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## St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League of New York



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## SAINT BRIDGET OF SWEDEN

By CARL-AXEL SELVIN

*"And for a breath of ecstasy  
 Give all you have or could have been."*

## DEAR READER:

Pause with me for a moment and be ready to accompany me on a long journey. It takes us over land and sea, over lakes and moors, to a secluded country-manor house, Finsta, located in the Province of Uppland, Central Sweden, for here was born Anno Domini, 1303, one of the greatest personalities of the Middle Ages, later raised to the Altars of the Church, and she has since carried the name of Sweden all over the world: St. Bridget of Sweden.

St. Bridget, or Birgitta, was of noble birth, being the daughter of the Provincial Governor of Uppland, and several of her ancestors had served in the Privy-council of the King. Her mother was a daughter of the Earl of Eka and a grandniece of Earl Birger, of the royal Folkunga-line, founder of the city of Stockholm.

Birgitta was the child of a good father and a pious mother, fervent in religion. Those were the days when to be Christian was to be Catholic. Sweden was yet happy in the arms of Mother Church. The sixteenth century and its heresies had not yet come. In the long winter eves she heard by the fireside the legends and

stories of the martyrs who first brought the Faith to Sweden, and when four years of age she went with her mother to daily Mass. Such is the background on which her childhood will be seen.



At the age of seven Birgitta lost her saintly mother (she and her husband Birger Persson of Brahé, were both interred in the Cathedral of Upsala). Already in tender years Birgitta received celestial messages like the prophets of old, and in her intensely rich spiritual life, she was given the privilege to see beyond the veil of time.

When nine years of age she was awakened at night by someone calling her by name. Over the little altar in her room she beheld a shining white apparition of Our Lady holding a crown in her hand saying: "If you desire this crown, my child, come." When Birgitta came near, Our Lady put the crown on her head, so Birgitta could plainly feel its weight around her forehead. . . . Then the vision disappeared but from her memory it never vanished. . . . It matters but little if this was a dream or a vision: The child came.

RIGHT REVEREND MONSIGNOR STILLEMANS RETIRES AS SPIRITUAL  
DIRECTOR OF THE LEAGUE

WITH heartfelt sorrow the members of St. Ansgar's League have learned that Monsignor Stillemans, on account of ill health, has withdrawn from all his charges and consequently also from his spiritual directorship of the League.

Monsignor accepted the leadership of our League in 1923 and has thus for eight years, as our third Spiritual Director, led the League in its ever-growing work.

We owe Monsignor a great debt of gratitude for the deep interest he has always taken in the work and in the members, and for the hospitality with which he made the Belgian Bureau our headquarters and permitted our meetings to be held there.

At the meeting of November 12, the Rev. O. A. Nys was asked to extend to Monsignor our heartiest thanks

and our best wishes for a speedy and complete recovery. All the members adhered by rising.

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As the fourth Spiritual Director of St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League of New York, His Eminence, Cardinal Hayes, has appointed Rev. John LaFarge, S.J., and again the League is to be congratulated on the choice.

Father LaFarge, Associate Editor of *America*, has through several years proved his interest in the League, the development of which he has seen with joy. Father LaFarge, who reads and understands the Scandinavian languages, has often written on the Church in Scandinavia and on the Catholic literature in these countries. Our new Spiritual Director has graciously offered room for the meetings of the League at 329 West 108th Street, New York City.

Some time later she had another vision. It was a night when she could not fall asleep. The room was dark but suddenly she saw a shining light in the form of a crucifix. It became so lifelike and real. She beheld all the nails driven through Our Savior's hands and feet, the crown of thorns, the drops of blood running down into His eyes, blinding them. . . . Her heart was near breaking from sorrow and compassion and she exclaimed: "Oh, my Lord, who has done this to Thee." And a voice, sounding like the whisper of the wind in the tall grass in the moats outside Finsta Castle, said: "Those who despise me and forget my love."

Birgitta longed for the quiet life in the monastery, and, in the judgment of men, she, if any, was "called." But now, after centuries, we clearly can see the hand of God, forming the life and destiny of Birgitta, for, as we shall see later, God had destined her for work of worldwide scope: admonishing popes, emperors and kings, foundress of great and influential religious orders, gaining the name of "The great Mystic of the North," whose fervent spirit is felt to this day, and whose mystical experiences are a marvel for all time.

Following the custom of their time, her father had planned marriage between his daughter and a Knight of his own choice. So now we see a wedding all arranged for, without the bride having anything to say about it. Only thirteen years of age, small and fair, she must have looked like a child dressed up. This was Birgitta, and the groom was the eighteen years old Ulfo Gudmarson,

son of one of her father's friends. She would have preferred to stay at home, devoted to the poor, or to have spent her life in the monastery, but Birgitta saw in her marriage to Ulfo the will of God, and like the valiant women of the Book of Proverbs she began to look well to the ways of her house, Ulfosa Castle, Province of Ostrogothia. And even across the remote distance of centuries, it is perfectly clear, that theirs was a marriage made in Heaven.

At her marriage the young bride found herself something like a Princess. She had immense wealth, broad domains, dependents and a circle of rich friends. Luxurious meals were served and the clothing worn was rich in texture and ornament. Silver and gold was plentiful, not only for the tables, but on the belts and ornaments of the men. There was plenty of armor at Ulfosa, with hangings of tapestry, embroidered in silk and gold. The hospitality of Ulfosa was proverbial, and guests from far and near filled the great halls. And the center of it all was the little Birgitta. But how little did any of the many guests know that their young hostess was really in the midst of all her riches, living a life of mortification, a life of penance. Under her clothes she wore a prickly haircloth. If she said a hasty word in the busy household she put bitter herbs in her mouth. Everyday, before sitting down to dine, she served twelve poor people at her table. On Thursdays she washed their feet and kissed them, in memory of Our Lord.

Despite their boundless hospitality Ulfo's fortune in-

creased, but a large share of it was always kept for Christ and His poor. Churches and schools were built, and hospices already in existence were put in order and new ones were opened. There was something wonderful about her charity, for it seemed to reach out to all.

Here we see Birgitta as a busy housewife, keeping house to perfection. The spinning wheels and looms went merrily, the hop-gardens, orchards and fields were well cultivated. There were four sons and four daughters, and the wise mother took care that, as they grew old, they should get in touch with her beloved poor. She took them to the bedside of the sick, because, she said, as they should become treasurers of Christ, they should learn their work in good time.

