

Risen



Christ

The Presentation of the Lord

1 & 2 February 2025 - Year C

The Catholic Communities of Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham & St Francis Xavier, Montmorency



We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respect to the elders past, present and emerging.

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord - observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord - and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God, and he said:

'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace, just as you promised; because my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared for all the nations to see, a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of your people Israel.'

As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected - and a sword will pierce your own soul too - so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

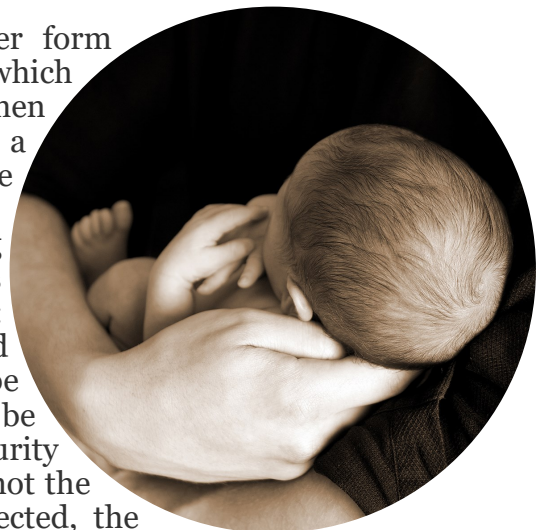
There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

Reflection - Break Open the Word 2025:

The gospel has a longer and a shorter form. The longer form continues after the prayer of Simeon with his prophesy which makes the connection with the cross of Christ. The reading then introduces the beautiful figure of Anna and it concludes with a fine summary of Jesus growing up. It would be a pity not to use the longer version.

Although they are poor (the two birds are the simplest offering for this sacrifice), Mary and Joseph fulfill all the requirements of the law. Simeon and Anna are also models of religious faith: they are attentive to God's word, humble, trusting and obedient, and filled with longing for God's promises to be realized. This small child in Simeon's arms is the one who will be a light and the glory of the people, one who will grow to maturity and wisdom to become the awaited messiah. But, of course, not the triumphant leader people were expecting, rather a sign rejected, the suffering servant who would die on the cross.



*This parish has a commitment to ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people in our community.
We support the recommendations of the Royal Commission into institutional abuse and pray for all the survivors.*



PARISH TEAM & INFORMATION

OUR PEOPLE & OUR CONTACT DETAILS



Parish Priest

Michael Sierakowski - **Moderator**

Michael.Sierakowski@cam.org.au

Parish Office

all correspondence to:

86 Mayona Road,
Montmorency Vic 3094
9435 4742

RisenChrist.Parish@cam.org.au

Kate Kogler:

Parish Secretary

Tue-Fri 9am-3pm

Peter Williams:

Safeguarding Officer

RisenChrist.ChildSafety@cam.org.au

Kerry Mash:

Volunteer

Wed & Fri 10am-3pm

New Website:

www.melbcatholic.org/risenchristparish

Facebook:

[Risen Christ Parish](#)

Risen Christ Parish Bulletin items:

RisenChrist.Parish@cam.org.au

Schools

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Principal: Philip Cachia: 9435 8474

principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

Holy Trinity Primary School

Principal: Vince Bumpstead: 9431 0888

principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Principal: Rudy Vail: 9439 7824

school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

RECONCILIATION

available half an hour before
any weekday or weekend Parish Mass.

Collections: 12 & 19 January 2025

		OLHC	SFX
Thanksgiving	Cash	\$577.00	\$1,147.00
	Electronic	\$2,468.67	\$1,653.50
Presbytery	Cash	\$432.45	\$1,098.70
	Electronic	\$100.00	\$130.00

Thanksgiving / Stewardship Offering

Month	OLHC	SFX	Total
October	\$5,523.52	\$8,916.05	\$14,439.57
November	\$6,538.34	\$8,768.75	\$15,307.09
December	\$9,129.67	\$10,865.50	\$19,995.17

Risen Christ Parish Calendar of Events

Saturday 1 February

12:00pm Baptisms: Rosalyn, Jordan, Ella,
Tommy Clodagh, Teddy Montmorency

6:00pm Mass Montmorency

Sunday 2

8:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Mass Eltham

Monday 3

11:30am Mass & Beginning of Year Whole School Mass
& Staff Commissioning Holy Trinity

Tuesday 4

9:30am Mass & Beginning of Year Whole School Mass
& Staff Commissioning Montmorency

10:00am Rosary Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group Montmorency

