

Dear Friends,

As we enter this beautiful Christmas season, may our hearts be filled with peace, joy, and an abundance of blessings. This special time of year invites us to pause, reflect, and appreciate the moments and people that bring warmth to our lives.

Whether we're gathering with loved ones, sharing traditions old and new, or simply enjoying the quiet glow of the season, Christmas reminds us of the hope and kindness that connect us all.

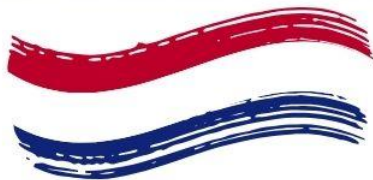
As you read through this year's newsletter, we send our heartfelt wishes for a season wrapped in love and a New Year filled with promise.

As we approach the end of the year, we extend heartfelt gratitude to all who visited Solas Bhríde during the extensive roof replacement works. It was a significant undertaking, and your patience and understanding as we navigated disruptions were greatly appreciated. We are delighted to now have a strong, reliable roof overhead — a blessing for the years ahead.

We wish you a peace filled, grace filled, hope filled Christmas and may 2026 be richly blessed for you and may the light of Brigid and the warmth of the season bless your homes and hearts. We look forward to welcoming you to Solas Bhríde in 2026.

**With every good wish,
The Solas Bhríde Team**

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF 2025



FLAME TRAVELS TO NOORBEEK

22nd January 2025

On January 22nd, Solas Bhríde welcomed pilgrims who received the St. Brigid Flame to bring to St. Brigid's Parish Church in Noorbeek, Netherlands. Noorbeek's 400-year devotion to St. Brigid began during a devastating cattle

plague, and her feast day remains a major celebration.

This historic moment deepened the bond between our communities. We followed with interest the young men's stormy journey to Cherbourg and onward to Noorbeek — and were delighted to later see photos of the Flame safely installed in its new home.

Among those present for the ceremony were Bishop Denis Nulty, Dean Isobel Jackson, Brigidine Sisters Phil O'Shea and Rita Minehan, Geraldine Moore, Ann Mulrennan, and Board member Patrick Gleeson.



Féile Bríde 2025 was alive with energy, creativity, and community spirit. Workshops, talks, music, storytelling, and pilgrimage beautifully wove ancient

traditions with modern expression.

The Pause for Peace Movement, first launched in 2023, continued to expand globally, with participation from Irish Embassies, church groups, and peace and justice organisations.

We were uplifted by many stories from those who visited Solas Bhríde during the festival.

Féile Bríde concluded with Afri's inspiring conference "*Brigid's Light – Illuminating Paths of Justice and Solidarity*".

Plans for Féile Bríde 2026 are well underway, and the programme can be accessed on our website www.solasbhríde.ie



Throughout the year we welcomed countless pilgrim groups from across Ireland and around the world. While too many to name individually, we thank you sincerely for your presence and look forward to welcoming you back in the future.

We would like to mention Brad and Rita, who have led pilgrimages to Solas Bhríde for over 20 years. This September they guided their final group before retiring, though they assure us they will continue to visit.

Also, Birgitta Lodge from Norway, who visited this year and whose long-standing friendship with Solas Bhríde remains a blessing.

Solas Bhríde were also honoured to welcome Br. Laurence Freeman OSB, Director of the World Community for Christian Meditation. Br. Laurence was speaking at the John Main Seminar in Balally Parish, Dublin and took time out

to visit Kildare.

We also welcomed numerous drop-in pilgrims from many countries — all finding a warm welcome at our door.



Throughout 2025, we honoured significant seasonal and spiritual moments:
**Spring and Autumn Equinoxes • Summer and Winter Solstices • Earth Day
• Bealtaine • Liturgical Seasons**

Each was marked with ritual, music, and story.

Annual Pilgrimage

In June, under beautiful clear skies, we walked in the footsteps of St. Brigid with pilgrims from Ireland, the UK, USA, Canada, and Australia.

Autumn Reflection

October brought a rich gathering with **Judith King**, who shared insights on *Becoming More Grounded: The Gifts and Givens of Pilgrimage*. Participants shared moving—and often humorous—stories from their own journeys.

Youth Engagement

We were delighted to host several youth groups, including Confirmation classes, who engaged in reflection, explored Brigid's traditions, and enjoyed the peace of the Centre.

National Ploughing Championships

We were honoured to participate in this year's National Ploughing Championships, offering live demonstrations of traditional St. Brigid's Cross weaving — a timely celebration following its inclusion on the **National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage**.

Taizé Prayer Gatherings

A new addition this year was our twice-monthly **Taizé Prayer** meetings: simple chants, silence, and scripture creating a gentle space for reflection. These gatherings will resume in the new year.

Meditations

Throughout the year we offered meditations in keeping with the various seasons. We are delighted to have both an in-person and online community join us and look forward to continuing in 2026.



Our **hermitages** again proved to be deeply valued spaces for rest, prayer, and quiet renewal — a welcome retreat from the fast pace of daily life



Rita Minehan's book, *Rekindling the Flame: A Pilgrimage in the Footsteps of Brigid of Kildare*, continues to reach readers around the world.

It is a beautiful collection of story, poems and meditations - the perfect companion for your pilgrim journey in Kildare Town.



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The perfect gift - Rekindling the Flame

Purchase a copy from our [online shop here](#) or contact us by email: info@solasbhride.ie or by phone on 045-522890.



'If light is in your heart, you will find your way home' - Rumi

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