

## **Parish Prayer List (Living)**

Alexandra	Rachael	Jessilyn	Reader Mark
Andrea	Amanda	Sherry	Thekla
Fr. Michael	Barry	Sean	Susan Mary
James	Nicholas B.	Karin	Andrea & Kirby
Lawrence	Emil	Seraphim	Evdokia
Michael	Helen	Susan K	Bob Wedder
Anna	Brian	Carolyn	Monk Nicholas
Ashley & Ben	Kathy Tanner	Anthony	Pauline
Olga	Marina	Salvatore	Josephine
Nicholas (Nadja's brother)	Nina		

## **Parish Prayer List (Fallen Asleep)**

Frances Dreyer (+2/1)

June Henn (+2/2)

John Beach (+2/27)

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## **Words from the Fathers**

Say, O Simeon, Whom carriest thou in the Temple in thine arms with rejoicing? Toward Whom dost thou cry shouting, Now I have been let to depart; for I have beheld my Savior. This is he born of the Virgin. this is the Word, God of God, Who was Incarnate for our sakes, and saved man. Him let us worship.

*First and Second Stichera on "O Lord, I have cried...", Great Vespers of the Meeting of the Lord*

Righteous Symeon blessed the Theotokos and Joseph...And he then turned to the Theotokos to make two remarkable prophecies to her. The first referred to the Person of the Godman Christ, "Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against" (Lk. 2:34). This prophecy was realized during Christ's life-time, but it continues to be realized in the history of humanity and in the personal life of every man. The Godman Christ is the fall of those who do not believe in Him, and the rising of those who do.

*Metropolitan of Nafpaktos Hierotheos, The Twelve Feast of the Lord*

O my brothers, truly Christ is always with us, as a light that is ever present to the eyes of those who look. But to our loss, if the eyes of our soul are closed, then the light seeks in vain to encounter the pupil of our eye! O, what sorrow and grief is ours when we are not with Christ! He comes to meet us - do we go to meet Him? He desires to be with us - do we desire to be with Him? If we desire consolation, we must be with Him every day to the end of our lives.

*Saint Nikolai of Zhicha, The Prologue from Ochrid, Vol. 1*

Humility consists, not in condemning our conscience, but in recognizing God's grace and compassion.

*St. Mark the Ascetic, 5th century*

What is the spiritual battle? Well, the soul is a garden divided into two parts. On one half are planted thorny bushes, and on the other half, flowers. We also have a water pump with two taps and two channels. The one guides the water to the thorns and the other to the flowers. I always have the choice to open one or the other tap. I leave the thorns without water and they dry up; I water the flowers and they blossom.

*Elder Porphyrios the Athonite (1906-1991)*

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## **St. Brigid of Ireland (Comm. February 1)**

Saint Brigid (Brigit, Bridget), "the Mary of the Gael," was born around 450 in Faughart (Fochart, Fothairt) , about two miles from Dundalk in County Louth in Ulster. According to tradition, her father was a pagan named Dubthach, and her mother was Broessa (Broiseach), one of his slaves. Whether she was raised a Christian or converted in 468, as some accounts say, is unknown, but she was inspired by the preaching of Saint Patrick from an early age.

Even as a child, she was known for her compassion for the poor. She would give away food, clothing, and even her father's possessions to the poor. One day he took Brigid to the king's court, leaving her outside to wait for him. He asked the king to buy his daughter from him, since her excessive generosity made her too expensive for him to keep. The king asked to see the girl, so Dubthach led him outside. They were just in time to see her give away her father's sword to a beggar. This sword had been presented to Dubthach by the king, who said, "I cannot buy a girl who holds us so cheap."

St Brigid received monastic tonsure at the hands of St Mael of Ardagh (February 6). Some miles from Dublin she was granted by the King of Leinster possession of a plain called the Curragh, where she built herself a cell under a large oak tree, thence called Kill-dara, or Cell of the oak. Seven other girls soon placed themselves under her direction establishing the monastery of Kill-dara, which gave its name to the later cathedral city of Kildare. The community grew rapidly thanks to the renown of the holy Abbess, and became a double monastery, with the Abbess ranking above the Abbot, and branched out into several others all over Ireland. This was the beginning of women's cenobitic monasticism in Ireland.

