

Happy Saint Bríde's Day Beannachtaí na Féile Bríde



February the 1st is Saint Bridget's Day and the first day of spring. Bridget was by all accounts a very strong-willed woman who didn't let troubles stop her for long. One story says that she got so annoyed with various men trying to win her hand in marriage, when she wanted to devote her life to God, that she plucked out one of her eyes to spoil her beauty. (Please don't try this at home!)

Another story says that she wanted some land to build a monastery on so she asked the king to give her some land for free, because she had no money. The king, who wasn't a Christian, laughed in her face and told her no. She prayed for wisdom, and for God to open the heart of the king. Then she went back to the king and asked him to give her only enough land that she could cover with her cloak. The king, looking at her cloak, thought this was hilarious and agreed.

So Bridget whipped off her cloak and laid it flat on the ground, praying all the while, and as the cloak settled down on the grass, it rippled in a holy wind from heaven. The cloak's edges spread out and out and out... until Bridget's cloak covered many acres of land, more than enough to build a monastery! "Thanks very much for all this land," Bridget said to the flabbergasted king.

"You're welcome," the king said, once he got his jaw up off the floor and recovered from the shock. He realised that this woman was truly blessed by God. "How do I become a Christian?" And that is how the monastery and later town of Kildare was founded, and how the Irish word for cloak - '**brat**' – became the word for a very cheeky person, in memory of Saint Bridget and her miraculous cloak.

FEBRUARY PRAISE 'N' PIZZA

THIS FEBRUARY BRINGS YOU A DOUBLE
HELPING OF PRAISE 'N' PIZZA -
SUNDAY 1ST FEBRUARY &
SUNDAY 15TH FEBRUARY

AT 6PM IN THE OLD BORO SCHOOL
HALL. FREE ADMISSION

PRAISE 'N' PIZZA IS A FUN
FAMILY EVENING SERVICE WITH

- SONGS
- ACTIVITIES (OPTIONAL FOR PARENTS :)
- TALK
- AND OF COURSE, DELICIOUS PIZZA!

ALL ARE VERY WELCOME



Stephen Vincent and Gillian Haynes

who, amongst other things, are the founders of Praise and Pizza, have been invited to the

11.30 a.m. Service, Sunday the 22nd of February in Saint Columba's Church, which will be followed by a presentation to them to thank them for all their many years of faithful work for the parish. Join us for refreshments and fellowship.



CONFIRMATION 2026

The Archbishop of Dublin will confirm candidates from Fingal Rural Deanery (which includes our parishes of Swords Clonmethan and Kilsallaghan with Donabate and Lusk) at a service in the Church of St John the Baptist, Clontarf on the morning of Saturday 2nd May, 2026. The time of the service is yet to be confirmed.

Pre-confirmation classes will be held in St Andrew's Church, Malahide on Tuesday nights at 7.30pm for candidates from our parishes together with candidates from Malahide parish. Each class should last around 45 minutes.

All candidates must be in Sixth Class or above. Please note there is no expectation for any child to be presented for confirmation. However, it should be emphasised that those who wish to be prepared and presented to the Archbishop must attend all of the pre-confirmation classes and, where possible, church on Sundays, with their parents or guardians, for the duration of the classes.

An Information Night for candidates, and their parents and guardians, will be held in St Andrew's Church, Malahide on Tuesday 3rd March at 7.30pm. Then there will be classes on March 10th, 24th, and 31st; and April 14th, 21st, and 28th.

The names of prospective candidates, to include their parish, home and email addresses, names of their parents or guardians, and a contact telephone number, must be notified to the Reverend Canon David Gillespie. It would be most helpful if you would send these details to malahidirector@gmail.com by Friday 27th February at the latest.

Thank you.

Christmas in the Sun: A report by David Snow

Normally when I go on holiday, I like to switch off and take it easy. I have never been on a holiday at Christmas, but this year we decided to take a two week holiday in Barbados. This was my 15th trip to the island, which for me is paradise with guaranteed sun, beautiful beaches and lovely friendly people who speak English and drive on the same side of the road.