Later on, when Ulfo was raised to a high office in the state and had the care of the whole Province, Birgitta found time to study Swedish and Roman law, so as to be able to help him. Terrible civil wars swept the country, making the history of Sweden a tangled story of bloodshed and struggle. Even Ulfo had to take up arms. Birgitta herself helped him to put on the armor. When he was gone Birgitta turned to prayer and austerity and took short sleep on the floor beneath the crucifix.

As a member of one of the leading families of the country Birgitta was at the age of thirty-three called to the court of the King. As mistress of ceremonies to the Queen, she had charge of the Royal household and had ample knowledge of what was going on. She went to live at the King's palace and had to wear robes of State and a jewelled coronet. King Magnus and his Queen were newly married, as frivolous a couple that ever amused themselves in a palace. King Magnus was a weakling. His life at Stockholm was a whirl of feasting and pleasure. He let the people be crushed by taxes to pay for his extravagances, and the money affairs of his country were in a terrible state. Birgitta saw it all with sorrow and regret, but at this time she had nothing to rest her influence upon, although the King was a distant relative of hers and the Queen a grandniece of St. Louis (nee Blanche of Namur). Birgitta had to retire from a hopeless task, and meantime the dissatisfaction with the King grew in the country. But, as often is the way, one failure will pave the way to future success, so here. A time came when she returned to the Palace at Stockholm, speaking as one having powers, as we shall presently see.

When married twenty-five years Birgitta and Ulfo left home for a pilgrimage to the grave of St. James in Compostella in Spain. We, who live in the age of railroads, automobiles and airships, cannot possibly imagine the hardships and inconveniences of a long journey in those far off days. The pestilence, called the black death, was abroad at the time, adding to the danger of the pilgrims,

and highwaymen and rovers were everywhere. Coming back from Compostella Ulfo fell deathly ill at Arras in France, and upon Bridget's advice and fervent prayer that he be spared, he vowed that if he be allowed to return home he would pass his remaining days in some religious house. He recovered, and kept his vow. Upon their return to Sweden he attended for the last time the meeting of the counsel of state, and he put all his affairs in order. Then, commending the younger children to Birgitta, he went to Alvastra, a cistercian monastery located not far from his home, Ulfosa. He was not a monk, but a guest of the cloister, for, when he lay on his deathbed three years later we find him receiving the white habit, that he might die in the robe of St. Bernhard. An exception to the Abbey rule was made for Birgitta; she was allowed to stay at the guesthouse, so as to be with her husband during his last days. Ulfo thanked her for leading him heavenward and for all her helpfulness since she became his little bride, twenty-eight years before. Then he took the "fingergold" (ring) from his finger, giving it back to her. They talked of Paradise, and when he was dead, Birgitta closed his eyes in peace, realizing that they had parted only for a little while. Upon reading the records of this far off time, can one help seeing the greatness of their love? It shines across five centuries.

Birgitta lingered at Alvastra and from now on strange things began to happen. One day, when kneeling in prayer in the Abbey-church, she heard a voice speaking to her in a way never heard before. In her humility she feared a delusion from the devil and fled to the sacraments of penance and communion. But the voice came again and after the third time she feared not. Christ was calling her soul to be His spouse. . . .

For Birgitta a new life of frequent ecstasies began. The veil between heaven and earth seemed to have fallen away. Christ and His Mother, Angels and Saints, looked in upon her any hour of the day or night. Birgitta was amazed. . . . She feared that unworthiness would drive Our Lord away, so she plunged deep into humiliation and penance. One feels how real and human she was when one reads how she blamed herself for not being able to keep her mind off food on fastdays. Taking bread and water, she remembered the good things that used to be on the tables at Ulfosa and sometimes "could think of nothing else." On Fridays she drank gall and dropped hot wax in an open wound on her arm. Her clothing was poor and coarse. She arose at midnight to recite the psalms, and she slept on the bare floor, with her arms extended as in prayer.

Although of an intensely rich contemplative nature Birgitta also had a very practical turn of mind. One day

we find her again at the palace of the King, sent by Divine command to announce the anger of God. Birgitta had abundant knowledge of what was going on. Then came the Divine inspiration and she went before King Magnus with a new power. She was not in court robes now, but in the gray dress and black veil of a poor widow, and this time King Magnus listened to her.

She laid down the rules, how he was to reform, from the smallest details of life at court to the taxation of his kingdom. He was to study the lives of the heroes of Sweden, to learn what others had done for their country. In dispensing justice, he was to allow no delay, to permit no bribes, there was to be no regards for anything but truth. The money for the royal extravagances had been squeezed out of the poverty of the people. Large parts of the land in the country had become waste and common, because the laborers had lost heart, having to pay nearly all in taxes to the Crown. Upon advice of Birgitta, King Magnus granted freedom from taxes for ten years to all who would take up cultivation of the waste land. At once plowing and sowing began. Famine was prevented. (Shall we call this a Bridgittine moratorium?) Upon reading one of the latest textbooks in history for the schools in Sweden, in which large space is devoted to St. Bridget, one cannot but admire the splendid intelligence and energy of this wonderful woman, one of the greatest personalities of her nation for all times. And the Swedish nation to this day, although with a Protestant government, holds her name in honor for the public good she did. And on her death-day, July 23, the old monastery church, at Vadstena, in which her relics are resting, is the goal of princely family-members as well as of humble workers. As an example of how vividly and real St. Birgitta lives in the memory of the Swedish people, despite "reformation" *et al* I recall when a few years ago I was visiting in my native Sweden, I also made a pilgrimage to St. Bridget's shrine, the venerable old Vadstena with its beautiful Abbey-church, St. Bridget's Church (now an episcopal parish church). It was with greatest difficulty we could secure a room in any hotel in the little town, so great was the influx of people from all over the country, the following day being St. Bridget's death-day. There was to be a "Matin" in the early morning and a "High Mass" at noon and a Latin Vesper in the evening. We went to the Vesper, and I willingly admit, with a good portion of curiosity, as we knew, it being the non-Catholics having charge of the celebration. Arriving at the church at dusk we found the very large church illuminated by wax candles only. There must have been many hundreds of them, giving to everything this beautiful mellow glow that "live" candles alone can give. The shrine contain-

