



## "The Giveaway" - a poem about St. Brigid

(from *The Love Letters of Phyllis McGinley*, New York, Viking Press, 1957)



Saint Bridget was a problem child.  
Although a lass demure and mild,  
And one who strove to please her dad,  
Saint Bridget drove the family mad.  
For here's the fault in Bridget lay:  
She *would* give everything away.

To any soul whose luck was out  
She'd give her bowl of stir-about;  
She'd give her shawl, divide her purse  
With one or all. And what was worse,  
When she ran out of things to give  
She'd borrow from a relative.

Her father's gold, her grandsire's dinner,  
She'd hand to cold and hungry sinner;  
Give wine, give meat, no matter whose;  
Take from her feet the very shoes,  
And when her shoes had gone to others,  
Fetch forth her sister's and her  
mother's.

She could not quit. She had to share;  
Gave bit by bit - The silverware,  
The barnyard geese, The parlour rug,  
Her little niece's christening mug,  
Even her bed to those in want,  
And then the mattress of her aunt.

### A Simple Activity

Having read the poem, grab a few  
simple props and see if you could be  
inspired to make up a little play  
inspired by this!!

An easy touch for poor and lowly,  
She gave so much and grew so holy  
That when she died of years and fame,  
The countryside put on her name,  
And still the Isles of Erin fidget  
With generous girls named Bride or  
Bridget.

Well, one must love her. Nonetheless,  
In thinking of her giving-ness,  
There's no denial she must have been  
A sort of trial, unto her kin.

The moral, too, seems rather quaint.  
*Who* had the patience of a saint,  
From evidence presented here?  
Saint Bridget? Or her near and dear?

### SAINTS FUN FACTS

by John Sheppard

Brigid was raised by Druids in Ireland and as a child heard St. Patrick preach.

She never forgot that and it was St. Patrick who heard her final vows upon entering into the convent.

She founded a double monastery in Kildare, an art school and many convents all over Ireland.

Her extraordinary spirituality, charity and compassion for those distressed were legendary.

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St. Brigid of Ireland

## St Brigid's Holy Well – Clondalkin

*This well is about 200 yds from the Boot road, a road which leads from Clondalkin on the south west side, to the Naas road.*

Legend has it that St. Brigid came to the site of the monastery at Clondalkin and baptised pagans at the well on Boot Road. The structure around it dates from 1761. The original railings were donated by the workers in the Paper Mills in the 1940s and the statue was given by Mary O'Toole. In the 1950s four local men, Paddy Lyons, Jimmy Gallaher, Paddy Mathis and Paddy Kelly restored the well and constructed the grotto that houses the statue. About this time there were processions to the well on the 1st February each year, the feast day of St. Bridget. The well is believed to have curative powers. A piece of rag dipped in the water and used to wipe the face, particularly of young girls, was said to cure eye complaints. After use the rag (or Clootie) would be hung on an adjoining tree. Then seven Hail Marys, seven Our Fathers and seven Glory be to the Father was then recited each day for seven days.

Community pride in the renovation of the well brought about an increased devotion to St Bridget.

After dark on St Bridget's day the community gathered at the well, lighted candles in hand, they sang hymns and recited the Rosary. This tradition continued into the very early 60s.

Another major event in the life of the well at this time was the erecting of an iron cross to St Bridget. This was erected by a Mr and Mrs Doyle from Dublin on the occasion of their 25th wedding anniversary. Two further crosses was erected by this couple, one to St. Patrick on the north side another to St. Colmcille in the Dublin hills

The well was restored by South Dublin County Council in 1995.



**Make sure you make a point of visiting the Well on or around  
St Brigid's Feast day – February 1st!!**