



St. Bridget

The best-loved Irish female saint, St Bridget, lived in the late 5th and early 6th centuries. Her veneration would become so popular that it rivaled that of St Patrick until the eighth century, when Armagh achieved pre-eminence among the Churches in Ireland. She founded her monastery in an oak grove at Kildare ('church of the oak grove' in Gaelic), where a sacred fire would be kept perpetually alight for nearly a thousand years after her death. It was a mixed monastery for men and women, headed by an abbot and abbess respectively. Such was the saint's stature that the diocese of Kildare during her lifetime was known as 'a see at once episcopal and virginal'. Bridget passed into eternity around the year 525. Her feast is celebrated on 1/14 February, one day before the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord.