; gave them sweet dreams of victory, allowing them to wake up happy (and alive!) without killing anyone. One of Brigit's instruments was the "weaver's beam" a beam that holds the warp yarns or threads, the base for the weft threads that are yet to be woven. She also had a "golden branch with tinkling bells" a form of wand held by the chief poet as she called the poets to assembly.*

## **Weaver, Weaver**

Weaver, weaver, weave our thread,  
Whole and strong into your web  
Healer, Healer heal our pain  
In love may we come strong again

We are dark and we are bright  
We are formed of earth and light  
From joy and pain our lives are spun  
But all too soon the spinning's done

### **Weaver chorus**

No one knows why we are born  
A web is made, a web is torn  
Like wandr'ing sea birds we alight  
To rest one moment, then take flight

### **Weaver chorus**

May we find the hidden way  
Beyond the gates of night and day  
To that sweet land where apples grow  
And endless healing waters flow

### **Weaver chorus**

At that spring may we drink deep  
And wake to dream, and die to sleep  
And dreaming spin another form  
A shining thread of life reborn.

*Words adapted from Starhawk. Music Traditional  
Music, traditional: Mo Ghile Mear,*

- Instrumental and singing: **Evelie Delfino Sáles Posch**  
<http://groups.google.com/group/heartistic-music>

## Further Additional Resources

### Brigit 2021

- Three short films/poems for Brigit presented by the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Museum of Modern Irish Literature in 2021

<https://moli.ie/digital/three-poems-for-brigid/>

To celebrate St. Brigid's Day 2021, the Department of Foreign Affairs and MoLI - Museum of Literature Ireland, collaborated on 'Three Poems for Brigid', a series of three short online films. Each film showcases a poet and a spoken word performer, and is based around one of the three aspects of Brigid as the triple goddess of Poetry, Healing, and Craftwork. The poems were commissioned from three of Ireland's finest female poets, spanning the creative generations: Doireann Ní Ghríofa, Paula Meehan and Nidhi Zak/Aria Eipe. Artists performing the works include Osaro Azams, Ruth McCabe and Caitríona Ennis, with music by Syn, Dowry, and Dreamcycles.

Through the poem and accompanying imagery, each film explores the theme as it relates to Irish women from past to present. The films aim to reach the widest audience possible, both local and international, and to engage Irish people around the world with living female Irish writers, performers and the feminine continuum that stretches through our history, is alive in our society, and is exemplified through both the Pagan and Christian symbolism of Brigid.

- A film on Brigid presented by Telefís na Gaeilge  
[https://www.tg4.ie/en/player/categories/top-documentaries/play/?pid=5729046071001&fbclid=IwAR3gbkA18l8Gb7M140mCZrfpWG\\_I\\_N7MPzrvk9ggE\\_8WJq\\_vSjfa7t0wHja8](https://www.tg4.ie/en/player/categories/top-documentaries/play/?pid=5729046071001&fbclid=IwAR3gbkA18l8Gb7M140mCZrfpWG_I_N7MPzrvk9ggE_8WJq_vSjfa7t0wHja8)

*Previous viewer) If you run your mouse over the lower right corner, it will reveal a menu where you can opt for subtitles. Someone wrote: "I am watching with subtitles. It took a minute of clicking on the top section!"*

- Brigid in Folk Tradition: from University College Dublin  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnGYV0538jA>
- Claire Blennerhasset made for Col Patterson's "Brigid's Land"  
<https://vimeo.com/465831955>  
*"It was filmed on location on the Curragh, and at the Well in Kildare during the glorious weather we had late September. We had a fundraiser for it at the time for Teach Tearmainn Women's Refuge in Kildare town."*
- an Irish-Scottish celebration of Brigid's Day 2021  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQ0Z8fEHuzo>
- David W. Atherton and Michael Peter Peyton, "Saint Brigid: Holy Wells, Patterns and Relics"  
[https://www.academia.edu/23716717/Saint\\_Brigit\\_Holy\\_Wells\\_Patterns\\_and\\_Relics](https://www.academia.edu/23716717/Saint_Brigit_Holy_Wells_Patterns_and_Relics)
- Eddie Lenihan, Irish seanchaí: podcast telling folklore of St Brigid.  
<https://youtu.be/CqZUXLD3WSw>
- For Schools and Children: Epic Centre [https://f.hubspotusercontent10.net/hubfs/3074216/St\\_Brigit\\_pack\\_v6.pdf](https://f.hubspotusercontent10.net/hubfs/3074216/St_Brigit_pack_v6.pdf)