



Seasonal Lesson 2: St Brigid and Other Women of Faith

FROM THE CURRICULUM

Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland (2015)

In this lesson the children will engage with the following knowledge and concepts from Level 4:

CHRISTIAN FAITH

Mystery of God

- Faith is a gift of God through which one trusts in God's care.

Mystery of Jesus Christ

- Jesus had special esteem for women.

Mystery of the Church/Kingdom

- Every person is called by Jesus to a specific vocation.
- What inspired the saints is of more lasting importance than the details of their lives.
- Saints: St. Brigid and other people who have shown Christian values at work.

WORD OF GOD

Sacred Scripture

- 1 Samuel 1:9-13, 17-18. Story of Hannah
- 1 Samuel 2:1-3. Canticle of Hannah
- Psalm 56:4

LITURGY AND PRAYER

Prayer

Additional prayers

- Psalm 56:4
- Hannah's prayer in the Book of Samuel

Liturgical Year

- Throughout the liturgical year our Church recognises and celebrates the lives of the martyrs and saints.

Introduction

The children have already heard a number of stories about the life of St Brigid in Second and Fourth Class. This year we turn to St Brigid again but this time in the context of other women of faith who inspire us by the lives they lived and the choices they made.

In Ireland we have a strong tradition of women of faith. In the 1700s and 1800s we had women such as Mary Ward (Daughters of Charity), Margaret Aylward (Holy Faith Sisters), Catherine McAuley (Sisters of Mercy) and Nano Nagle (Presentation Sisters) who founded religious orders of women. These orders worked in education and in health care and were particularly concerned with looking after the needs of people who were poor. In more recent times we have women such as Sr Stanislaus Kennedy, founder of Focus Ireland, which works to change the lives of people who find themselves homeless and in difficult circumstances, and Sr Consilio, founder of Cuan Mhuire, Ireland's largest voluntary provider of addiction treatment and residential rehabilitation services. These women of faith, and many others like them, are role models of what it means to work for justice and compassion for the poor and disaffected.

Sir Isaac Newton (1643-1727) said, 'If I have seen a little further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.' One such 'giant' in terms of women of faith in Irish history is St Brigid. Living at a time when Christianity was new to Ireland, she showed remarkable wisdom and courage, fearlessly challenging people close to her and society to live Christian lives. There are many legends about her generosity, her bravery and her faith. She straddled the worlds of paganism and Christianity and, in many cases, adapted pagan symbols and traditions to explain the love of God. She became a role model for women through the ages to be strong leaders with compassionate hearts.

Finding our voice and our vocation is central to our lives. By studying St Brigid and other women of faith we learn the depths of strength that we can find within ourselves when we trust in God and try to do what we know to be right. 'I can do all things through him who strengthens me' (Philippians 4:13).



TEACHER REFLECTIONS

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

Marianne Williamson (quoted by Nelson Mandela in his inaugural address in 1994)

Faith in God leads us to turn to him alone as our first origin and our ultimate goal, and neither to prefer anything to him nor to substitute anything for him.

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), no. 229

PRAYER SPACE

Place the following items in the prayer space as you begin this lesson:

- Green Cloth (Ordinary time)
- Bible
- Candle
- Cross/crucifix
- Holy water

As the lesson progresses, add the following items to the prayer space:

- St Brigid's Cross
- Children's 'My Dream for the World' artwork (*Let's Live Art Activity*)

TEACHER NOTES

FOR MEMORISATION

St. Brigid's Blessing

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.

The Holy Spirit works through ordinary people, helping them to do extraordinary things.

DIFFERENTIATION

Remember to differentiate by reducing written work and including practical activities for those with special educational needs in an appropriate manner, e.g.

- Where possible, in the case of Religious Education Journal activities, give children the possibility of drawing a picture rather than giving a written response.
- Allow movement breaks to those who need them by allocating tasks such as arranging the prayer space or recording on the whiteboard.