11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry Eltham

2:00pm Bethany Small Church Community Montmorency

Wednesday 5

6:30am Meditation Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Eltham

1:00pm Kairos Small Church Community Montmorency

Thursday 6

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Montmorency

10:30am ASRC Food Collection Montmorency

2:00pm Mass Calvary Lower Plenty Garden Views

Friday 7

9:30am Mass & Beginning of Year Whole School Mass
& Staff Commissioning Eltham

12:00pm Funeral: Terezija Drezgo Eltham

Saturday 8

6:00pm Mass Montmorency

Sunday 9

8:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Mass Eltham

Monday 10

11:00am Funeral: Valerie Jones Montmorency

7:00pm Reconciliation
Parent Faith Formation Evening Montmorency

Tuesday 11

9:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Rosary Montmorency

12:00pm Funeral: Leo Dark Eltham

7:00pm Jordan Small Church Community Montmorency

Wednesday 12

6:30am Meditation Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Eltham

Thursday 13

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Montmorency

10:30am ASRC Food Collection Montmorency

10:30am Emmaus Small Church Community Montmorency

Friday 14

9:30am Mass Eltham

Saturday 15

12:00pm Baptisms: Lottie, Charlotte, Ollie Montmorency

6:00pm Mass Montmorency

Sunday 16

8:30am Mass Montmorency



*Let us pray for all those who have gone
before us marked with the sign of faith ...*

Montmorency

For those in need of **healing**, remembering especially:
Siobhan Lappin, Barney Steward, Skye Stojanov

For the recently **deceased**:
Valerie Jones

For those whose **anniversaries** are at this time:
*Maria De Lazzer (1st anniversary - 28 January 2025),
Annie Gatt, Bernie Lamers, John Longton,
Regina Roszczenko (mother of Liz Gray), Antonina Salvatore*

Eltham

For those in need of **healing**, remembering especially:
Ruth Decker

For the recently **deceased**:
Leo Dark, Terezija Drezgo, Simone Owen

For those whose **anniversaries**
are at this time:
Luke Hawthorne-Smith, Chris Mullens

To include an anniversary please contact Parish Office
9435 4742 or RisenChrist.Parish@cam.org.au.

Roster for week ending 2 Feb 2025

Armstrong, Miranda	H10:00
Capuana, Marisa	PRYR
Castellanos, Rodrigo	E10:00
Dhanasen Family	PRSE
Dopheide, Marlis	H10:00
Hall, Vali	ASE
Heyhoe, Margaret	C10:00
Iliffe, Yvonne	E10:00
Kenny, Michael	W6:00
Lucas, Maree	CLNR
Maynes, Phil	W6:00
Northrop, Greg	E10:00
Reardon, Kathy	E10:00
Reardon, Peter	E10:00
Scully, Greg	R10:00
Stevens, Patricia	CLNR
Sullivan, Frances	W8:30
Wood, Marie	W8:30

Roster for week ending 9 Feb 2025

Ballenger, Nima	C10:00
Bucknell, Jed	R10:00
Cotter, Anne	W8:30
Cseh, Ferenc	E10:00
Davidson, John	W8:30
Donnellan, Denice	E10:00
Dunell, Linda	E10:00
Edwards, Elisabeth	E10:00
Hannon, Genni	ASRC
Hannon, Kevin	ASRC
Kulkens, Mark	W6:00
Leahy Family	PRSE
Reardon, Kathy	ASE
Reardon, Kathy	H10:00
Reardon, Peter	H10:00
Scully, Greg	H10:00
Scully, Helen	H10:00
Smith, Neil	E10:00
Wallace, Kathryn	W6:00
Watson, Denis	CLNR
Williams, Anne	PRYR
Williams, Peter	PRYR
Wood, Marie	LoW-01 Thu

ASE = Altar Society @ Eltham;
C = Commentator;

CLKR = Powerpoint Clicker @ SFX;
CLNR = Cleaner @ SFX; R = Reader;
E = Eucharistic Minister;

H = Hospitality;

LoW-01 = Liturgy of the Word with
Communion @ SFX;

PRSE = Pilgrim Rosary Statue @ Eltham;
M = Music; W = Minister of the Word



**Congratulations to all who celebrate
their sacraments this weekend:**

Saturday, 1st February, 2025

St Francis Xavier, Montmorency, 12:00pm

Jordan Boyd
Roselyn May Bryce
Ella Ray Lydiate
Tommy John Lydiate
Clodagh Bella O'Connor
Teddy Gerard O'Connor

Baptism
Baptism
Baptism
Baptism
Baptism
Baptism

Congratulations

to

**Ian & Barbara
Bibby**

**who recently
celebrated their**

65th

Wedding

Anniversary!



