

Brigid of Kildare CD

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1/2/16

Myla,

Thank you so much for sending the copy of the CD radio show "Brigid of Kildare." The time before Christmas was very busy in my parish and it is only now this past week that I have been able to give it the attention it deserves. Several of the others sisters here in my community have also listened to it and all of us really enjoyed it and were very impressed.

Here are just a few comments:

The background and interlude music is very nice and very appropriate;

The introduction is very good, very clear and gives an excellent concise background on Brigid and Patrick;

The geography of the various places/settings is done in a loving way and indicates a love of nature and its beauty;

It does a great job of inviting the listener into understanding the history and culture of Ireland at the time of Brigid;

It touches on several interesting aspects of Brigid's family, some I was very familiar with, and others that were new to me;

As someone who has done quite a lot of research on Brigid myself, and has read every book that has been written about her, I found it to be very accurate, in as much as one can piece together the story of Brigid's time, and the fact that myth and legend also give us a message from that era;

It could have set off World War 3 on the issue of where Brigid was actually born because Faughart in Co. Louth, as well as a few other locations, often claim to be her birthplace, but I'm with you on the west in Connaught being much more likely!

The play while set in the past, has several very relevant messages for our contemporary times just to mention a few areas such as:

- * the issue of slavery - modern day human trafficking (our sisters in Kildare are doing training sessions at the moment on this issue and my niece, Therese, attending the last one);

- * care of the earth - Francis letter "Laudato Si" and the recent Climate Summit in Paris has brought this issue to the forefront again;

* care of the poor - 28 of the 31 legends in Cogitus' (a monk of Kildare) early writings on Brigid were on her outreach to the poor and the needy. I love that you included the story on giving away Dubtach's sword in the radio play. It is one of my favorites and reminds me of 'beating their ploughshares into pruning hooks' for peace;

* the place of women in the church and world today. It was a monastery/abbey style of leadership, rather than diocesan, in the Irish church of that time. Brigid had considerable influence and seemingly she was the one who appointed Conleth as Bishop at that time!

* There is a big emphasis in all the stories on our social responsibility and the need for putting the common good above our personal needs and wants;

* At a time when we are experiencing much intolerance toward differences whether it be rich and poor, or based on religion and ethnicity, or others divides, there is much in Brigid's story to apply to today in the way that she incorporated and crossed the divide between the Pre-Celtic (Druidism) era and the Celtic Christian era. It might help us to have a better outlook on interfaith perspectives. Our sisters in Kildare welcome people of every faith and no faith to Solas Bhirde and we have had a long-term relationship with Brigitte's Sisters in Norway - a group of married women whose husbands follow many the practices of the Druids. When the Anglican (Church of Ireland) Cathedral in Kildare are renovated back in the 1990s our sisters contributed to the redoing of the window of Brigid and Conleth and have a great working relationship to the present time with that community. A gentleman who was Catholic, and head teacher in the Vocational School in Kildare, headed up the renovation committee and when he died his Vigil Service was held in the Church of Ireland Cathedral and his Mass of Christian Burial in St. Brigid's Catholic Church. Brigid's spirit lives on!

Myla, thank you again for sending the CD, and congratulations on your great work.

A Blessed, Happy and Healthy New Year,
Sr. Mary Teresa Cullen, CSB