



NEA NEWSLETTER



FEBRUARY 2021 NEWS

1st February Feast of St Brigid, Patroness of Ireland



*May Brigid bless the house
wherein you dwell.
Bless every fireside, every wall
and door. Bless every heart
that beats beneath its roof.
Bless every hand that toils to
bring it joy. Bless every foot
that walks its portals through.
May Brigid bless the house
that shelters you.*



Brigid (Prayer on St Brigids Day from the Irish Chaplaincy in London)

You were a woman of peace. You brought harmony where there was conflict.
You brought light to the darkness. You brought hope to the downcast.
May the mantle of your peace cover those who are troubled and anxious,
and may peace be firmly rooted in our hearts and in our world.
Inspire us to act justly and to reverence all God has made.
Brigid you were a voice for the wounded and the weary.
Strengthen what is weak within us. Calm us into a quietness that heals and listens.
May we grow each day into greater wholeness in mind, body and spirit.

Amen

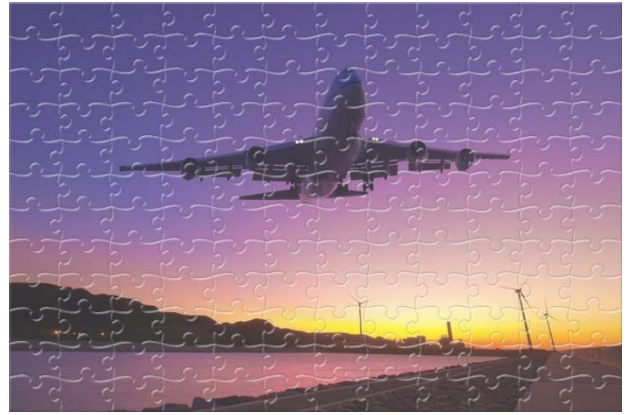


Sculpture of
St Brigid holding the flame
at St Brigid's well in Kildare,
near the Solas Bhride Centre
set up by the Brigidine Sisters.

Brigid is the patron saint of creativity, poets, craft, healing, fire, new life and she heralds the new life in Spring. She is also patron of scholars, travellers, fugitives, cattle, farmers, sailors etc.

Creativity in a time of pandemic

Many Sisters have taken up a new hobby or creative pursuit during these lockdown times. One of the activities that Patricia McGrath has engaged in during her recovery from knee surgery has been completing jigsaws - a bit different from baking cakes, fancy desserts etc but creative none the less. Others have knitted, crocheted, painted, planted, baked etc.



Have you any pictures of your creativity that you might like to share?

Thoughts on Hope in Covid Time :

From Anne Murphy

Hope is not a lottery ticket you can sit on the sofa and clutch, feeling lucky.

*It is an axe you break down doors with in an emergency.
Hope should shove you out the door, because it will take everything you have to steer you away from endless war, from the annihilation of the earth's treasures, and the grinding down of the poor and marginal.*

*To hope is to give yourself to the future -
and that commitment to the future
is what makes the present inhabitable.*

*"Disaster is a lot like revolution: disruption and improvisation,
and an exhilarating sense that anything is possible"*



The Snowdrop

by Lord Alfred Tennyson

Many, many welcomes,
February fair-maid,
Ever as of old time,
Solitary firstling,
Coming in the cold time,
Prophet of the gay time,
Prophet of the May time,
Prophet of the roses,
Many, many welcomes,
February fair-maid!

So here we are already . . . entering February, the soul's month . . . the month of whispered hopes. The month in which we can turn our expectant faces towards the glad promises of the warmer months to come . . .

The beds and borders begin to be peppered with green tips . . . a few snowdrops bravely spring up their fairy bells amidst the teeth of a raw wet wind . . . and the buds on the Camellia bushes get larger, and greener.

These are all mere teases . . . days in which we must be content with hints and glimpses. Winter has not done with us yet, but the heart has caught a glimpse of the far-away sound on the wind and hope can no longer be denied. Spring will come . . . surely.

We hear February's thrush . . . and we just know that yes, "it", we daren't speak the word out loud . . . "IT" is just around the corner.



Adapted from Marie Rayner

Kathleen O'Donovan sent the following link in case people might be interested:

Link to a recording of a recent Austen Ivereigh Livestream Event.

Austen speaks about the book he recently co-authored with Pope Francis **Let us Dream: The Path to a Better Future** presenting the Pope's vision for the post-pandemic future.

The recording of the sessions with Austen Ivereigh are now available on

www.whatgoodnews.org

You may also be interested in the recordings of the individual sessions of the Halki Summit, inspired by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, now available on the [Halki Summit IV webpage](#). It is Bartholomew who inspired Pope Francis to produce *Laudato si*.