Example for this lesson:

- Some children could do a small project for the Prayer Space depicting stories they have already learned about St Brigid in previous years.



BEFORE YOU BEGIN

The children have already learned many things about the life of St Brigid in previous *Grow in Love* programmes. They have learned about legends surrounding her life and faith. In this lesson we broaden that knowledge to include the faith-filled lives of three other women in history: Gladys Aylward, Florence Nightingale and Chiara Luce Badano. These women lived at different times, but they all allowed their faith to take a central place in their lives. They brought Christ to those whom they encountered and they trusted in God to protect and guide them.

We know from the Bible that Jesus had special esteem for women. This is illustrated in the story of Lazarus (John 11), in the respect he showed for the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4), and in many other examples.

The St Brigid's Cross is a strong Celtic symbol

of faith. The children have learned the legend of St Brigid and the Dying Chieftain and of how St Brigid wove a cross from rushes on the floor to teach the chieftain about Christ. In this lesson we will remind the children about the tradition of placing the St Brigid's Cross over the door or window in a house for protection. They will also learn a prayer to St Brigid for protection.

We can all make a difference in our world. In this lesson we encourage the children to think of something they would like to change in the world in order to make it a better place. The longest journey starts with just one small step, so we encourage the children to think of a small step they might make to change something for the better. Faith is a gift from God that empowers and enables ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

That the children would be enabled to:

Understand

- Come to know St Brigid as a woman of strong faith and appreciate that Jesus called her to witness to her faith in the world.
- Appreciate the contribution made by many women to the development of the Church and the spreading of faith throughout the world.

Communicate

- Recall and retell stories they have learned about St Brigid in previous years.
- Discuss changes they might like to make in the world and what first steps they might take.

Participate

- Sing the 'Hymn to St Brigid' together.
- Work together on assignments relating to the lesson theme.
- Participate in opportunities for prayer.

FAITH FORMATION GOALS

That the children would:

- Find inspiration for their own lives of faith from the example of the women featured in this lesson.
- Begin to consider/dream about how they might 'change the world'.

KEY WORD

- **Saint:** A person who, after living a good life by loving God and others, dies in the state of grace and is now in heaven. The saints are role models for us today.

YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of the 'My Dream for the World' template (p. 485) and colouring materials for each child (*Let's Live Art Activity*)

AT A GLANCE

CHATTING

- About women of faith who have made a difference

STORY

- The Life of Gladys Aylward

JOURNAL EXERCISE

- Gladys Aylward

PRAYER

Let's
Look

SONG

- 'Hymn to St Brigid'

CHATTING

- About St Brigid

LEARN BY EXAMPLE

- Women of Faith

JOURNAL EXERCISE

- St Brigid

JOURNAL EXERCISE

- A Woman I Admire

VIDEO

- The Story of the St Brigid's Cross

CHATTING

- About the St Brigid's Cross

SACRED SCRIPTURE

- Hannah and Eli (1 Samuel 1:9-13, 17-19) and Hannah's Prayer (1 Samuel 2: 1, 2)

JOURNAL EXERCISE

- My Prayer of Thanks

TAKE A MOMENT

Let's
Learn

A CHRISTIAN HERO

- Chiara Luce Badano

ART ACTIVITY

- My Dream for the World

PRAYER

Let's
Live

Let's Look ...

CHATTING

ABOUT WOMEN OF FAITH WHO HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE

Invite the children to recall women of faith who have made a difference, using these or similar questions:

- What famous female saints have you heard of? (e.g. *St Brigid, St Thérèse of Lisieux, St Bernadette of Lourdes, St Teresa of Calcutta, or Kolkata*)

Share any stories you can recall about any of those women.

Tell the children that they are going to learn about more women of faith this week – women who worked to make the world a better place for everyone.