The miracles performed by St Brigid are too numerous to relate here, but perhaps one story will suffice. One evening the holy abbess was sitting with the blind nun Dara. From sunset to sunrise they spoke of the joys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and of the love of Christ, losing all track of time. St Brigid was struck by the beauty of the earth and sky in the morning light. Realizing that Sister Dara was unable to appreciate this beauty, she became very sad. Then she prayed and made the Sign of the Cross over Dara's eyes. All at once, the blind nun's eyes were opened and she saw the sun in the east, and the trees and flowers sparkling with dew. She looked for a while, then turned to St Brigid and said, "Close my eyes again, dear Mother, for when the world is visible to the eyes, then God is seen less clearly by the soul." St Brigid prayed again, and Dara became blind once more.

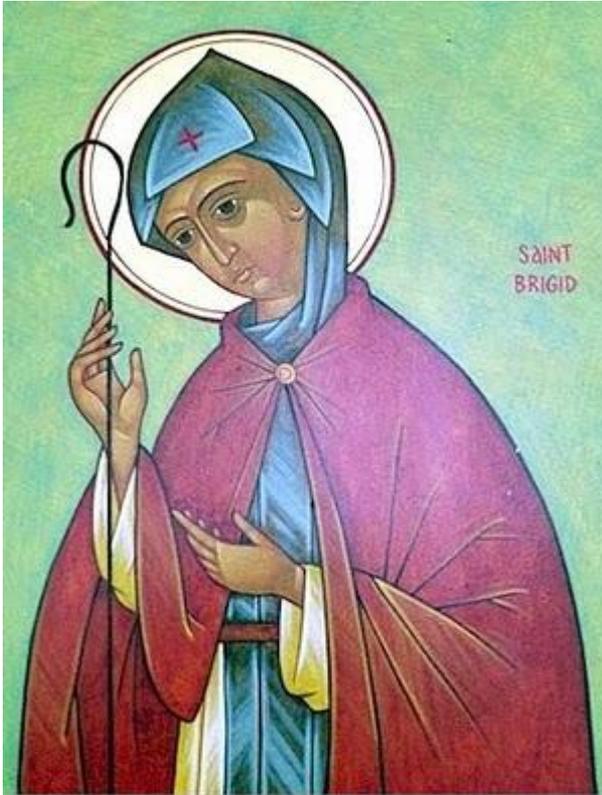
St Brigid fell asleep in the Lord in the year 523 on February 1 after receiving Holy Communion from St Ninnidh of Inismacsaint (January 18). She was buried at Kildare, but her relics were transferred to Downpatrick during the Viking invasions. It is believed that she was buried in the same grave with St Patrick (March 17) and St Columba of Iona (June 9).

Late in the thirteenth century, her head was brought to Portugal by three Irish knights on their way to fight in the Holy Land. They left this holy relic in the parish church of Lumiar, about three miles from Lisbon. Portions of the relic were brought back to Ireland in 1929 and placed in a new church of St Brigid in Dublin.

The relics of St Brigid in Ireland were destroyed in the sixteenth century by Lord Grey during the reign of Henry VIII.

The tradition of making St Brigid's crosses from rushes and hanging them in the home is still followed in Ireland, where devotion to her is still strong. She is also venerated in northern Italy, France, and Wales.

The *Book of Armaugh*, an ancient Irish chronicle, calls Saint Patrick and Saint Brigid "the pillars of the Irish" and says that through them both, "Christ performed many miracles."



### **Troparion in the Fourth Tone**

Having learned of things divine by the words of Patrick, thou hast proclaimed in the West the good tidings of Christ. Wherefore, we venerate thee, O Brigid, and entreat thee to intercede with God that our souls be saved.

### **Kontakion in the Third Tone**

At the Church of the Oak, thou didst establish thy sacred monasteries for those that took up the Tree of life, even the Precious Cross, upon their shoulders. And by thy grace-filled life and love of learning, thou didst bear fruit a hundredfold and didst thereby nourish the faithful. O righteous Mother Brigid, intercede with Christ, the True Vine, that He save our souls.