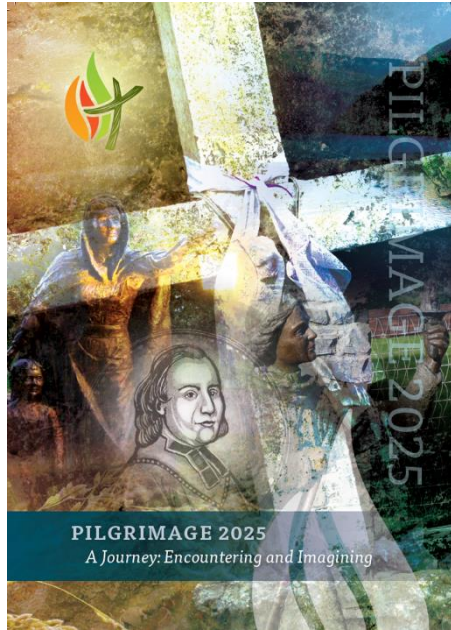


Following in the Footsteps of Brigid and Nano: Pilgrimage to Ireland 2025

Later this week, 23 participants from across Kildare Ministries will set out on a 13-day pilgrimage through Ireland. Entitled *Following in the Footsteps of Brigid and Nano*, this sacred journey invites us to encounter the roots of our heritage, to walk the landscapes that shaped our founders, and to be renewed in spirit for the mission of Kildare Ministries today.



Pilgrims come from across our ministries—Trustees, board members, principals, and staff. Each of us brings our own story and hopes for the journey, yet we are united by a common desire: to be touched anew by the charism of our founders and to carry their flame into the future of Kildare Ministries.

Pilgrimage has always been more than travel. As Thomas Merton reminds us, the geographical pilgrimage is the symbolic acting out of an inner journey, in which we interpret the signs and meanings of the places we visit. Along the way, we will be nourished by prayer, reflection, and companionship, opening ourselves to the stories of St Brigid, Nano Nagle, and Bishop Daniel Delany in fresh ways for our time.

Our itinerary takes us to places closely connected to our founders. At the start of our pilgrimage, we will visit the monastic valleys of Glendalough, where we will step into the early traditions of prayer and learning that shaped Ireland's Christian story. On the slopes of Croagh Patrick and the cliffs of Inis Mór, we will sense the Celtic spirit that underpinned Brigid's flame of hospitality and courage. In Ballygriffin, we will visit the birthplace of Nano Nagle and walk the Cork laneways where she brought hope, education, and dignity to the poor. In Tullow, where Daniel Delany founded the Sisters of St Brigid in 1807, we will honour his legacy and that of the first Brigidine Sisters. Journeying on to Kildare, we will spend time at Solas Bhríde, where the Brigidine Sisters will help us enter more deeply into Brigid's story, before visiting her wells and cathedral—places where her legacy of welcome and justice continues to inspire.

Along the way, we will also be enriched by the wisdom of Bernadette Flannagan, who will explore the riches of Celtic spirituality, and Diarmuid O'Murchu, who will invite reflection on contemporary expressions of faith and mission. At the conclusion of our pilgrimage, Dr Noelia Molina will help us draw the threads of our shared experience together and embed the deeper gifts we have received. These voices will help weave our heritage into the fabric of today's hopes and challenges.

The Kildare Ministries pilgrimage to Ireland is a journey into the heart of our story. From the Celtic spirit of Brigid to the lantern of Nano and the vision of Daniel Delany, we will walk the landscapes that shaped our charism and mission. We are deeply grateful for this opportunity and look forward to returning with an enriched understanding to share with our ministries as together we continue the mission of Kildare Ministries.

- Nicole Mangelsdorf (From KM Newsletter Issue 5 2025)