STORY

The Life of Gladys Aylward

Gladys Aylward was born in London in 1902, and she spent her childhood and teenage years living in that city. Her family was not very well off and she had to become a domestic servant as a teenager in order to make money. She had a fascination with China, a country she had only found out about through books. She longed to be a missionary there and even went to missionary school to be trained. However, she found it very difficult to learn Chinese and she failed her exams. She was a strong-spirited girl and, when the missionaries wouldn't allow her to go with them to China, she decided to go on her own.

Having saved as much money as she could for the journey, she set out. Her few possessions included a Bible. Her first job in China was working with an elderly missionary lady at a hotel. Then she got a job as an 'Inspector of Feet'! At that time in China, young girls' feet were wrapped tightly at birth to stop them from growing big. The Chinese thought that tiny feet were prettier than large ones. This caused many problems and a lot of pain for women when they grew up. A new law was passed banning foot wrapping and Gladys became the foot inspector.

Gladys travelled to many villages in her new role and she used the opportunity to tell Bible stories as she was removing the bandages from girls' feet. She taught people about Jesus, as many people in China had never heard of Jesus before. One day, when she was walking through a village, she saw a woman selling a little girl.

The girl looked dirty and neglected. Gladys couldn't bear to think what might



happen to the child, so she bought her. This little girl was the first of almost a hundred unwanted children who came to live with Gladys.

The Japanese had been at war with China for many years. One day the war struck the village that Gladys was living in. Bombs fell and there were many people killed and injured. Soldiers were on their way to kill the survivors. The only place of safety was to hide in caves. Then, on foot, Gladys led the children for many days without food over dangerous terrain to catch the last train to freedom. She became very ill and almost died, but she had saved the lives of many orphaned children. Sometime later she returned to England because she needed medical treatment.

When she recovered, Gladys wanted to return to China, but the authorities wouldn't allow her. She eventually settled in Taiwan, an island off China's southeastern coast, where she set up an orphanage. She died there in 1970. There is a famous film about her life called *The Inn of the Sixth Happiness*.

After you have read the story, check the children's understanding by asking some recall/lower-order questions such as the following, which are also **on page 122 of the children's book**:

- Where did Gladys Aylward spend her childhood and teenage years?
- What few possessions did she bring with her to China?



- Why did the Chinese wrap little girls' feet?
- What did Gladys teach the people while she was removing the bandages from the girls' feet?
- How did Gladys help the orphaned children to escape from the war?
- What did Gladys do in Taiwan?

Then dig deeper by asking questions such as:

- Why do you think Gladys didn't give up when she was not allowed to travel with the missionaries?
- Do you think Gladys was interested in inspecting feet? Why do you think she took that job?

- How do you think Gladys felt when she began walking with the children across dangerous terrain trying to bring them to freedom? What do you think she might have prayed for?
- Which of the following phrases would you think describes Gladys best, and why – you can choose more than one: a woman of courage, a foolish woman, a risk-taking woman, an adventurous woman, a woman of faith, a hard-hearted woman, a courageous woman, a holy woman? Can you think of any other suitable description for her?

JOURNAL EXERCISE

GLADYS AYLWARD

Refer the children to the Journal Exercise **on page 122 of their book**, which invites them to write or draw about what they admire or find inspirational about Gladys Aylward.

PRAYER

Sign of the Cross

Invite the children to stand in a circle.

Teacher (*lighting candle*): Our candle reminds us that God is with us.

We are deliberately standing for today's prayer time, because standing to pray was the most common posture for prayer in Jesus' day.

Jesus told his disciples, 'When you stand and pray, forgive anything you may have against anyone, so that your Father in heaven will forgive the wrongs you have done' (Mark 11:25).

The response to the prayer today will be these words from Psalm 56: *I trust in God and am not afraid; I praise him for what he has promised.*

Teacher: Loving God, help us to hear your call and to do the good work you call us to do.

All: I trust in God and am not afraid; I praise him for what he has promised.