5 things to know about Jubilee 2025

1.

The theme of the Holy Year is
“Pilgrims of Hope.”

“Everyone knows what it is to hope,” Pope Francis wrote. “In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring.

For all of us, may the Jubilee be an opportunity to be renewed in hope. God’s word helps us find reasons for that hope.”

Pope Francis also hopes the year draws Catholics toward patience, which he described in “Spes Non Confundit” as a “virtue closely linked to hope,” yet can feel elusive in “our fast-paced world, we are used to wanting everything now.”

2.

Drawing on their Jewish roots, jubilee years emphasise the sacrament of reconciliation and restoring relationships with God. They also provide an opportunity for a special jubilee indulgence, which can remove the residual effects of sin through the grace of Christ.

The year calls Christians to action. Pope Francis called for “signs of hope” in the Jubilee Year, including the desire for peace in the world, openness to life and responsible parenthood, and closeness to prisoners, the poor, the sick, the young, the elderly, migrants and people “in difficult situations.”

Pope Francis has called on affluent countries to forgive the debts of countries that would never be able to repay them, and address “ecological debt,” which he described as “connected to commercial imbalances with effects on the environment and the disproportionate use of natural resources by certain countries over long periods of time.”

3.

Expect an influx of pilgrims in the Eternal City. Italy’s National Tourist Research Institute projects 35 million visitors in 2025, nearly triple of its 13 million visitors in 2023. Pilgrimage is a “fundamental” part of jubilee events.

Jubilee pilgrims are likely to visit Rome’s Christian catacombs & its seven pilgrim churches - the basilicas of St Peter, St Mary Major, St John Lateran, St Paul Outside the Walls, St Lawrence, Holy Cross and St Sebastian - destinations St Philip Neri popularised in the 16th century with a 15-mile walk.

Twelve other Roman churches, including the Sanctuary of Divine Love in southeast Rome, are designated “jubilee churches” intended as gathering spots for pilgrims during the jubilee.

4.

Major events are happening in Rome, including jubilee gatherings with liturgies, speakers and papal audiences to celebrate different groups within the church.

The jubilee also includes gatherings for artists (15-18 Feb), deacons (21-23 Feb) and even marching bands (10-11 May). Some of these special gatherings will coincide with major canonisations, such as the canonisation of Blessed Carlo Acutis during the Jubilee of Teenagers 25-27 Apr, and the canonisation of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati during the Jubilee of Young People 28 Jul-3 Aug.

Expect some events to highlight the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, from which Christians received the Nicene Creed. This year, the dates for celebrating Easter align in the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church.

5.

The Jubilee Year concludes with the closing of the Holy Door at St Peter’s Basilica 6 Jan, 2026, on the feast of the Epiphany. However, the Holy Doors at Rome’s other major basilicas will close 28 Dec, 2025, the same day dioceses are to end local celebrations of the Holy Year.

The Jubilee Year also looks ahead to 2033, when the church will mark the 2,000th anniversary of Jesus’ passion, death and resurrection, which Pope Francis called “another fundamental celebration for all Christians.”



Make Jubilee 2025 resolutions

Much like ‘New Year resolutions’ a good idea, either as a community or individuals, is to commit to some ‘jubilee resolutions’ for 2025. This could include:

- Being intentional about using the official Jubilee 2025 song
<https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025/inno-giubileo-2025.html> and prayer (next column).
- Visiting some of the Archdiocese of Melbourne’s different pilgrimage sites and shrines, especially our jubilee ‘Pilgrim Places’.
<https://melbournecatholic.org/connect/jubilee/pilgrim-places>
- Consider joining one of the Archdiocesan pilgrimages to Rome that will take place throughout 2025. Information about the Pilgrimage to the Jubilee of Youth (open to 18 to 30 years old).
<https://melbournecatholic.org/events/journey-to-rome-for-jubilee-2025>
- Committing to additional prayer and/or fasting for the sake of our loved ones, and those in our community, who have

drifted away from faith.

- Gift a candle: have a special Jubilee 2025 candle made that your community can gift to someone in their life, symbolically passing on ‘the light of Christ’.
- Committing to additional formation activities, especially those focussed upon the Catechism of the Catholic Church or documents of the Second Vatican Council.
- Creatively nurturing the three ‘attitudes’ that Pope Francis encouraged us to have as pilgrims during Jubilee 2025: thanksgiving, intentionally seeking to encounter the Lord, and penance.
<https://melbournecatholic.org/events/journey-to-rome-for-jubilee-2025>
- As a community, creating more opportunities for evangelisation and outreach.

