Resources from Online Handheld Finger Labyrinth Walk

*February 3rd at 4pm with Judith Tripp.*

*Awake, O my soul,*

*to the beauty of the divine deep within you*

*and awake to its fragrance in the body of the earth.*

*Know its strength of attraction*

*and its grace to heal what has been torn apart.*

*Awake, O my soul,*

*to the beauty of the divine deep within you.*

*Awake, O my soul.*

*Awake.*

~ John Phillip Newell

The Irish insist that the midwife that night in Bethlehem was St Brigid herself. This is a strange thought within strange thoughts, but she may have simply walked into a Connacht hill and found herself in the stable. The deep mind accepts this.

If Brigid had indeed been the knee-woman of the birth, she may most of all liked to pass baby Yeshua several times over the sweet smoke of a fire. Brigid would then give the tiniest drop of water to the baby and sing:

A wavelet for your body,

A wavelet for your sounds,

A wavelet for the sweetness

Of your words.

A wavelet for your fortune,

A wavelet for your goodness,

A wavelet for your health.

A wavelet for your pluck,

A wavelet for your grace,

A wavelet for your generosity

As they washed Yeshua

She would slip a gold coin

Into the water he lay in.

Brigid was born on the first day of spring, and the angels that baptized her gave her a name, Fiery Arrow – Brigid. A druid put aside the milk of a white, red-eared cow and that was all she consumed in the early days, before she went to stay at her father’s house. Being utterly generous, when a starving hound came to their door she fed it luscious strips of bacon meant for guests. A Liturgy of the Wild would learn from Brigid’s generosity.

Brigid’s move from protocol to compassion caused the whole house to forgo their meal and give to the ravenous, that were everywhere at that time. She tells us that every broken, starving stranger is a Jesus of the road, calling to the best of us.

Brigid was not above wishing. She wished for these things:

I wish that the Lord of the Elements be provided with a huge lake of ale for his thirst.

I wish to be a renter in God’s house. If I was in a fix he would bless it away.

I would wish mercy, peace-making and alms to always be supplied to the poor.

They say Brigid was nothing less than a ladder in which ordinary people like you and me could climb to the luminous kingdom of the son of Mary.

She could bring a frightened bird to settle happily in her palm, she calmed a terror-boar from the north country to settle with her herd. Before she ran into battle surrounded by angels she would visit church and remind us that the Mover of Seas and Mountains was greater even than a poem. And the Irish loved a poem as much as rivers and ale and a lover to snuggle. Greater still her god.

At end of day, the people of the huts would tuck an ember from the fire under the ashes to keep going till morning, they would call this the seed of the fire. Some would think of Brigid as they did so and say:

I save this fire seed as the

Christ-Man saved everyone.

Tucked in safe beneath it

Is Brigid, and Mary’s son within it.

Fiery Arrow, dear Brigid, tells us not to shadow our generosity but let it abide in full view, as the sun does. It is Brigid that tells us rise early and tend to animals. It is Fiery Arrow that speaks to the Irish Sea when it is in its turbulence, petitions for the fisherman, attends to the sad and hungry hound that lives at the doorway of every warm kitchen.

Into the Connaught hill you walked, like through the back of a wardrobe, and into the glow of the Bethlehem stable.

So sweet it is to hear of the kick in Elizabeth’s belly

When she was reunited with her cousin Mary.

When the wild one inside felt the vibrational woomph

Of his master’s mother close by.

Praise the life-kick in Elizabeth’s Grail,

It is the clink of every glass met in joy,

It is the hoof-leap of every Devon stag,

The bass thump of every song that

Made you leave your chair and dance.

~ Martin Shaw

I like the idea of the fire-seed a few lines back. For all of us being buffeted by the darkness of winter, we tuck an ember under the ashes of what’s passing away from the last year. In ancient cultures the storyteller always held a contract with the wider tribe: that they would take the people deep out into the darkness where the owls hoot and strange things circle, but that they would also bring them safely home, wiser and wylded. If you feel too far out in the woods, focus on a fire-seed to bring you back. Could be a line of poetry, a line of knitting, a line of music, but hold gently to the string that the poet William Stafford says could lead you to Jerusalem’s wall. That’s a lot of metaphors, but maybe one will stick.