Teacher: Loving God, help us to trust in you to protect us and guide us as we carry out your work.

All: I trust in God and am not afraid; I praise him for what he has promised.

Teacher: Loving God, help us to learn from the life of Gladys Aylward and all those who dedicate their lives to helping others and leading them to you.

All: I trust in God and am not afraid; I praise him for what he has promised.

Teacher: Together let us say the *Prayer to Guardian Angel*:

All: Angel sent by God to guide me,
Be my light and walk beside me;
Be my guardian and protect me;
On the path of life direct me. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

Remember to invite the children to take their book home and to engage with the At Home page with their parents/guardians at an appropriate time towards the end of the week.

Let's Learn ...

SONG

'HYMN TO ST BRIGID'

Play the song 'Hymn to St Brigid' (music online; setting p. 484) and chat about the words. The children may be familiar with this song from the Fourth Class *Grow in Love* programme. There is a lyric video to accompany the song on the *Grow in Love* website.

CHATTING

ABOUT ST BRIGID

Chat with the children about St Brigid using these or similar questions:

- What can you remember learning about St Brigid over the years?
- What legends or stories about her can you recall? (*They may recall the legends of St Brigid and the Dying Chieftain, St Brigid the Healer, St Brigid and the Fire on the Hill of Kildare, and folklore about St Brigid's Well [all in Fourth Class], and the story of St Brigid's cloak [Second Class].*)

- Have you learned about any other famous female saints? (*e.g. St Teresa of Calcutta [Kolkata], St Clare*) Share with the class what you recall about them.

Tell the children that they are now going to learn some more about St Brigid and also about another woman of faith who made a difference in the world.

LEARN BY EXAMPLE

WOMEN OF FAITH

St Brigid

St Brigid was born in County Meath but she spent most of her life in Kildare. She was a kind and generous child with a strong will. She lived at the time of St Patrick. When she heard St Patrick preaching about Christianity, it inspired her to live a Christian life. She decided that she wanted to dedicate her life to prayer and helping the poor.

Brigid set up a convent with some other girls who were also dedicated to living as

followers of Jesus. She helped people to learn more about God and to place their trust in him. She became known far and wide for the way she welcomed everyone to the convent, especially the poor.

Brigid set up many convents around Ireland and helped to train other women to live a life of Christian charity. When she died, her body was brought to Downpatrick in County Down to be buried beside St Patrick.

After you have read this account of St Brigid's life, check the children's understanding by asking some recall/lower-order questions such as the following, which are also **on page 122 of the children's book**:

- What famous saint inspired St Brigid to live a Christian life?
- What words would you use to describe St Brigid? What kind of things did she do that show us that she was a woman of faith?
- Where was St Brigid buried?

The above account of St Brigid is also on page 122 of the children's book. Encourage the children to read it for themselves.

Refer the children to the Journal Exercise on page 123 of their book, which invites them to draw a picture in their Religious Education journal based on one of the stories they have heard about St Brigid over the years.



Florence Nightingale

Florence was born in Italy in 1820 but grew up in England. She was from a wealthy family and, because of that, she was not expected to do any work. When she was sixteen years old she felt called by God to help people who were suffering and she decided that she would like to become a nurse. Her parents were not happy with this, but Florence didn't give up on her desire to follow this path.

Eventually her father allowed her to train to be a nurse in Germany. In 1854 the Crimean War broke out and Florence was asked to lead a team of nurses to look after the wounded British soldiers. Florence had a strong faith in God and this influenced everything she did. She was known for her kindness to the soldiers

and for the way she cared for people who were poor and living in terrible conditions. Florence got the title 'Lady with the Lamp' because she would walk through the wards at night with a lamp, checking that the soldiers were comfortable. She also wrote letters home for them.

When the war was over she wrote many letters to important people outlining ways in which army hospitals could be improved. This led to better conditions in the hospitals and to lives being saved. When asked how she achieved so much, she answered, 'I attribute my success to this – I never gave or took any excuse.' She died at the age of ninety and is regarded as the founder of modern nursing.