ing the relics had been lifted from its customary resting place and placed in front of the high altar, surrounded by tall candles and red roses and beautiful white lillies. . . . We found an Archbishop in a fourteenth century episcopal robe conducting the service, assisted by a multitude of vested clergy. The litany and the hymns were all in Latin. With peculiar feeling we listened to the beautiful strains of the well-known Birgittiner hymn: "Rosa rorams bonitatum, Stilla stellans claritatum, Birgitta, vas gratia." This hymn was written by St. Bridget's faithful friend, the saintly Bishop of Lincoping, Nicolaus Hermanni. He was the last Swede to receive the honor of beatification, the "Reformation" and other upheavals stopping all other causes. At last came St. Bridget's own favorite hymn: Ave Maris Stella. These two hymns are sung, the second one daily, the first one on all feast days in all existing Bridgittine monasteries in the world. At the end of the service a long line of delegates from various societies came forward, placing wreaths on the shrine. In later years the Catholics have arranged a special pilgrimage to the shrine, but not on July 23, so as not to interfere with the non-Catholic celebration. (See ST. ANSGAR'S BULLETIN, 1930.) But now I must go back to my article.

After having put the affairs of the king and his kingdom right, Birgitta returned again to Alvastra Abbey, and it was here, during one of her ecstasies, that Our Lord revealed to her a plan of a religious order she was to found for the glory of our Most Holy Savior and His Blessed Mother. During continued ecstasy she was given the rules and plans of her order, and Peter the Prior wrote it down in Latin. Now by mentioning Prior Peter I think it is quite appropriate to say a word of this man, figuring so conspicuously in St. Bridget's life and history. He was the Prior of the Cistercian Abbey of Alvastra, not far from Birgitta's home, Ulfosa, and as I already have told, it was here her husband Ulfo died. And all four of Birgetta's sons were brought here for their training and education. In co-operation with Birgitta's father-confessor, Father Olav, of the nearby Dominican convent at Skening (both lifelong friends of Birgitta, accompanying her to Rome and on her many pilgrimages), he wrote down in Latin the mystical experiences of Birgitta, so simple and so human, although a marvel for all times, never so completely lost in light that we cannot understand her. . . . Everything was revealed to her, even to the future habit of the Sisters and brethren. It was to be a double convent and the rules correspond fundamentally to the rules of some other orders (in particular to the Augustinians), but most of it was entirely new. Much could be said of this monastic foundation, its rules and its developments, for be it

known that this Order became one of the largest and most important during the Middle Ages. Royalties counted it an honor to be members of the chapter and daughters of the highest nobility were found among its members. This was particularly the case in Sweden and in England, where the Bridgittine Fathers also gained the reputation for learning and scholastic achievement. The Order spread to various countries of Europe, yea, to this day we find convents of St. Birgitta or the Order of the Most Holy Saviour as the official name is in England, Germany, Sweden, Holland, Switzerland and Italy, living and working in the spirit of St. Bridget. The history of this Order is extremely interesting, and perhaps I will be given an opportunity to write something about it in the near future.

As mentioned before, Birgitta was given practically the whole rule of her Order while in ecstasy, but now her next step was to get Papal approbation, sanctioning the same. Through Divine command she was told to go to Rome "where the ground has been wet of the blood of the martyrs." Now it happened that the life of Birgitta covers just about the same years as the exiles of the Popes at Avignon, forced to leave Rome by the French kings under whose powers they now were. The Papal court became luxurious, religion suffered. Birgitta saw in this a degradation, yea, a disaster for the whole Christendom. Before starting out for Rome Birgitta sent a letter on parchment to the Pope in Avignon, and when she arrived in Rome we find that the confessor of the Pope consulted her as to the will of God.

Great saints arose in the fourteenth century, and two of them, St. Catherine of Siena and St. Bridget of Sweden, had the same mission. They were instrumental in bringing the Pope back to Rome. Different in age, country and temperament, they were both living lives of prayer and ecstasy. Both being great lovers of Christ, were devoted to the interest of souls, with that sort of devotion that does not reckon difficulties and that never gives up. For thirteen years she labored ceaselessly for this cause. She wrote to Pope Urban, to the Roman people, to the kings of England and France. Pope Urban came to Rome for the jubilee year 1350, but returned again to Avignon against the warning of Birgitta and . . . died.

Interesting, indeed, it is to read the old chronicle written some time after Birgitta's death by the then Lady Abbess of Vadstena, Margaret Clausson-Oxenstern, in which she tells in quaint old Swedish about Birgitta's audience with Pope Urban. Two of Birgitta's sons also had come to Rome, and Birgitta went with both to see the Pope. The chronicle tells us that the two sons were very different in both appearance and mind. When arriv-

ing at the palace of the Popes Bridget and one of her sons were in the somber garb of penitent pilgrims, but the other son appeared in costly clothes, in velvet and ermine, in heavy gold and silver chain and belt. Good Lady Abbess' diary goes quite into details describing this scene, saying, "That his cloak was trimmed with countless ermine skins, running up and down outside his cloak, so when he moved it appeared as if all the animals were alive." He gained the reputation of being a very handsome man, being of the robust, stocky build of the northern heroes. Now after having mentioned in particular this son of St. Bridget it is perhaps not out of place to mention the peculiar manner in which he met his death, because it gives us better than anything else a picture of the woman who later should become St. Bridget of Sweden, and chief patron saint of her country. Some years later we find Birgitta making a pilgrimage to a place in southern Italy. Among others in her company were her daughter Catherine and her two sons. At this time the whole of southern Italy consisted of the kingdom of Naples and Sicily and the reigning sovereign over the kingdom was at this time the beautiful but lustful Queen Joanna (Giovanna). When told that Birgitta was to pass through her Capital City she made all preparations to receive her with royal honor and dignity. Upon entering the city Birgitta and her company were met at the city gate by the queen. In compliance with the then prevailing court custom Birgitta and her company came forward to kiss the hand of the queen, but the handsome son greeted the queen with a bold kiss on her lips. The old chronicle tells us that the queen was deeply infatuated in this son of Birgitta, and announced her intention of making him her consort and spouse, despite the fact that she had four other husbands alive. When told what was about to happen, Birgitta answered, that God Himself shall forbid such an outrage. She retired from her company and spent all night in prayer. Towards morning the son fell into a deathly sickness and before the end of the day he was dead. . . . There was great lamentation in the city and the queen was not to be consoled and, loudly weeping, she followed the funeral procession of her beloved. Everybody was crying when his body was taken to the grave. Only one in the procession did not weep. With her face a little paler than usual and with her hands extended as in prayer: The seeress of the North.