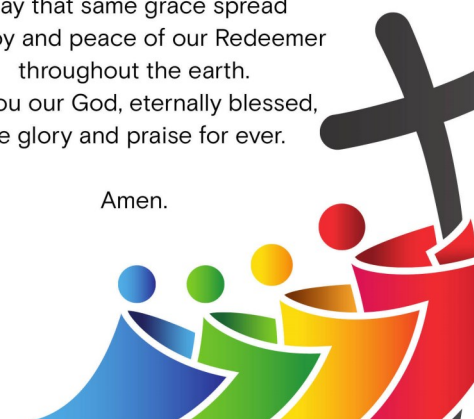
The Jubilee Prayer

Father in heaven,
may the faith you have given us
in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother,
and the flame of charity enkindled
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,
reawaken in us the blessed hope
for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel.
May those seeds transform from within both
humanity and the whole cosmos
in the sure expectation
of a new heaven and a new earth,
when, with the powers of Evil vanquished,
your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee
reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope,
a yearning for the treasures of heaven.
May that same grace spread
the joy and peace of our Redeemer
throughout the earth.
To you our God, eternally blessed,
be glory and praise for ever.

Amen.



Prayers of the Faithful for 2 & 3 Feb 2025 - The Presentation of the Lord

Leader: Christ brings consolation for all peoples. On this day of His Presentation to the Temple, may we confidently offer Him our intentions for the Church and for all the inhabitants of this world.

Blessed are you O Lord for those who have consecrated their lives to you: religious, monks, nuns and lay people. Allow them to bring light and consolation to all those they meet.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Blessed are you O Lord for all those in governments who are true to their mission and see it as a true vocation. Accompany them in their efforts, their decisions, their moments of inspiration.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Blessed are you O Lord for the aged in our community. May the image of Simeon and Anna inspire them to be witnesses to the faith, to hope and to charity, as examples for the young.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Blessed are you O Lord, for Christians who each week set aside time for prayer or the care of the sick and people in trouble. May their faith be strengthened in the consolation of the work they do.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Blessed are you O Lord, for the comfort you bring to those who are ill, especially those named in the bulletin. May they be strengthened by the love and peace of your presence in their lives.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Blessed are you O Lord, for the promised resurrection of those who have died recently, especially *Leo Dark, Terezija Drezgo, Valerie Jones & Simone Owen* and for those we remember at this time, including *Maria De Lazzer, Annie Gatt, Luke Hawthorne-Smith, Bernie Lamers, John Longton, Chris Mullens & Antonina Salvatore*. May they rest in your eternal glory.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Lord Jesus, forty days after your birth, you were presented to God your Father. This day we present ourselves to you. Listen to our prayers and deign to grant them, you who live and reign for ever and ever.

All: Amen

OLHC Hospitality

We are calling for a few more volunteers for our OLHC Sunday Hospitality!

We need some more people to fill in the gaps on our roster. Our regular volunteers usually do hospitality on the second and fourth Sundays of each month, and it would be wonderful if we could provide some little treats on the other weeks.

Sign-up sheets will be in the OLHC gathering area - so please consider helping just one week, some time from February to July.

Alternatively, ring or text Kathleen on 0432 391 105 if you can help.

Thank you.



Single Bed & Mattress



A parishioner has a single bed and mattress in excellent condition, too good for landfill.

Contact Margaret if interested.
0409 508 556



St Vincent de Paul Society
good works

Thank You

Vinnies Eltham wish to thank all who contributed to our appeal for groceries to fill our Christmas Bags, which were much appreciated by all who received them.



The ancient accounts of Saint Brigid - whose feast day is celebrated on 1 February - tell us something about the part that women played in the early centuries of Christianity in Ireland and offer a hint of how women can change the Church today / by Nancy Fitzgerald

‘Bishop’ Brigid’s mantle of hope

Once upon a time, on the plains of Kildare, in the Irish province of Leinster, there was a nun named Brigid. She was a woman of remarkable holiness, renowned for her care of the sick and poor. She cured a local king of an illness, and in return, the king promised to grant her whatever she asked for. *Here’s what I’d like*, she replied. *Give me all the land my cloak will cover*. The king though he was getting off easy. As the sun was setting, Brigid and her sisters began to spread the cloak. By the time the morning dew had fallen, the cloak was draped across thousands of acres of what came to be known as “Brigid’s pastures”.

