



Issue No. 31



Newsletter

February 2021



## *“Lá le Bríd - St Brigid’s Day”*

On this first day of February we welcome the celebration of Lá le Bríd. This day traditionally in Celtic tradition ushers in the beginning of spring, with all the possibility for new growth, the triumph of light over darkness and new beginnings. St Brigid, Muire na nGael (Mary of the Gael) is a Patron of Ireland and lived towards the end of the fifth century. Her monastery in Kildare was renowned in both Ireland and Europe. Many stories and legends surround her life. As we celebrate her feast let us reflect on her inspiration and legacy. St Brigid was renowned for her protection towards the vulnerable, the sick and those experiencing poverty. She was a healer and a source of great wisdom for all those who sought help and guidance. Her monastery was a place of refuge, care and hospitality.

In 2021 in the midst of a pandemic we are called to be people of hope and healing. People who serve our fellow women and men with compassion, understanding and love. St Brigid can be our model and guide in this calling to live our Christian vocation. She never refused anyone, all who sought help were under her mantle (Brat Bríde) of protection. Her mantle extended to enclose and protect all who were in need. Perhaps in 2021 we are called once more to address issues of inequality, poverty and injustice with renewed energy and courage. St Brigid’s Cross, made of rushes is a simple symbol of the centrality of Jesus in our lives. St Brigid used the natural resources around her to make the symbol of the cross. This tradition has been faithfully followed throughout the centuries, to the present day. A simple, renewable symbol of the endurance of faith and love for the Redeemer and source of all Life and Love. This use of the rushes for the most noble of symbols may help us to rededicate ourselves to caring for our home, in the spirit of Laudato Si. We pray in the words of the hymn by Liam Lawton, to St Brigid,

*So Light the fire of God’s desire,  
Within all our hearts, let sorrow end,  
So light the Fire of God’s desire,  
God’s chosen one, on us your Peace descend.*

May this fire of love and light, burn within us after the example of St Brigid and help us to renew our calling to serve our fellow women and men with compassion, dedication and energy. Amen.

*by Sr Carmel Ryan DC*



[www.vocationsireland.com/](http://www.vocationsireland.com/)

## NOTES FROM DIRECTOR'S DESK.

The year has begun with lots of ideas flowing in from various directions about possible conferences, training workshops and promotional ideas. We are forming a communications team within Vocations Ireland in an attempt at having a structured approach to communication and social media. We are planning to develop some podcasts for the website. Watch out for more on these developments along the way.

Thank you to all who responded to delayed payments of subscriptions from last year this was much appreciated. We are now trying to prepare for our audit for 2019-2020. Our subscription invoices will be issued on the 31st January for 2021. Some have asked if we still have to pay if we are planning to become a committee of AMRI. The answer is yes as we will still have our own accounts for the time being. It will take time for AMRI and Vocations Ireland to work together to find a way forward with regard to how best to manage subscriptions from 2022. We are not yet a committee of AMRI but moving forward and making positive progress. We will still have our current expenses such as my salary, audit\accountant fees, telephone & internet, website, conference fees, Membership fees for NRVC and CWR, Promotional work etc.

### **Temporary Change of Address:**

During the restrictions for Covid-19 please send any mail for Vocations Ireland to my home address. An Post will no longer re-direct mail. Thank you for your help.

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This will be our biggest Promotional event this year and will take place online.

This event is being launched online during the first week of February.

We have a campaign in place to contact all youth groups in the country. This will also include different language groups that have youth programs i.e Filipino, Polish, Indian and African communities. Flyers will be sent to you all and I ask that you put these on your website, in your hospitals and nursing homes for the staff and anywhere you have staff as they might have someone in their family that may be interested. These Flyers will also be sent to every parish to advertise in newsletters and at online masses.

We will have advertisements in newspapers, Radio Maria and local radio stations.

The UK vocation office are joining us in this project so your communities in England Scotland and Wales will hopefully be involved too.

Please pray for this project.

## ***New Newsletter for young people***

We would like to start a one page newsletter aimed specifically at young people. Would you or a member of your community be willing to help create and produce it every 2 months. I will distribute it to our extensive youth mailing list.

## ***Samuel Programme***

Would you be interested in running a Samuel Programme for young adults?

Now is a time where young adults – like all generations – are maybe feeling lost and without purpose. We can all feel like God has left us at a crossroads at times. The 6 month Samuel programme helps young adults to put God into their decision making and grow in faith.

Anne-Marie Whelan and Br Pat Lynch OFM are currently running a Samuel programme online with 8 young adults. If you are interested in setting up a similar group you can contact Anne-Marie on [awhelan@congregation.bonsecours.ie](mailto:awhelan@congregation.bonsecours.ie)

## *World Day for Consecrated Life*

### *By Br Rupert O Sullivan, Presentation Brothers*

World Day for Consecrated Life will be celebrated on February 2, 2021.

We pray for all who have responded and continue to respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit in the consecrated life. May we continue to be inspired by Jesus Christ and reveal his love to all whom we continue to encounter in our daily lives.

The Institutes of Consecrated Life & Societies of Apostolic Life, Rome, issued a message, for the World Day for Consecrated Life (To all consecrated persons, 18 January, 2021). It highlights Pope Francis recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* and asks religious "to place this encyclical at the center of your life, formation and mission". Pope Francis invites religious "to be architects of universal brotherhood, custodians of the common home, of the earth and of every creature".

President Joe Biden in his very challenging and spiritual inauguration speech in Washington on January 20 2021, quoted St. Augustine to the effect that a people are a multitude defined by the common objects of their love. Now, especially, is a time for us Brothers and Sisters to continue to be a loving presence among those whom we live and work.

Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all (FT 8). In light of this dream that is entrusted to our hands, to our passion and to our perseverance, this feast day will again be a beautiful feast to praise and thank the Lord for the gift of our vocation and mission.

In dedicating 2015 as the year of Consecrated Life, Pope Francis expressed three aims; to remember our past with gratitude, live the present passionately and celebrate the future with hope. Let this be an opportunity to reflect, to give thanks, to celebrate our many achievements and entrust the future to the Lord.

Let us continue to pray for one another. Let us endeavour to stay in contact with and to support as many people as we can, especially the many people who are suffering because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Stay safe and stay well!