

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.

It is surrounded by stone work and a stream flows from it along the Boot road into the Camac river.

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. Brigid.

St. Brigid's well was, at one time situated on what was known as 'Brideswell Common', an abandoned piece of land which travellers passed on their way to Kildare. The 'Well' and surrounding lands were owned by William Caldbeck, whom in turn rented it a Mr. Ormsby. The 'Commons' area at that time consisted of just two fields with a rough lane dividing them and the natural spring which the locals named 'St. Brigid's Well', in honour of St. Brigid. Infants that died before they could be baptised were said to be buried in this immediate area as a lease signed by Caldbeck, allowed for burials to take place on the grounds. The Children's Burial Ground is at the well but its exact location is now unknown. It may possibly be located in the raised grassed area to the south of well in the vicinity of the upstanding white metal cross but it is locally believed to be located in the open green area to north-west of the well.

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 Our Fathers, seven Hail Marys, 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 Brigid. After dark on St Brigid'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 Brigid. 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



Prayer at St Brigid's Holy Well, Clondalkin

Welcome & Introduction

We begin our prayer, In the name of the Father, ...

St Patrick's Breastplate

I arise today, Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity, Through belief in the Threeness, Through confession of the Oneness of the Creator of creation. I arise today.

I arise today, The power of Heaven, The radiance of the sun, The brightness of the moon, The splendour of fire, the flashing of lightning, The swiftness of wind, the depth of sea, the stability of earth, the compactness of rocks. I arise today,

I arise today, God's Power to guide me, God's Might to uphold me, God's Wisdom to teach me, God's Eye to watch over me, God's Ear to hear me, God's Word to give me speech, God's Hand to guide me, God's Way to lie before me, God's Shield to shelter me, God's Host to secure me. Christ, protect me today, that I may receive abundant reward.

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ within me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ at my right, Christ at my left, Christ be with me everywhere I go, Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks to me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me. Christ be my friend for ever and ever, Amen

Quiet silent reflection: *As we stand at this Holy Well on the feast of St Brigid we gather in union with the thousands who have offered their prayers here before us. Know that our God walks with us.*

Scripture Reading

Jesus said, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you-- you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." . (Matthew 6:25-33)

Quiet silent reflection: *The Lord provides for us - notice God's wonders in creation.*

Litany of Celtic Saints - On this feast of St Brigid, at this Holy well, we now invoke the Trinity, Mary, our Irish Saints and Holy Ones who have gone before us, we bring before them our prayers and ask for their blessing and protection.

Father, our Creator

Have mercy on us Jesus, the Anointed, One Spirit, our Guide

Mary, Mother of God

Pray for us (after each saint's name we respond - **Pray for us**)

St Patrick **Pray for us**

St Brigid, St Columba, St Ciarán of Saigher, St Ita, St Brendan, St Gobnait, St Kevin, St Attracta, St Ciaran, St Dymphna, St Finbarr, St Lelia, St Eugene, St Moninne, St Mura, St Deirbhile, St Columbanus, St Charles of Mount Argus, St Gall, St Fiacre, St Killian, St Laurence O'Toole, St Oliver Plunkett, Bl Catherine McAuley, All Holy men and women.

We now recite **seven Our Fathers, seven Hail Marys, and seven Glory be to the Father**

A blessing with water from the well

Final Prayer & Blessing

Deep peace of the running wave to you,
Deep peace of the flowing air to you
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Deep peace of the shining stars to you,
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.
And may God hold you forever in his care, cradle you in his arms and cover you with his loving protection,
And we ask this in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **Amen**



To finish our prayer we pray together -

St Brigid, Mary of Ireland

Ask for us all today

The courage to do God's bidding

Whatever the world may say

The grace to be strong and valiant

The grace to be firm and true

The grace to be faithful always

To God, God's mother and you.

Amen

St Brigid watch over us and keep us always in your care.