Six Little Stories with Lots of Meaning

1. Once all villagers decided to pray for rain. On the day of prayer, all the people gathered, but only one boy came with an umbrella. **That is faith.**
2. When you throw babies in the air, they laugh because they know you will catch them.
That is trust.
3. Every night we go to bed without any assurance of being alive the next morning, but still we set the alarms to wake up. **That is hope.**
4. We plan big things for tomorrow in spite of zero knowledge of the future.
That is confidence.
5. We see the world suffering, but still, we get married and have children. **That is love.**
6. On an old man's shirt was written a sentence, "I am not 80 years old; I am sweet 16 with 64 years of experience." **That is attitude.**

Feb 11

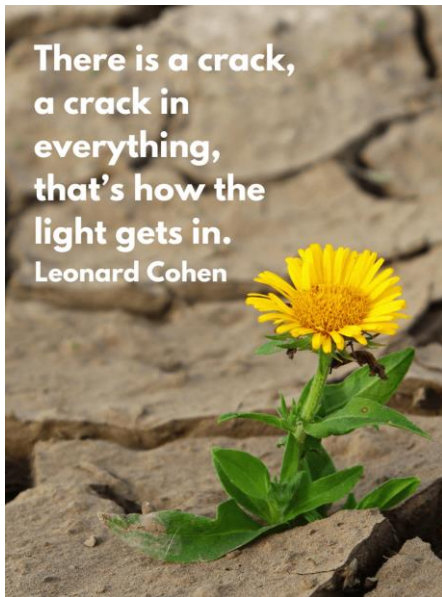
Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Prayer for Healing

Our Lady of Lourdes

look upon us with eyes of mercy,
may your healing hand rest upon us,
especially during this time of the
pandemic
may your lifegiving powers flow into
every cell of our bodies
and into the depths of our souls,
cleansing, purifying, restoring us to
wholeness
and strength for service in the Kingdom.

Amen.



A quote from a song by Leonard Cohen

The birds they sang
At the break of day
Start again
I heard them say
Don't dwell on what has passed away
Or what is yet to be

Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in.

HOW DO THEY KNOW?

How did they know
It was time to push up
Through the long-wintered soil?
How did they know
it was the moment to resurrect
while thick layers of stubborn ice
still pressed the bleak ground flat?
But the tulips knew.
They came, rising strongly,
a day after the ice died.

Joyce Rupp



NOTICES RECEIVED

Good news from Portugal and Brazil! 2 fevereiro 2021

Dear Sisters,

Our greetings and best wishes! We are pleased to share, today, with all of you the birth of a new project, the fruit of the collaboration between the Areas of Brazil and Portugal, regarding the mission of Zumalai, East Timor. We are very grateful to Sr. Delva Oliveira (Area of Brazil) for her willingness to be missioned to Zumalai to this project. Her YES made it possible to transform our presence in Zumalai into a collaborative project between our two Areas - Portugal and Brazil. The Sisters who are currently part of the community in Zumalai are very grateful for this step and we believe that new life will emerge. We also feel very much encouraged by the Institute Leadership Council in their accompanying us and confirming this decision. We are waiting for travel restrictions to be released in order for Delva to be able to travel to Portugal to learn about Timorese culture and language, Tetum, before travelling to Timor. We entrusted this decision and project to our Founder on January 25, asking for his intercession and blessing. The Sisters of the two Areas - Brazil and Portugal - reacted with great joy and see this step as a ripple of Hope, a step in implementing the decisions of the 2019 General Chapter and strengthening of the Unity in the Institute. We count on your prayerful support.

Love,

Ir Cristina Caetano Ir

Leader of the Area of Brazil

M^a Teresa Nogueira

Leader of the Area of Portugal

From the General Leadership

We are very happy to let you know that **Sr. Virginia Dorgan** has been appointed Coordinator of the Institute JPIC Network for three years, effective 1st May 2021.

We are grateful to Sr. Mary Jo McElroy who has served generously with commitment and leadership in this role for over six years and we wish her every blessing.

We also thank Jinny for accepting this appointment and wish her well as she takes over responsibility for coordinating the work of this important Institute team of JPIC Animators.