After you have read this story about Florence Nightingale, check the children's understanding by asking some recall/lower-order questions such as the following:

- What did the young Florence Nightingale dream of becoming?
- What words would you use to describe Florence? What kind of things did she do that show us that she was a woman of faith?
- What is Florence Nightingale regarded as the founder of?

Then dig deeper by asking questions such as:

- What or who do you think inspired St Brigid and Florence Nightingale to follow their dreams and live Christian lives?
- Do you think any of their actions were extraordinary? Why or why not?
- We use the word 'legacy' to describe what somebody will be remembered for after they have died. What do you think is the legacy of St Brigid and Florence Nightingale?

Refer the children to the 'Think About It ...' activity on page 123 of the children's book.

JOURNAL EXERCISE

A WOMAN I ADMIRE

- Gladys Aylward, St Brigid and Florence Nightingale all made a difference in the world. Imagine you had the chance to speak with one of those women. What questions would you like to ask them? Write some of those questions in your Religious Education journal.

VIDEO

THE STORY OF THE ST BRIGID'S CROSS

In Fourth Class the children heard the legend of St Brigid and the Dying Chieftain, and how St Brigid wove a cross from rushes in order to teach the chieftain about Jesus dying on the Cross. Before showing the online video, invite the children to share what they remember of that story.

Then show the children the video, which features a group of Brigidine Sisters from the Solas Bhríde Centre in Kildare talking about the story of St Brigid and the Dying Chieftain and the tradition of the St Brigid's Cross.

Teacher Tip:

The children made St Brigid's crosses in Fourth Class. If you wish, you could invite them to bring in bulrushes or art straws and make some new St Brigid's Crosses.

Prayer Space:

Display a St Brigid's Cross in the prayer space.

CHATTING

ABOUT THE ST BRIGID'S CROSS

- If any of the children have a St Brigid's Cross in their home, they might like to tell the class where it is kept, who made it, etc.
- Ask the children if they know why there is a tradition of displaying a St Brigid's Cross in homes. What is its purpose? (*Traditionally, the St Brigid's Cross was placed over doors and windows to protect the house from any kind of harm.*)
- Finally, teach the children this St Brigid's Blessing, which is also **on page 125 of their book.**

St Brigid's Blessing

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. Amen.

SACRED SCRIPTURE

THE STORY OF HANNAH

Invite the children to listen as you read the story of Hannah and some lines from Hannah's prayer, which is called the *Canticle of Hannah*, from the Book of Samuel. Before you begin, explain that Hannah was married to a man named Elkanah, and she was always very sad because she did not have any children.

Hannah and Eli (1 Samuel 1:9-13, 17-19)

One time, after they had finished their meal in the house of the Lord at Shiloh, Hannah got up. She was deeply distressed, and she cried bitterly as she prayed to the Lord. Meanwhile, Eli the priest was sitting in his place by the door. Hannah made a solemn promise: 'Lord Almighty, look at me, your servant! See my trouble and remember me! Don't forget me! If you give me a son, I promise that I will dedicate him to you for his whole life. '...

Hannah continued to pray to the Lord for a long time, and Eli watched her lips. She was praying silently; her lips were moving, but she made no sound ...

'Go in peace,' Eli said, 'and may the God of Israel give you what you have asked him for.'

'May you always think kindly of me,' she replied. Then she went away, ate some food, and was no longer sad.

After you have read the Scripture story, check the children's understanding by asking some recall/lower-order questions such as the following:

- Why was Hannah so upset?
- Who was sitting by the door in the 'house of the Lord'?
- What solemn promise did Hannah make?
- What was Eli's wish for Hannah?

