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St Brigid

Although Brigid is named alongside St Patrick as a patron saint of Ireland, little fact is known concerning her life, if much folklore! She reputedly was born of humble stock near Dundalk c.450 and was baptised by St Patrick. She became a nun when aged about 18, then founded the first Irish convent at Cill-Dara (now known as Kildare). Later this became a double monastery and she was created the first abbess.

She was known for her compassion and generosity, her charity and liveliness/humour. The monastery became a centre of learning, noted for art and marvellously copied manuscripts.

She died there c.525. Her fame spread far beyond Ireland and the Celtic lands, for she is the patron saint of Sweden and is venerated in Portugal, Flanders and Alsace.

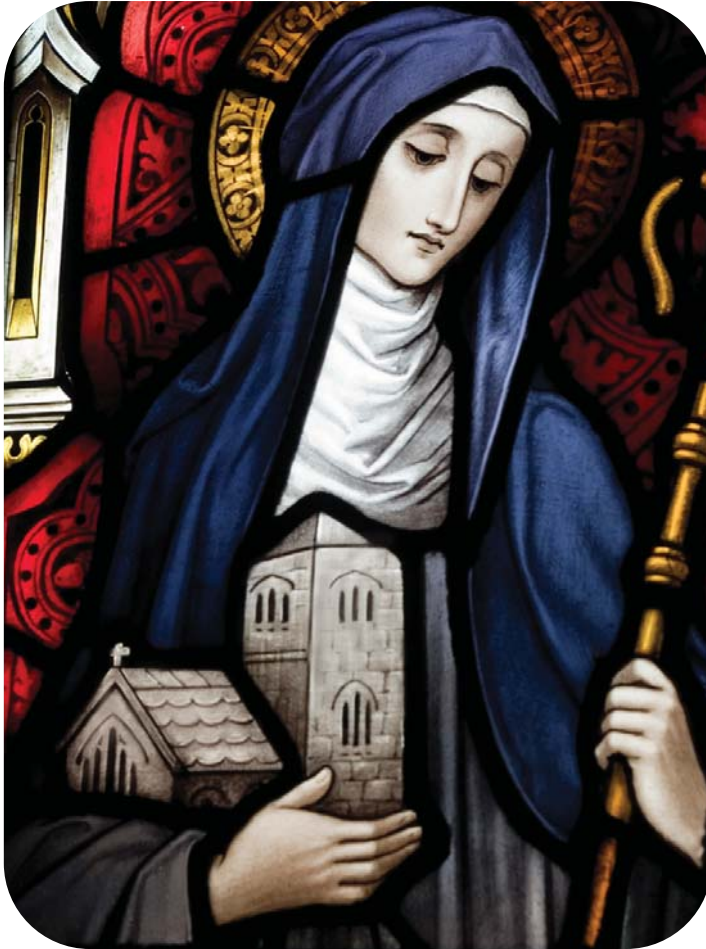


- ① Sit down with the children and show them the series of pictures overleaf. You may wish to lay the sheets out either on a table or the floor, and then read the story.
- ② Ask the children the following questions and discuss them:-
 - Which pictures do you like?*
 - What would you miss if you had to give up material things ?*
 - How would you like to help people?*
- ③ Draw a picture of the plaited cross in the story.

The Story of St Brigid



Brigid was born about 453 in Kildare, County Louth in Ireland. Her mother taught her stories about Jesus and she was later baptised by St Patrick.



She was a very beautiful little girl. Many young men wanted to marry her. "I shall be a nun," she thought.



**But she never knew she
was going to be the first
of millions of Irish nuns
throughout the world.**



**With joy she
became a sister,
a nun. And as soon
as she did, God
made her more
beautiful than ever.
She built a lovely
little convent.**



She tended the cattle herself.



Other young women heard about her. They came and asked to join her and be nuns too. Then little girls came to be taught. The sick came to her and asked her to care for them. She had been taught how different herbs could heal illnesses.



**She made a dying King
a cross of rushes and he
wanted to know more
about Jesus.**



Often she sold everything she had and gave the money to the poor. The Irish called on her for help from all over the country. So all over Ireland she went. She built convent schools and hospitals everywhere. And when she died, all Ireland loved her. They made her the Patron of Ireland with St Patrick.