That was the last time anyone underestimated Brigid. She used some of her land for her monastery, which became a centre of learning, pilgrimage and hospitality. The story of Brigid’s mantle may be folklore - a charming tale about a harmless nun getting a few acres at the expense of a clueless king. But it shows that Brigid knew exactly what she was doing. Spreading her cloak was an act of subversion, turning the king’s false generosity upside down and revealing the harmless little nun as someone to be reckoned with. She had holy work to do, and she put her rugged, persistent, can-do faith up against the power of the king, betting that God would come down on the side of the poor and the hungry at her door.

The story survives, a sign of the power of the people on the margins and a reminder to those on the brink of forgetting about them. Across Ireland, Brigid’s mantle is still being spread. On the eve of her feast day, 1 February, people hang a cloth outside their door, knowing that the saint will bless it as she goes by. It is, after all, their *brat Bhride*, a symbol of Brigid’s cloak. She’s still at work today. (African-American womanist folklore might call this “making a way out of now way”.) It’s been centuries since Brigid travelled the bog roads to spread the Gospel. But her influence still lingers, if you know where to look for it.

In my research for a book about St Brigid I went looking at the ancient holy wells in rural Ireland, with origins going back to the pagans. There may be a thousand or so sacred springs in Ireland, and a few hundred belong to Brigid - more than those dedicated to any other saint. Each one tells us something not only about this woman but also about the part that women played in the early days of Christianity in Ireland. And Brigid’s holy wells offer a



A window depicting St Brigid in the church of St Mary of the Rosary, Cong South, Co. Mayo

hint of how women can change the Church today.

A near-contemporary of Patrick, Brigid was born of a druid father and a mother who was enslaved. Said to have been baptised in milk, a link between the old and the new, her childhood was marked with acts of generosity and kindness that set a path she’d follow for the rest of her life. She gave away treasures, from her father’s sword to her mother’s newly churned butter. Nobody in her family was surprised when she dedicated her life to the new religion. After all, they’d noticed flames shooting from her head since infancy; they must have guessed that she was destined for something great. And she was: along with Patrick, she nurtured Christianity on her island outpost at the edge of the Atlantic.

Most of what we know about Brigid comes through oral history that made its way into hagiography - the lives of the saints. Embellished with flights of fancy and meant to be taken with a grain of salt, they weren’t quite what we’d call history. But, says church historian Anne Thayer, they’re “an important historical source if read with considerable care. There is usually some ‘there’ there.” Within a hundred years of Brigid’s death, her story had been committed to paper - and listeners found it entirely plausible.

For generations of communities in Ireland, Brigid is exactly what her stories claim: a

woman who preached the Gospel, administered a diocese, celebrated the liturgy, absolved sins, and lived a life of prayer and service in imitation of Christ. Which sounds pretty much like what a bishop does. And that’s because Brigid probably was a bishop. In one of the earliest hagiographies, composed in the eighth century, Bishop Mel is depicted conferring episcopal orders on her as a fiery column rises from her head.

In later centuries, that ordination would be dismissed as a fluke, performed by a drunken bishop. But Brigid’s life shows her, time and again, clearly living out her episcopal orders - and passing her episcopal authority on to her successor abbesses in Kildare. Her ordination was no accident. And it was no accident that it’s been forgotten. The Church did its best to wipe out the evidence - and blot out the memory - of women’s roles in earlier times. But here and there, fragments of the story escaped the purge: in Brigid’s *Lives*; in the Irish annals; in scraps of lost ordination liturgies. But to her communities, she was always understood as a bishop, just like the apostles on Pentecost, with those signature tongues of fire. Her communities, the collective authorities on her life, knew Brigid was an equal to Patrick; like him, she was a descendant of those first bishops, the apostles anointed in the upper room by the flames of the Spirit.

The Church has tried to transform Brigid from a firebrand who out-preached Patrick, trained up a generation of missionaries, and rivalled Jesus himself by turning bathwater into beer. But today, people continue to remember her as something more. And instead of finding her at church, they’re finding her at her wells. In my travels in Ireland, I spoke with the Brigidine sisters in Kildare, who continue her tradition of prayer and hospitality. I met historians and musicians and farmers. I met a grandmother in Kerry who gave me directions to a well and asked me to say a prayer to Brigid for her.

The Church throughout the world is still keeping women on the margins. But the people of God are still searching for a spark of the divine. The story of Brigid is helping to ignite that spark, spreading a mantle of hope and joy across an old and battered world.

Nancy Fitzgerald is an award-winning writer and editor. This excerpt is from *Brigid’s Mantle: Finding the Fiery Saint of Kildare at the Heart of Celtic Spirituality*, to be published by Paulist Press later this year.