But now we will return again to the papal audience. When received by Pope Urban Lady Bridget fell upon her knees, asking for the jubilee indulgences for herself and her sons. The Pontiff fingered the heavy gold and silver chains on the one son saying, that to wear such a weight must be a penance for his sins. Whereupon Birgitta, who had not lived at the court of Stockholm for



nothing, said: "Holy Father, if you will see to the indulgences for my son I shall see to the silver belt." Soon after the audience with Pope Urban a long cherished dream of Birgitta's became a reality: The papal sanction and approval of her Order. For this she had labored and prayed for at least twenty years. Her own property at Vadstena was waiting, and here the first Abbey should be located. So it also came to pass, and Vadstena became the motherhouse of all Bridgittine cloisters in Europe.

Birgitta's daughter, Catherine (later canonized under the name St. Catherine of Sweden), had now joined Birgitta in Rome and the two never since separated. In this way St. Catherine, who became the first Abbess at Vadstena Monastery, served her novitiate under her mother for several years, thereby being thoroughly familiar with St. Bridget's ideas concerning the Order. Beautiful are the legends of St. Catherine of Sweden but, as that would lead me too far, I must forego it now.

The two Swedish ladies, Birgitta and Catherine, soon became familiar figures among the pilgrims in Rome. It seems that Birgitta had turned her house, near Campo di Fiore, into a Hospice for poor Swedish pilgrims to Rome. Wondrous things soon began to be whispered about the elder of the two ladies. Cures were effected through the touch of her hand, when human skill and treatment had been futile, and spiritual favors as marvelous as the cures were reported everywhere. At her house she received the poor, the afflicted and sinners. Her power of converting sinners had already been looked upon in Stockholm as something like a miracle, bearing witness of her mission. In Rome, having quickly learned the Italian, she put it to good use in attracting and saving the lost. Her house, Casa di Santa Brigida, soon became the meeting place for innumerable people seeking advice, consolation and solace, and her reputation went all over the land. Nearby is the Church of St. Lawrence, in which Birgitta received her Angelic messages. During her ecstasies she saw an angel, speaking to her in her own language, giving her the twenty-one lessons to be read on different days of the week in her new Order. (This manuscript, *Sermo Angelus*, is still preserved in Rome.)

When seventy years old, Birgitta received divine inspiration calling her to visit the Holy Land. Despite her age and infirmity Birgitta set out for the long pilgrimage to the Holy places, accompanied by her daughter Catherine, her son Birger, the prior Peter and others. They reached Jerusalem in May, 1372. With her heart full of celestial joy, she prayed in Jerusalem and at the Holy Sepulcher. While praying at Via Dolorosa it is told that her face "shone like a radiant light," and in her ecstasy Christ appeared to her with His eyes full of tears and His body covered with a sweat of agony. She

witnessed the whole Passion, until the Mother of Sorrows closed His eyes and He was taken down from the cross. Bridget found herself following the sacred burden in company with the Blessed Virgin, St. John, St. Mary Magdalen, the Holy Women and a multitude of Angels.

After this pilgrimage the soul of Birgitta was now literally saturated with devotion to the Passion of Christ. But her days on earth were now at an end. One of the most beautiful chapters in the life of this great Nordic Saint, a life so overflowing rich in marvelous and celestial things, seems to me, in her last earthly days, which were a real martyrdom: suffering in body and soul, she went through a period of desolation and darkness. She ceased to have either ecstasy or consolation; but—and here again we see her supernatural strength of mind breaking through like a radiant star—we are told that she had the courage to prefer desolation to ecstasy, remembering the abandonment of Our Lord upon the cross.

This dark period did not last to the end. On the feast day of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the Blessed Virgin appeared to her, comforting her, saying: "You are beloved by my Son and me and that is why your sufferings are prolonged." It was revealed to her that in Jerusalem she had been given back her baptismal innocence, but "that the negligences and defects of life had to be expiated by patience under infirmities."

The day after this she beheld in a vision the mysterious manner of the Presence of Our Lord upon the altar. "Now is the hour of consolation," He said, "prepare for the fulfillment of My promise. Henceforth you are not only My Spouse, but a religious, the Abbess of Vadstena." He told her that her labors had now come to an end and to assemble certain persons in five days and assign to them their duties in the new order. Then she was to enter the Cloisters of Heaven.

She settled everything, even to the hour of the Abbey Mass in winter, wrote a letter of advice to her son Birger, who was likely to fill a high office in the state, and then, calling her daughter, Catherine, she said, she was going tomorrow. This was the feast of St. Mary Magdalene.

Early on this day, before the sun had risen over the hills of the Campagna, Christ appeared to her for the last time on earth. The room outside her death-chamber was full of kneeling people before the Mass was to begin. Most likely she was dressed in the brown robe of St. Francis, as it is known, that since her early days in Sweden she had been a tertiary of said order. After Holy Communion and Extreme Unction she spoke to those around her in ecstasy. Out of humility she had asked to be lifted from the bed and laid upon the board to die, and as a priest just arrived from Jerusalem offered up the Holy Sacrifice, her Mass of thanksgiving, she

raised her head and said in a loud voice: "Lord, unto Thine hands I commend my spirit. . . ." St. Bridget had entered the cloisters of Heaven. The news of the death of Birgitta spread like wildfire all over Rome and all over Europe as well. In accord with the prevailing custom, Birgitta had wished to be buried the day of her death, but towards evening when her body was taken to the nearby church, followed by Cardinals in procession with the nobles of Rome, priests and a multitude of people, miracles without number began to happen. Sick and afflicted were carried to the church and were healed through touch of her body. Instead of mourning there was outburst of thanksgiving and Magnificat and psalms of praise were heard everywhere. So strong was the feeling of the people that the authorities had to let the body rest in the church until the third night, when it was secretly interred in a marble tomb, given for the purpose by a noble Roman lady, whose sister was one of the miraculously healed through St. Bridget's intercession. Pilgrimages began immediately at her tomb, and in a short time the tomb was completely hidden by *ex-votos* in all languages.