My Mother Mary passed away in September 2024 after a long battle with Parkinsons. Her passing was most spiritual and she had a strong faith in Christ. I was an only child and although I had dreaded her passing for years, when the time arrived I had great support from my family and the Parishioners. In particular St Patrick's Donabate, who provided me with their Church (as St Columba's in Swords was being renovated) to celebrate my Mother's life. Everything went fine, but I found Christmas when everything stops, when we pause, a most difficult time, hence I ran away this year.



I normally don't attend Church when on holiday, but when out walking, I met a man named George who was painting the outside of a small Church for Christmas. The Church is St Alban's located in St James, beside Thunder Bay, a simply magnificent location, with the Caribbean Sea lapping onto the side walls of the Church perimeter wall.

This is an Anglican Church in which Barbados has a total of 1,200 Churches with a population of 280,000. The majority of Churches on the island are Anglican along with other Christian denominations, which is mainly due to being part of the UK from 1627 to 1966, although now a Republic, Barbados is still part of the Commonwealth and shares good relations with the UK.

George invited me to attend the Service on Christmas Day, which started at 04:45am, a service of dawn to welcome and celebrate Christ's birth. The services lasted just over two hours, with a good sermon by Reverend Eric Lynch on Christian unity, along with eight hymns. It was most spiritual to see the light of morning appearing over the sea and also to hear the waves lapping against the wall, which was drowned out by the beautiful choir singing Christmas carols.

It is somewhat strange to hear Silent Night in a warm balmy 30 degree climate! I found the service most emotional, but when I looked around, I could see many people crying, but more of a weeping, as there was a definite feeling of love and the presence of the spirit within the congregation. A most humbling and yet beautiful experience.

The following Sunday I attended the Holy Communion Service which started at 7am and lasted about ninety minutes. Once again a lovely service in which I was very humbled to be invited to speak and read one of the readings.

Christmas in the Sun, continued

At the end of the service, anyone who is a foreigner, mainly tourists, have their name and home country called out in the Church, it was lovely to hear 'Ireland'.

I was delighted to receive a very special prayer and blessing from Reverend Lynch, as he invites anyone to come forward to the Altar, after Communion for a blessing, which I found most interesting and spiritually refreshing.



Bajan people are similar to Irish, they are friendly, welcoming, warm and in the main deeply Christian and good followers of Christ. I was a stranger on their shores and yet they openly welcomed me and gave me friendship and shared Holy Communion with me.



As I return home to Ireland, yes, I miss the sun and swimming in the sea, but most of all I miss the friendship of the people of St Alban's and Barbados. Attending their Church was the highlight of my holiday.

A big Thank you to 'George' who was painting but took the time to talk to me and invite me to attend worship. I look forward to my 16th trip to Barbados in a year or two and visiting St Alban's once again.

DONABATE & LUSK PARISH

Condolences



WE EXPRESS OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO
CATHY HAYES AND FAMILY
ON THE PASSING OF
CATHY'S MOTHER, MARY

May Mary rest in peace and rise in glory

Register of Vestrypersons

The Register of Vestrypersons is, in many ways, the electoral roll of the Parish and will be updated at the meeting of the Select Vestry early in each new year. If you're not on the Register, you are not entitled to vote on parish matters at the Easter General Vestry meeting, and are not able to hold any office in the parish or serve on the Select Vestry, if you wish. Please contact the Churchwardens to be placed on the Register of Vestrypersons.

It is very simple to do, the Churchwardens have forms available, and all you have to do is fill in the short, simple form and give it to a Churchwarden.

Services for the Month Ahead

Sunday 1st February

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Morning Prayer
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Morning Prayer
6 p.m.	Old Boro School Hall	Praise and Pizza

Sunday 8th February

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Holy Communion
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Holy Communion

Sunday 15th February

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Family Service
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Morning Prayer
6 p.m.	Old Boro School Hall	Praise and Pizza

Sunday 22nd February

10 a.m.	Saint Patrick's Donabate	Holy Communion
11.30 a.m.	Saint Columba's Swords	Holy Communion
(followed by presentation to Stephen Vincent & Gillian Haynes)		
1 p.m.	Saint David's Kilsallaghan	Holy Communion

And, finally...