Then dig deeper by asking questions such as:

- Why do you think it was so important to Hannah to have a son? (*In biblical times, having a son was seen as a blessing – someone to carry on the family name and to look after the parents in their old age.*)

- What do you think Hannah meant when she said that she would dedicate her son to the Lord? (*e.g. she would bring him up to pray to God, to be a good role-model, to lead others, to help the poor*)

Explain to the children that Hannah gave birth to a son, whom she called Samuel. When Samuel was old enough, Hannah brought him to the house of the Lord, where he later studied under Eli and learned to serve the Lord. Hannah would eventually have three more sons and two daughters. She was hugely grateful to the Lord. The following is an excerpt from her prayer of gratitude, known as the *Canticle of Hannah*:

Hannah's Prayer (1 Samuel 2:1, 2)

The Lord has filled my heart with joy;
how happy I am because of what he has done! ...

No one is holy like the Lord;
there is none like him,
no protector like our God.

Help the children to reflect on Hannah's prayer using these or similar questions:

- Which words tell you how grateful and happy Hannah was?
- Have you ever felt really grateful for anything? Tell us about that.
- Does Hannah's prayer remind you of any other prayer? (e.g. the *Magnificat*)

- Hannah said, 'there is no protector like our God'. Do you think Gladys Aylward, St Brigid or Florence Nightingale would agree with that statement? Why or why not?

The two Scripture passages above are also on page 123 of the children's book. Encourage the children to read those Scripture texts for themselves.



JOURNAL EXERCISE

MY PRAYER OF THANKS

Refer the children to the Journal Exercise **on page 124 of their book**, which invites them to compose their own prayers of thanks to God. They might like to begin with the same words as Hannah used: 'The Lord has filled my heart with joy', before writing about what they are grateful for. Alternatively, they may prefer to start the prayer with their own words.

TAKE A MOMENT

Using these or similar words, invite the children to take a few moments for silent reflection:

I invite you to pause for a moment. You may close your eyes ... A long time ago, Brigid, Florence and Gladys were ordinary children, just like you ... They heard God calling them to be brave ... to stand up for what was right and good ... and to do what they could to help others and bring God's love to them ... They followed their calling, even when it was difficult and dangerous ... and they trusted in God.

What might God be calling you to do so as to help make the world a better place? ... What steps might you take to answer that call? ... You might begin by doing something in your home, or perhaps with your friends in school ... and later you might do something in your community ... Trust in God ... Using your inside voice that no one else can hear, ask God to help you, to be with you as you do what you feel is God's plan for you ... When you are ready, open your eyes.

Let's Live ...

WHAT HAVE YOU TAUGHT?

Throughout history there have been women of faith who have made a lasting difference in the world and helped make the world a better place. Gladys Aylward showed tremendous courage and trust in God when she travelled to far-off lands and brought God's love and care to countless people. St Brigid was one of the early Christians in Ireland and she carried on the work of St Patrick by setting up Christian communities in Ireland, which then spread throughout the world. Florence Nightingale used her nursing skills to bring God's love and care to others and to improve standards of nursing care for future generations. All of these women were inspired by Jesus' love for the poor and needy and each one of them has left a lasting legacy.

A CHRISTIAN HERO

CHIARA LUCE BADANO (1971-90)

- Invite the children to read the profile of Chiara Luce Badano **on page 124 of the children's book.**
- Then invite their personal responses by asking these or similar questions, which are also **on page 124 of their book:**
 - » What virtues/Christian values did Chiara show by the way she lived her life?
 - » What gifts of the Holy Spirit could be seen in action in Chiara's life?
- » Chiara showed how love can conquer all, especially when it is motivated by love of God. When she was dying, Chiara said, 'I have nothing left, but I still have my heart, and with that I can always love.' What do these words tell you about the kind of person Chiara was? How did she show that she was a Christian hero?
- » Chiara was generous with her time and with her possessions, right up until her death. How might her example inspire you?

Prayer Space:

Invite the children to display their 'Dreams for the World' artwork in or near the prayer space.