When the news of her death reached her homeland, Sweden, the old chronicle tells us, that "it was received, not as a message of death, but like a tidings of great joy, as if the armies of the country had won a great victory or as if a ship, loaded with gold and precious stones, had reached its shores." And when her body was brought back to Sweden to be entombed at Vadstena the following year, it turned out to be a triumphal procession. The procession, accompanied by her daughter Catherine and

her son Birger, was met at the border by Archbishops and the Bishops of Sweden, priests and people from all over the country; yea, even from neighboring countries, flocked to see the homecoming of the one, who, while already living, was found worthy "of taking part in Our Blessed Mother's, the Queen of Heaven's concilium, and who had, so to say, died in the arms of Christ." Miracles without number took place also here, and many attested miracles are related in her canonization bull from this event. It must have been a wonderful event for Catherine and Birger, and I am again tempted to quote the old chronicle in its quaint old Swedish, when of the homecoming of St. Bridget it says: "That the blind saw, the deaf heard and the lame walked. Sins and hatred ceased and mothers rejoiced in the healing of their children."

So goes the wonderful story of the great Patroness of our League, St. Bridget of Sweden. Oh, that only an echo or a faint reflex of her burning love of Christ and His work on earth would be awakened among us all, but especially among us, league-members and St. Bridget's own countrymen, then the future of our League would be secured. With this I will end my little article and cannot find a more appropriate term to do it with than with the words found in St. Bridget's own Litany, read in the Swedish churches: "Holy Birgitta, Mighty Patroness of our land and nation: Intercede for us by the throne of God."

*Cleveland, Ohio, Day of St. Bridget, 1931.*

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## A SAINT

By VAUGHN FRANCIS MEISLING

SILENT and rapt he stands, he has put down  
 Rebellion in his heart, and spurned a crown;  
 Laurels that they would brand him with he's cast  
 Into the outer darkness, and the vast  
 Room of his heart is bright with love and pity:  
 Greater he is than he that took a city!

By REV. LAMBERT J. ERKENS, S.M.A., *Chappaqua, N. Y.*

## I

## THE CATHOLIC PAST, PROTESTANTISM, RESTORATION

**D**URING the eighth and ninth centuries, Viking expeditions brought the Scandinavians in contact with Christian civilization and many of their warriors embraced the Faith. This prepared the way for the preaching of the Gospel in their own country.

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In Denmark, the early efforts of the Frisian Bishop Willibrord in 739 and of Archbishop Ebbo of Rheims in 823 to convert the nation were frustrated by internal turmoils. But Chief Harald, on a journey to Louis the Pious, the purpose of which was to implore his aid, had received Baptism with all his retinue. Now he helped the Frankish monk, Ansgar, to spread the Faith over Denmark and from there to Sweden.

In 1014 the Danish King Canute the Great added four dioceses to the four ones already existing, and brought in bishops, priests, monks and nuns from England and Germany for the foundation of monasteries and schools.

At that time also King Olaf of Sweden accepted Baptism and gave such a new impetus to the progress of Christianity in his country, that no later than 1104 the Metropolitan See of Scandinavia was transferred from Hamburg-Bremen to Lund in Sweden.

In Norway from 880 on, King Hakon and his successor Olaf introduced the Christian Religion, and in 1015, under Olaf Haroldsson, the saintly king and martyr, it became the prevailing religion. On the grave of Olaf was raised later the cathedral of Trondhjem, the principal of the four dioceses of Norway, to which was transferred in 1152 the metropolitan jurisdiction of the land.

Finland received the Faith in 1157, when King Erik of Sweden undertook a crusade through the country with the Bishop of Upsala, Henrik, who now remained in Finland, preaching the Gospel for which he died a martyr. Rantamakai became the Metropolitan See of Finland in 1240. The two dioceses of Finland have had illustrious Bishops, and foremost amongst them were Hemming, the great organizer of churches and libraries; Olai Tavast, apostle and promoter of arts; Olaus Magni, who settled the dispute between Charles VII and the Sorbonne on the responsibility of the burning of Joan of Arc.

Until the gloomy time of the wrongly-named Reformation, the Scandinavian countries were centers of fervent Catholic life, in which also highly flourished the fine arts of sculpture, painting, literature and music. Protestantism was brought into Scandinavia by the despotism of kings, who deceived the people.

In Denmark King Christian II invited in 1520 the notorious Reinhardt and Karlstadt to preach Lutheranism. The nation expelled them and soon thereafter deposed the king himself. His uncle and successor, Frederic I, received the crown on the sworn promise to defend the Catholic Faith. Yet he allowed the Lutherans to propagate their doctrines, and his proclamation of religious freedom at the diet of Odense in 1527 meant only the beginning of freedom for Lutherans and of a systematic persecution of the Catholic Church. Lutheranism finally succeeded because it maintained all the rites and ceremonies of the Catholic Church, to make believe that there was no changing of religion.

In Norway, which belonged to the throne of Denmark, Christian II began to suppress the monasteries in 1519 and these became the possession of the king's favorites. Here also people were merely seduced away from their ancestral Faith, though the Catholic Church died out in this country only in the beginning of the seventeenth century. In Sweden and Finland the confiscation of Church properties was the main object of Gustavus Vasa in breaking off the connection of his country with Rome. On political grounds he banished the hierarchy, priests and monks, to whom secret Lutherans succeeded in 1524. At the diet of Vasteras in 1527, he was proclaimed protector and supreme Bishop of Sweden, and following this he brought the Church into helpless subordination to the State. Holy Mass, veneration of the Saints and pilgrimages were continued in order to dupe the people and every revolt was checked in bloodshed. At the second diet of Vasteras in 1544 the tyrant imposed new persecutions. Yet it was not until 1593 that the rupture with Rome was consummated at the assembly of Upsala to the demands of which the Pope could not possibly consent.

In Finland also Gustavus Vasa was the instigator of Protestantism by appointing there the renegade monk, Martin Skytte, as Bishop.



This inflexible Lutheranism disappeared only in Finland under Russian sovereignty which granted the Catholic Church, first in 1869 and later in 1889, the right to reenter the country. For many years the priests of the Sacred Heart have exercised apostolate in Finland and, when in 1921 Dr. Buchx was appointed the first vicar apostolic, a new milestone was set in the laborious campaign to reconquer the lost territory. In Sweden Gustav III granted foreigners in 1780 permission to freely practice their religion. To Swedes themselves it yet remained forbidden until 1860 to become Catholics under penalty of expulsion and since 1873 only at the age of eighteen, may Swedes enter the Catholic Church. In 1893 Dr. Albert Bitter became the first vicar apostolic and from then on churches and institutes were again established. Yet it was only under Bishop Muller, and chiefly since the great war, that real religious liberty returned, and with it also better prospect for the future. Protestant Sweden seems to fear the zeal of the Catholic clergy, of the two established religious congregations of Sisters and of the Catholic laity! On May 18, 1930, the whole press sounded a warning against Catholic propaganda, signed by prominent Lutheran clergy and officials. To this the Catholic weekly calmly remarked that it saw in the Protestant appeal an encouraging indication of the present position of the Church in Sweden!

In Norway the first Catholic parish came into existence in 1843, though it was not until 1845 that a law freed the non-Lutherans from obligations towards the State church. A Frenchman, Father Bernard, became the first prefect apostolic in 1868. Owing to the able zeal and courageous attitude of his successor, Dr. Fallize, once the priest congressman in the Parliament of Luxemburg and first vicar-apostolic of Norway since 1892, the position of the Church in the country of the Midnight Sun has been greatly improved. The conversion of the well-known Sverenson and the theologian, Krogh-Tonning, the overthrowing of many historic misstatements by leading historians, the establishment of two Catholic periodicals and of hospitals connected with parishes, are some of the results of Bishop Fallize's time. John Olaf Smit, a Hollander, for six years Bishop of Norway and Spitzbergen, established new parishes and founded in Holland a periodical treating on Norway and a new congregation of Dutch Sisters for Norway which now counts with only a little flock, four Sister congregations and three orders of priests, together with secular clergy. He was succeeded in 1929 by Bishop Olav Offerdahl, the first Norwegian to become bishop since the Reformation, but he died six months after his consecration on a visit to Holland, the country where Olav Engelbrektson, the last pre-Reformation bishop, died in exile!

Three years ago "The Catholic Church" was the daily title on the front page of the whole press in Norway. The writer, Mrs. Martha Steinwick, exposed what she understood as the morals of the Catholic Church—yet not with impunity. Pastor Riesterer sued her and her assertions were proven defamatory and she was condemned in a Protestant court, by Protestant judges. The immense success of the convert and writer, Mrs. Sigrid Undset, also contributes to the progress and influence of the Catholic cause.

In Denmark a royal rescript of 1613 threatened with the penalty of death any ceremony held by a priest and converts with banishment and the confiscation of their property. In spite of that, the Jesuit college of Braunsberg in Germany continued at all times to be frequented by Danish students, who were strengthened there in their Faith or converted to it. After the treaty of Westphalen in 1648 an Italian was appointed vicar-apostolic for the Scandinavian diaspora with residence in Germany. His successors were the famous Danish convert, Niels Steno, and the Bishops of Hildesheim, Osnabruck and Paderborn. In 1841 the coadjutor of Osnabruck, vicar-apostolic of the North, was allowed, though with several restrictions, to exercise his functions in Denmark. Thus far Catholic chapels could only exist in the foreign embassies. From now on the Austrians were permitted to hold public ceremonies on certain occasions. In 1843 the Catholics built their St. Ansgar's church in Copenhagen, though it was only the new constitution of 1849 that guaranteed complete freedom, religious as well as political, and equal rights to all dissenters from the State church. The revolutionary movements and the sweeping away of all religious restrictions was in vogue all over Europe and the Catholics enjoyed the benefits of this wave of freedom. Several societies sprang into life, as also the Catholic paper *Nordisk Ugeblad*. In 1869 Dr. Herman Gruder became the first prefect apostolic of Denmark and in 1892 Msgr. von Euch its first vicar-apostolic. The Jesuits had returned in 1872 after the Kulturkampf, and opened their St. Andrew's College, a center of culture, at Charlottenlund, near Copenhagen. Under the present Bishop Brems the Church has greatly increased her influence with a clergy of eight religious orders and twenty-five seculars, of whom fifteen were natives of Denmark. Eleven congregations of Sisters are conducting hospitals and schools. Amongst the converts are prominent men like Count Holstein-Ledreburg, Count Moltke-Huitfeld, Johannes Jorgensen, Fritz West, the national librarian. Mr. Scavenius, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Knuth Knuthenborg and many others foremost in science and position.

Interesting among all is a town in a corner of Denmark which I wish to recommend to the attention of my readers. It is in the district that was given back to Denmark at the close of the World War after a separation of fifty years from the motherland. Its name is Aaberra. It counts about 9,000 inhabitants, has Danish



*This is the present chapel in Aaberra.*

and German schools, a civic and a Catholic hospital and schools of higher education.

The pastor, Rev. Dr. Joseph Erkens, has free access to schools and hospitals and enjoys everybody's high consideration for his able and tactful zeal. His own very cosmopolitan flock number a hundred and fifty Danes, Poles, Italians, French, Dutch, Germans, etc. Several

families of very mixed religions live scattered at great distances. In the German town of Flensburg the priest goes a few times every month to hear the confessions of French and Italians. "Here indeed is great need of an automobile and blessed will be the generous giver or contributor!"

A drawback more serious than that of the distances is the fact that the so styled St. Ansgar church is none but a tiny chapel of the hospital, an old greenhouse in the garden of the nuns, hardly able to contain forty people. Catholics who see the Protestants go to such gorgeous temples are ashamed to call this chapel their church! The papers announce every week the hours of services and instruction which are attended by a constantly growing number of people. Protestants announce their desire to enter the pale of the Church and sinners make their conversion. But where to find the means to accommodate them in a chapel or church worthy of the name? Aaberra needs a hall or a church as a condition "*sine qua non*" for the return of souls to the Truth! Aaberra's Catholics are people who require help rather than to be asked for help to the cause of God. To Catholic America the pastor directs his appeal!

America is looked upon in Scandinavia as just another huge Protestant country.

The best answer to this false opinion is the publication in Scandinavia of the contributions from America to the great cause of the Catholic Church in Scandinavia, a church for the Catholics of Aaberra donated by the Catholics of America!

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#### THE FIRST OF THE SECOND GENERATION TO BE ORDAINED

HENRY J. ANDERSEN, S.J., WAS ORDAINED ON JUNE 22, THIS YEAR, AT WOODSTOCK, BY ARCHBISHOP CURLEY

FATHER ANDERSEN is the son of the late Henry Andersen and Mary Addely. Mr. Henry Andersen was the Treasurer of St. Ansgar's League and held this position till illness forced him to resign five years later. Their only daughter is Mary S. Tarcissius, Sister of the Good Shepherd. Father Andersen was born in New York, 1898. His first Solemn High Mass was sung in the Church of St. Ignatius of Loyola in New York City on Sunday, the fifth of July, and the members of St. Ansgar's League were invited to attend. On the 29th of November Father Andersen said his Mass for the deceased members of the League.

This goes to prove that the son, like the father, does

not forget the League, and for many years the Danish Catholic Weekly *Nordisk Ugeblad* has been read regularly by the young priest.

We feel certain that this interest will continue, and trust that Father Andersen will get the opportunity to study the language of his forefathers, and thereby be of still greater help to Scandinavians in America who wish to know the doctrine of the Church.

Father Andersen has promised to remember the League in his prayers and in the Holy Sacrifice, and the members will surely also remember the young father in their prayers.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST

MR. OPPERMANN, a Dane, studying for the priesthood at the College of the Propaganda in Rome, has given us the following interesting information:

Scandinavians at present studying for the priesthood in Rome are: At the College of the Propaganda two Danes and one Norwegian. The Norwegian, Mr. Haakon Bergwitz, will be ordained in December this year, and next summer he will be ready to work in his native country. Another Norwegian, Rev. Dr. Alf Hoeg, was ordained last year and will now return home.

In the Collegium Germanicum a Dane is studying, and a Norwegian Benedictine is at the International Benedictine College in Rome.

Besides these in Italy we find Scandinavians preparing for the priesthood in Germany, Austria, France, Belgium and Holland, and many non-Scandinavians who from the very beginning of their preparation have decided to go as missionaries to the Scandinavian countries.

Mr. Oppermann adds that the Scandinavian students at the College of the Propaganda will always feel happy to meet any member of St. Ansgar's League visiting Rome, and will be pleased to show them the wonderful college dedicated this spring by the Holy Father himself, and at which are educated students from more than thirty different nations.

In the *Bulletin* of the Catholic Women's Union of the United States, Effingham, Ill., February 15, 1931, we find an article on the monastery church of Vadstena, Sweden, referred to ST. ANSGAR'S BULLETIN of 1930. It ends in these words: "With St. Catharine of Siena St. Birgitta was one of the great spiritual forces of the fourteenth century whose memory should indeed be honored and kept fresh by Catholic women."

Referring to *America*, March 7, Miss Margaret Howitt, daughter of the poet and author, Mary Howitt, was during

her last years (she died recently at the age of ninety) devoted to preparing a life of St. Bridget of Sweden for which purpose she mastered both medieval and modern Swedish. We hope and trust this life will be finished and soon be accessible to the English reading public.

In the Basilica of Notre Dame de la Garde in Marseille an interesting votive tablet is to be found in the Chapel of St. Peter to the right of the altar. It is in marble and was presented by Queen Alexandra of England in thanksgiving when King Edward VII had recovered from a serious illness. The inscription reads: In thanksgiving for a great grace. Alexandra. (The queen was born a princess of Denmark.)

We have heard from Sister Marie Dominic of the Dominican Sisters of Sick Poor in Cincinnati, Ohio, that they have now their own little convent at 31 East Ninth Street, and there are four Sisters engaged in the work for Souls. Sister M.D. is the former Miss Olga Bjerring of Danish parentage.

It looks as if the demand for Finnish literature has increased since Miss Laitinen has undertaken the distribution of Finnish books. And no wonder, as Miss Laitinen is not only able to understand and read Finnish in spite of her American birth, but she even writes the language and has carried on some of the correspondence in Finnish.

We have received a very encouraging account for the past year, which shows that twenty letters have been received and nineteen letters written and fourteen pieces of Finnish literature have been given out and three Bulletins of 1930.



## DAYS IN ICELAND

By REV. JON SVENSSON, S.J.

From "Nordisk Ugeblad," December 28, 1930

The well-known Icelandic Jesuit and author, Father Jon Svensson, participated as one of the especially invited guests in Iceland's Thousand Years Celebration. In a letter dated July 26, 1930, Hotel Gulfos, Akureyri, he describes some of his impressions that may interest our readers.

## JUNE 23 TO 25—FIRST STOP IN REYKJAVIK

AS the steamer docked Bishop Meulenberg came on board to get me. By auto we reached the mission station Landakot. They received us, *i. e.*, my young German companion and me with great kindness. The entire first floor of the Bishop's residence was placed at our command. We lived here a whole month and over our protest paid nothing for it. The first day the Bishop arranged a festive dinner in our honor. He had three beautiful Icelandic horses in pasture. These he had procured for us, so that we could ride whenever we wanted.

The first day after dinner he took us for a ride on horseback that lasted from 3 p. m. to 10 p. m., inland, to a mission station in Hafnarfjordur. The Sisters at the beautiful hospital there gave us a most hearty welcome.

The port of Reykjavik was filled with foreign battle-ships (English, French, Swedish, etc.). We were invited with the Bishop to come on board, and were received with full honor. Music, a guard of honor that formed an espallier archway, and were shown around by the Commander himself.

The next day the Bishop and I were the guests of the Prime Minister. Here were crowds of guests from foreign countries. An English battle-plane landed in the middle of the port, and one of England's largest dreadnoughts (35,000 tons) steamed into port, together with the French battleship *Suffern*. The Danish royal yacht with King Christian X and the Swedish with the Crown Prince on board anchored at the dock. Shortly afterwards the Bishop and I, with Reykjavik's "400", were invited to a beautiful festival on the Danish royal yacht. For almost four hours the royal couple circulated among the guests, talking pleasantly with each and everyone. The King took me to a quiet corner and spoke with me at great length (he and the Queen had read my Nonni-books) and thanked me heartily for my books. Thus the three first days in Reykjavik passed.

Our big beautiful Catholic church was admired and visited in these days, and also later, after the festival of the Althing, by countless foreign guests, among them the two royal couples. Many English and French Catholic sailors and a number of American and German, etc., came to the services.

## JUNE 29 TO JULY 22—SECOND STOP IN REYKJAVIK

The interim was used for several interesting excursions to the southern part of the island. I gathered impressions for my new book and studied the great strides the country has made. There are now in Iceland several banks that do a thriving business, with a turnover of many hundred million kroner. The business of Iceland is flourishing. They have more than 1,000 kilometers of automobile roads laid out and used by thousands of cars that go all over the island. There are about fifty large fishing steamers, many more than 1,000 smaller motor boats, several modern steamers for foreign commerce, and furthermore, all the modern aids for intercourse: Telegraph, telephone, airplanes, radio, etc.