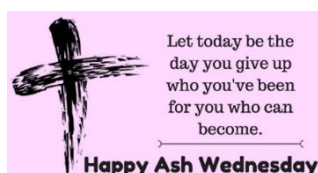
The Zambezi Area had a meeting with the ILC looking at the needs and challenges in the Area and how they can be addressed. One need identified is in the accompaniment of the sisters in temporary vows. They have more sisters in temporary vows than finally professed. The decision taken is that the sisters in the Area form a group of accompaniers with those from other Areas. The sisters proposed and invited sisters from different Areas to accompany them. They proposed **Sr. Virginia Mullane** who has generously accepted the invitation.

A COVID CROSS

I recently made this cross using pictures from the Times showing some of the one hundred thousand who have died of the pandemic in the UK. We use this at our Covid prayer time on a Friday and will continue to do so during Lent during our Covid Way of the Cross.

While sharing this with some other RSHM during our weekly zoom meeting, some saw it as a model they might adapt in their Parish or other settings and suggested sharing the idea with folk across the Area. It would be interesting to hear of any other experiments or settings.

Barbara



*The icon of Christ is by Andre Rublev
Il Salvatore (Deesis di Zvenigorod)*

BEREAVEMENT

We remember:

Sister Pierre Dullaghan, who died in Liverpool on 14th February. Pierre was aged 90 and in the 71st year of her Religious Profession.

Pierre will be missed by her brother Tom, nieces, nephews, extended family, the Carlisle community and her many friends.

We remember Pierre and all who mourn her in our prayers.

May she rest in peace.



Message to Sr Margaret Fielding from Sr Rosalia, Zambia

Dear Sr Margaret,

I hope this mail finds you and the community in good health. Otherwise the rest of us are well, just struggling with the Covid as everyone else is. Our Sisters who were ill have now recovered but we have to take a lot of precautions.

I write this mail to offer our condolences for the passing of Sr Pierre Dullaghan, our novice mistress. I was her last customer (novice). She was very jovial and inspiring. She taught us how to laugh at ourselves and how to go easy on life. It is from her that we learnt dance and song. I can imagine her being received by angels dancing her way into heaven with a bright smile. We were very fond of her. She has fought a good fight and ran her race to the end. May the good Lord who called her receive her in his kingdom and may she enjoy his warm embrace and sleep in his peace.

We remain united with you all and the family of Sr Pierre as we mourn her passing.

Take care and stay safe. Rosalia.



to Mary Mullins on the occasion of her Golden Jubilee 21st February 2021



WEDNESDAY
24TH FEBRUARY

A seed was planted, not a large one but a small one
Just about the size of a mustard seed.
It was planted in Béziérs,
In a needy people who did not know the seed was there.
It fell into a faithful heart and was carefully tended.



Women tended the seed.
It was watered by the tears of a weeping widow,
By the work of her good companions.
Like all seeds, this one needed to fall into the ground and die.
And so it brought forth good fruit.....

Mary Milligan

The tree will become what it receives from its roots. Jean Gailhac



"We were delighted to see so many RSHM among the 90 plus participants for the beautiful liturgy to celebrate Ash Wednesday with Diarmuid O'Murchu. About two years ago we had booked Diarmuid to come for the Easter Triduum in 2021. That is not possible now, so the Easter Triduum will be on zoom."

Thank you from the Noddfa Community

Remembrance of Marie Pierre Dullaghan

Some encounters are pure gift; they come into our lives for various lengths of time. The beauty of such an encounter means that you don't have to pass too much time in the entrance hall. Connection is there from the word go!

It would be quite a task to count the number of people who were renewed through these encounters where flame, the love of God, the passion for others were so palpable. Certainly she was gifted with wit and energy to get the ice melted... Humour had its place and allowed many to approach her easily.

Her power of imagination brought Fr Gailhac, Mère St Jean and our first sisters into reality. We could nearly see them walking down the street. Much of her animation and work was shaped and meaningful because of her capacity to let symbols express deep meanings: water, fire, fish, bread, boat.

This loving woman was loved by many. Those of us who lived in France in close contact with her thank the sisters and Province to have sent her to "accomplish a work here in France"

Bernadette Mc Namara

Message from Françoise Wyckaert, Béziers

With all my sympathy for Pierre's death...on Saturday 20th we'll have a Mass for Pierre in the Parish of Ste Madeleine. We get many messages from people who knew Marie Pierre...the following photos were taken in 2017. *Françoise*



THIS IS THE TIME

This is the time to be slow,
Lie low to the wall
Until the bitter weather passes.

Try, as best you can, not to let
The wire brush of doubt
Scrape from your heart
All sense of yourself
And your hesitant light.

If you remain generous,
Time will come good;
And you will find your feet
Again on fresh pastures of promise,
Where the air will be kind
And blushed with beginning.

John O'Donohue

