



# Guide to the 'Festival of Cloaks'

## All The Cloaks Have A Story Card For You to Read

**St Columb's Cathedral** is delighted to welcome you to the 'Festival of Cloaks' - a unique event comprising musical performances and workshops and featuring around 80 cloaks from civic and cultural organisations, churches and industry.

We are especially pleased to have as our main attraction four cloaks, representing each of the four Irish provinces, which were created specially to mark the 1,500th anniversary of the death of St Brigid of Kildare. Almost one thousand people were involved in making them.

### THE LEGEND

The legend of Brigid's cloak recounts how she got the land for her first abbey. She asked the King of Leinster for a site in a wood beside a lake, near a fertile plain where crops could be grown. When he refused, Brigid asked simply for **"as much land as my cloak will cover"**.

Seeing how small her cloak was, the King laughed and granted her request. Brigid instructed four helpers to take one corner of the cloak each and walk in opposite directions – north, south, east and west. As they did so, the cloak began to grow and spread across many acres, giving Brigid enough land for her abbey. Realising that this woman was truly blessed by God, the King became a patron of Brigid's abbey.

### PORCH

Visitors to our festival are met in the porch by Brendan Farren's beautiful willow sculpture of Saint Brigid in her garden, wearing her famous cloak. The other cloaks are displayed in the main body of the Cathedral.

### NORTH AISLE

As you enter, turn left and move along the north aisle to view an array of cloaks: Knights Templar, judiciary, academic, military, ecclesiastical, nursing and caring services. Also, along this aisle are two of the four cloaks made for the 1500th anniversary.

### TRANSEPT

In the transept, at the front of the church, is a display of sheep and a model of St Brigid. In the chancel, to your left, is Lady Mary Peters' Order of the Garter cloak, displayed with HM King Charles' permission, and on the right is the

Cope of Armagh belonging to the Archbishop of Armagh. There are two panels from The Dept of Foreign Affairs *Common Threads* global artwork project created for St Brigid's Day in 2023. These panels combine forty artworks from a range of locations including Abuja, Budapest, Cairo, Kyiv, and Shanghai, reflecting the spread of Ireland's diplomatic network, while illustrating the power of creative expression to form connections. The pieces were combined to form this cloak by the Irish Patchwork Society. The cloak has been loaned to the Cathedral by the Department of Foreign Affairs Reconciliation Fund who are also a proud supporter of this exhibition.

In the Bishop's throne, there is Bishop Stockwell's cope.

## **SOUTH AISLE**

Moving down the south aisle, there are three chasubles belonging to St Michael's in Creeslough, leading to the arts and theatre section. Beside this is a selection of District Council gowns, followed by a cloak loaned to us by Eurovision winner Dana, and next to it is a display of fashion cloaks, including one from a duchess (who moved in the same circles as the Von Trapp family). The adjoining section features organisations including: The Honourable the Irish Society, the Britannia Band, the Order of Lazarus of Jerusalem and the Order of St John of Jerusalem. Also on this side are the other two anniversary cloaks of Ulster and Connaught.

## **WORKSHOPS**

From 12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> August, a small cloak will be woven in the workshops being run by 'Wool in Schools' who created the four cloaks of St Brigid.

We hope you enjoy the 80 cloaks on display in our cathedral and do feel free to give us your version of the story behind the secret cloak.

## **MUSIC**

Please come again to the exhibition and any of our musical performances and bring your friends. You will all be very welcome.

*We would like to thank the Dept of Foreign Affairs, Reconciliation Fund for their support, which has been a tremendous source of support for the festival.*

 **No Charge for Entry, but all donations gratefully received. Thank you.**



An Roinn Gnóthai Eachtracha  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
**RECONCILIATION FUND**



To view this handout on your mobile or tablet, please click on QR Code above