ART ACTIVITY

MY DREAM FOR THE WORLD

Note: You will need a copy of the 'My Dream for the World' template on page 485 and colouring materials for each child.

- Invite the children to think of one big thing in the world that they would like to change for the better. It might be providing homes for the homeless, tackling world poverty, combatting climate change, curing cancer, etc.
- Tell them that there are no limits to the dreams they can have about making the world a better place. Remind them that all great things start with small steps.
- Then invite them to think of one small step they could take right now to start achieving that dream. Remind them that the longest journey starts with just one step.



- Distribute the templates and invite the children to draw and decorate an image of their biggest dream for the world in the large square and, in the outline of the footstep, to write what their first step will be towards achieving that dream.

PRAYER

Note: Choose a child to light and quench the candle at the appropriate times. Choose a child to read the Scripture reading and three other children to read the prayers. The Scripture reading and the prayers are online.

Sign of the Cross

Teacher (as a child lights the candle): Our candle is a symbol of the light of Christ, which lights the way for each of us to live as a follower of Jesus. Let us pray to Jesus together.

All: In lighting this candle, we pray that your light will enter our hearts each morning and night. We are sending this light to others today, to all those for whom we think and pray. May your light gently guide us in this our prayer and help us to grow in your love and your care. Amen.

Teacher: We pray together that we might learn from the example of the women of faith we have heard about in this lesson. We will now listen to Hannah's prayer, the *Canticle of Hannah*, from the first Book of Samuel.

Reader 1: A reading from book of Samuel.

*The Lord has filled my heart with joy;
how happy I am because of what he has done! ...
No one is holy like the Lord;
there is none like him,
no protector like our God.
(1 Samuel 2:1, 2)*

The word of the Lord

All: Amen.

Teacher: The response to the individual prayers will be: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Reader 2: Thank you, loving God, for the example of St Brigid, Florence Nightingale, Chiara Luce Badano and Gladys Aylward. Help us to learn from their strong faith and determination.

We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 3: Thank you, loving God, for all the opportunities you give us in our lives. Help us to use these opportunities to do good in our world and to bring your love to others. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 4: Thank you, loving God, for answering our prayers. Help us never to give up believing in your goodness. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Teacher: Let us pray together to St Brigid, asking her to bless our school and protect all who work and learn here.

All: *St Brigid's Blessing*

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. Amen.

Teacher: We make these and all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Song: 'Hymn to St Brigid' (music online; setting p. 484)

Teacher (as a child quenches the candle): As we watch the light go out on our candle, may we prepare ourselves to bring the light of Christ to others. Let us pray together.

All: In quenching this candle, O Lord, we pray that your love will help us each night and day. Guide us with your Spirit, the heavenly dove, to be people of light and people of love. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

