

The Communities of the early Irish Church had two important anchors that kept people's feet firmly on the ground. The first was the rule of the Community, often composed by the founding saint, and the second was the work of the Anamchara or "Soul Friend" who helped each individual to discern God's voice and develop an on-going personal and patterned response to God's call to holiness. But for us the community comes without monastery, Abbot or Mother Superior.

Following this example our Community also has these two defining foundational supports:

\* The **Way of Life** of our Community, which expresses our approach to the spiritual life and our values.

\* The **Soul Friend**, who will help them to listen and respond to God's voice and to compose a personalised "Way of Life" that reflects the Community Way of Life for their own situation.

As life changes, our personal Way of Life may also need to change, as God calls us on to new things. Our Soul Friend, along with the Holy Spirit, helps us discern the changes needed. This is our journey.

Our Community nurtures an holistic Christian spirituality for today that can benefit both traditional and emerging churches; and for people trying to find something new and vibrant and relevant.

As our members come from many different denominations—or from none—each will have their own tradition of prayer and worship. When we meet together, on those occasions where we use a liturgy, we have forms of prayer that will be acceptable for all Christians. They are often related to the saints of the early Irish church, but not exclusively!

You will find a sample variety of prayer examples on our website Prayer page. You can also download samples of worship material similar to that in *The Celtic Prayer Book* in four volumes, written by the International Founder the Revd Ray Simpson (published by Kevin Mayhew and available on Amazon).

## Ut Unum Sint

"Ecumenism, the movement promoting Christian unity, is not just some sort of "appendix" which is added to the Church's traditional activity. Rather, ecumenism is an organic part of her life and work, and consequently must pervade all that she is and does."

Pope John Paul II, 25 May 1995

If you're interested in finding out more about our Community visit our website

[www.cairdeananama.ie](http://www.cairdeananama.ie)

to learn about being a *Friend* of our Community, or an *Explorer* of our Way of Life.

If you want to take up this opportunity to deepen your spiritual life then please send your contact details to [contact@cairdeananama.ie](mailto:contact@cairdeananama.ie) confirming that you have read the "Way of Life" and the "Guidelines" and that you wish to become a *Friend* of the Community or to be enrolled as an *Explorer*.

### Online Courses

#### *Igniting the Flame*

a foundational course on the Community's Way of Life

#### *E-studies*

1. Introduction to Celtic Spirituality
2. From ancient Celtic to New Monasticism.

*For more information on these visit*

[www.aidanandhilda.org.uk/studies-main.php](http://www.aidanandhilda.org.uk/studies-main.php)

[www.cairdeananama.ie](http://www.cairdeananama.ie)

[contact@cairdeananama.ie](mailto:contact@cairdeananama.ie)

Irish charitable status applied for

© Cairde an Anama 2020

image: Pilgrim Way, Holy Island, Lindisfarne NE England



**Cairde an Anama**  
(Friends of the Soul)

in the company of  
**St Brigid and  
St Brendan**

**RECONNECTING WITH  
THE SPIRIT AND THE SCRIPTURES,  
THE SAINTS AND THE STREETS,  
THE SEASONS AND THE SOIL.**

IS A DISPERSED, ECUMENICAL BODY  
DRAWING INSPIRATION  
FROM THE LIVES OF THE EARLY IRISH SAINTS  
... INTERESTED?

image: St Brendan, Fenit, Kerry & St Brigid, Kildare

# THE VOICES OF IRELAND

Many centuries ago the “voice of the Irish” called out to Patrick. Today many voices call out again. Some express anger at once-honoured institutions which have betrayed their trust. Some speak out against God. Others shout down the stranger in their midst. Some turn to idols of fortune or fame. Many search and question about the journey ahead.

Other voices recall Ireland’s roots as a land of saints and scholars, of monastic foundations, which were people’s “villages of God”. A new generation now explores fresh expressions of such a monastic spirituality, and new shoots are growing. We are part of that and invite you to consider whether you are part of it also.

## ANCIENT WAYS

Institutions die when they cease to ask what is life-giving. Yet there is a part of us that wishes to live for God alone, to create sacred spaces around life’s treadmill, to sustain rhythms of prayer and hospitality, and to find a soul friend who will share our journey.

## NEW MONASTICS

In one place a community of married and single people buy nearby homes, share an organic garden and meet daily for prayer.

In the USA Catholics and Protestants have issued a manifesto called *Twelve Marks of A New Monasticism*.

In Ireland you can find out about some fresh expressions of monastic spirituality at the [www.newmonasticismsireland.org](http://www.newmonasticismsireland.org) website.

# CAIRDE AN ANAMA

*Cairde an Anama* (Friends of the Soul) is the Irish branch of the international dispersed *Community of Aidan and Hilda*. We are rooted in the early Irish {"Celtic"} monastic tradition. In the Irish branch we take our inspiration from the Irish saints Brigid [Bríd] and Brendan [Breandán].

Our *Way of Life* is universal, and life-giving. Each member works out their own personal application of it, establishing a rhythm of prayer, work, and re-creation, and share their faith journey with an *Anamchara* [Soul Friend]. They seek to live simply, cherish creation, and share in healing the land and other broken relationships.

Members include Catholic, Protestant, Charismatic and Orthodox. We use a daily *Celtic Prayer Book* which draws on all these traditions and especially on the Irish roots. We wear a Celtic cross as an act of witness. We're inspired by Irish saints: Brigid, Brendan, Ciaran, Columcille, Kevin.

We honour Brendan because he is the well known Irishman who stepped into his coracle in faith and trusted God to guide him on his journey across the sea. His example of faith and his sense of God's presence and purpose inspire us also. If we choose to make an annual vow we thus call ourselves *Voyagers* and use his example as our guide in the spiritual coracle of our life and work.

We honour Brigid because she was the pre-eminent leader of spiritual communities in her day. Her example of faith and her capacity to guide others on their journey of faith sets her apart and her legacy carries great significance.

Brigid and Brendan encapsulate the two halves of a whole, male and female, adventurer and wise counsellor, faithful and just, working as soul-friends for the common good of all.

Our community is open to men and women of faith, married or single, members of churches or of none. We seek a fresh and vibrant way to live our faith; a dispersed supportive community

The Community has two Guardians who oversee different aspects of its life and function. We guide those who wish to enquire about our Way of Life; we invite those—who wish to explore this mode more deeply—to become *Explorers*; we invest those—who wish to commit to an annual vow to follow their Way of Life contextualised for their personal circumstance—with the name *Voyager*. Always with the support of their Soul Friend who is in tune with our ethos.

The Founding Guardian of the *Community of Aidan & Hilda*, the Revd Ray Simpson, whose family live in Ireland, is a well known author whose many books (all available online) include:

- \* *Exploring Celtic Spirituality*
- \* *New Celtic Monasticism for everyday people* (the text and commentary on the Community's Way of Life)
- \* *The Celtic Prayer Book* in 4 vols

To contact *Cairde an Anama* please email:  
[contact@cairdeananama.ie](mailto:contact@cairdeananama.ie)

for more information please visit our website  
[www.cairdeananama.ie](http://www.cairdeananama.ie)

*We arise today in the wisdom of the One who brought to birth the giant plains, the water and the first beings.*

*We arise today in the brightness of the One who created the blazing sun, the shining stars and the twinkle in our eyes.*

*We arise today in the mercy of the One who gave us dreams and memories and hearts.*

*Amen*