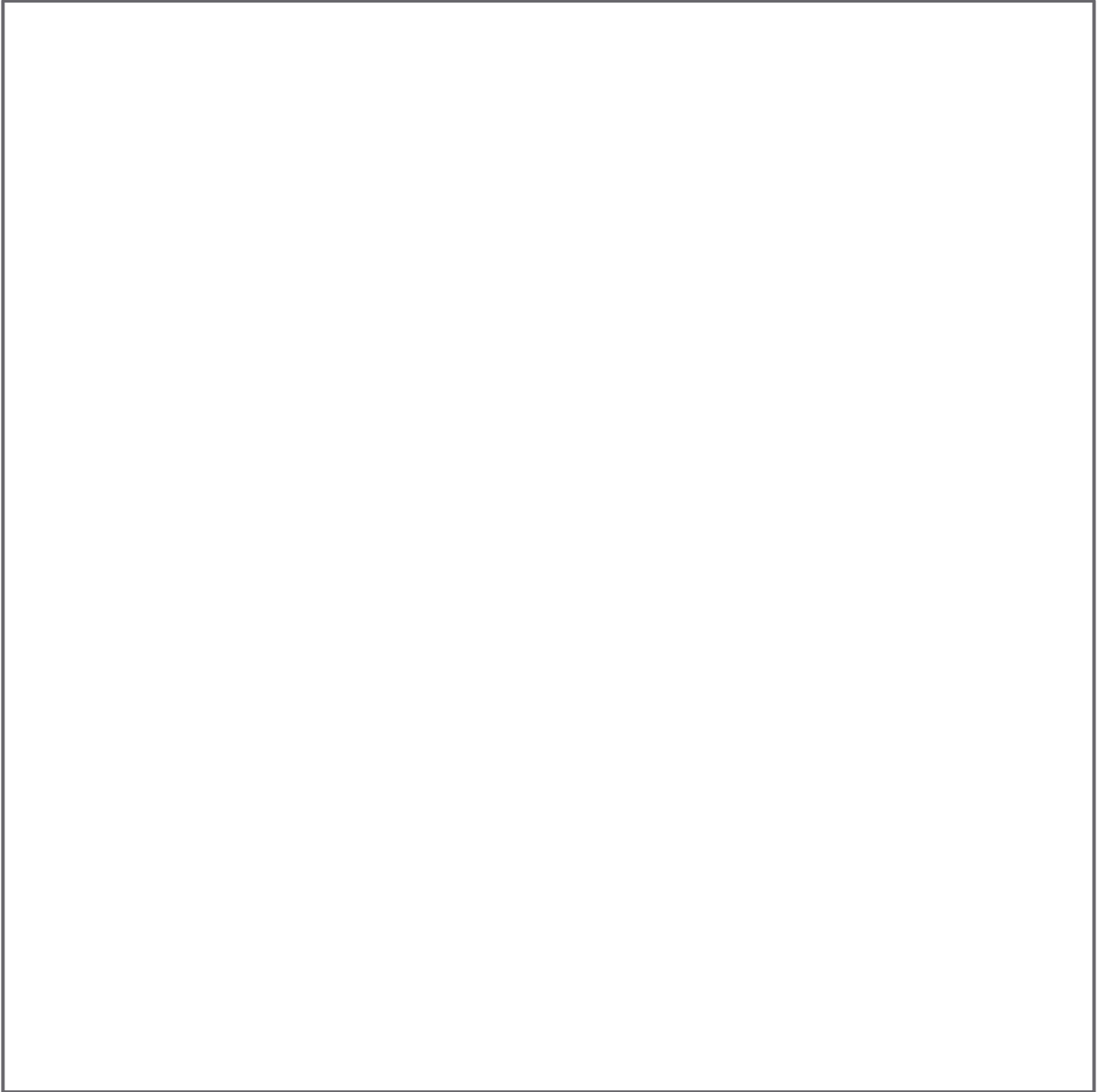
Hymn to Saint Brigid

Bernard Sexton

1. Brigid, gen - tle wom - an, strong of spir - it, Be our
 guide, our joy, our hope, our strength, our light.
 Brigid brought God's love to all God's peo - ple and pro -
 claimed it, mak - ing day from dark - est night. Let us
 sing our praise to Brigid, with hearts o - pen as we
 gath - er here to - geth - er now to pray. May her
 life for us re - main an in - spi - ra - tion. May her
 faith be with us now, and ev'ry day.

2. Brigid, peaceful woman, who showed courage,
 Show us all the courage that we so often need.
 Brigid loved the poor, the sick and the lonely.
 Show us how to love in spirit and in deed.
3. Brigid, who gave up her wealth to save us,
 Teach us kindness, teach us to be more like you.
 Brigid, who was firm, but always graceful,
 In your grace, help us be firm, help us be true.
4. Brigid, be the voice that guides all peoples.
 Bring us peace from all the conflict in our world.
 Lead us to the kingdom of our Saviour.
 Lead us to the truth, the truth that we have been told.

My Dream for the World

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their dream for the world.