The population of the small island of slightly more than 100,000 souls has had a profit during the last years of many hundred millions. The yearly business of the fisheries is over one hundred million kroner. Farming, which is now being reorganized, should net more than the fisheries, as the plan now is to proceed along big lines. The country needs this money for all these improvements. They use annually one million for roads and bridges, and more than this amount for schools. In one year they bought more than a thousand automobiles from America.

As a Catholic priest I was especially happy about the great strides the Catholic religion has taken on the island. Sixty years ago when I, as a twelve year old boy, left Iceland, there was not one Catholic—with the exception of a French missionary. Everywhere there was a feeling against the Catholic religion. When I now, in 1930, again visited Iceland, I find a Catholic bishop and several Catholic priests of the Order of Grignon de Montfort. In Landakot, Reykjavik, the most beautiful place in the capital, lies a splendid Cathedral, built by Bishop Meulenberg. The Holy Father, Pius XI, himself has contributed a considerable sum toward the building of this church. The Protestant architect has donated a huge church bell, the biggest in Scandinavia, to this house of God. Next to the church is a Catholic hospital where the sick are tended by the self-sacrificing Sisters (Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambery). In the nearby town, Hafnarfjordur, which is growing rapidly, there is also a

Catholic mission station with a beautiful hospital and lovely chapel. But more important than all this is the fact that the general attitude after Bishop Meulenberg's arrival in Iceland has changed towards the Catholic religion, and the change has been in favor of Catholicism.

One day I met on one of Reykjavik's streets an elderly gentleman, whom I at first took to be an American. He stopped me and asked: "Is not this Pater Jon Svensson?" "Yes it is," I answered. "And I am your brother Frederik." Imagine my surprise. It was sixty years since I last saw my brother Frederik. Another day some Icelandic friends and I took a trip to an island that lies some distance from Reykjavik, out in the ocean. The captain was twelve years old, the mate fourteen.

Everything went fine. The little sailor was wonderful and as careful as an old tar.

On the 17th of July, on a rather long automobile trip to the mountainous districts, we had a surprise that does not happen often. Suddenly we saw over one of the nearest mountains high up in the air the great airship *Graf Zeppelin*, that had come from Friederichshafen in honor of the one thousand year jubilee. For several reasons the beautiful ship had been delayed and had come a little "post festum" and flew for some time over the capital and other cities of the island kingdom.

This and much more of interest that Jon Svensson and his young traveling companions, Viktor, experienced on their Iceland trip, will be told in a new "Nonnibog" to be published in German in the near future.

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#### QUESTION BOX

**O**FTEN the question is asked both by born Catholics and by converts: "When was it decided by the Church to celebrate Holy Mass only in the morning?" The Norwegian weekly, *St. Olav*, gives the answer to this in one of its January numbers from this year. *St. Olav* has taken it from the English paper, the *Tablet*, in which Rev. E. Lester, S.J., says:

"It is not sufficiently generally known that it is not so very long ago that Holy Mass was celebrated from morning till night. It must have been for a very important reason that Pope Pius V (1566-1572) forbade the cele-

bration in the afternoon of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. But at that time communications from one place to the other took longer time than now, and it took time before this regulation was carried through. Even in the seventeenth century Mass was continued to be celebrated in the afternoon. If the Church should again consider it beneficial she will no doubt again introduce the old practice of celebrating Mass also in the evening. An interesting lecture on this subject is said to have been given by an eminent Prelate during the National Eucharistic Congress, lately held in America."

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#### JUST FOR TODAY

LORD, for tomorrow and its needs  
I do not pray;  
Keep me, my God, from stain of sin,  
Just for today.  
Let me both diligently work  
And duly pray;  
Let me be kind in word and deed,  
Just for today.  
Let me no wrong or idle word  
Unthinking say;

Set Thou a seal upon my lips,  
Just for today.  
Let me in season, Lord, be grave,  
In season gay;  
Let me be faithful to Thy grace,  
Just for today.  
So for tomorrow and its needs  
I do not pray;  
But keep me, guide me, love me, Lord,  
Just for today.

—From the *League Bulletin*, Organ of the Paulist League, October, 1931.

## NEWS FROM SCANDINAVIA

TWO aged priests who have spent a life-time in Sweden have this year left the country that has seen their manhood work, to return to their native country. They are Rev. F. Borcka, who has worked upwards of fifty years in the Swedish mission, and who, with regrets, and only on account of increasing infirmity, has decided to give up and take his well-earned otium in Bonn, Germany.

Rev. E. Wessel, who has been in the mission more than forty years, must also, on account of ill health, leave the work he has loved so much and given his life. Father Wessel is seventy-five years of age and withdraws to Münster. He will be very much missed, not only by his congregation, but by all with whom he came into contact. Rev. P. R. Wehner will succeed him as pastor of St. Eugenia Church.

The Union of Catholic Women in Sweden has during its four or five years of existence showed considerable activity. All kinds of social work has been on their program. It is the desire of the Union to establish a home for self-supporting Catholic women in Stockholm.

To help swell the fund for this purpose an evening entertainment was arranged on February 25 in the most exclusive public place in Stockholm, the palm garden and ballroom of the Grand Hotel Royal. Among the many guests filling the beautiful golden room were the Rt. Rev. Bishop Mueller and the Spiritual Advisor and Chaplain of the Union, and many priests from Stockholm. Also the diplomatic corps was well represented. After a wonderful program of music by orchestra and soloists from the Royal Opera, recitation and performance by the opera ballet, a banquet was served, after which the dance started in the ballroom. The event was a great success and brought in about 2,000 kroner. More power to the Catholic Women's Union.

A beautiful celebration took place on the day of the Annunciation this year in Stockholm. On that day Bishop Mueller blessed and dedicated the newly-opened Catholic Young Men's Home and Chapel. It had long been the Bishop's heartfelt desire to establish a home for boys and young men from all over Sweden. Providentially there appeared a helping hand in the person of a Salesian Father of Don Bosco's Congregation of Swedish Descent, Rev. Father Ad. Thornquist. A complex of buildings was bought at St. Eric's-gatan 39, and here is the Catholic Young Men's Home, established under the management of the Salesian Fathers. A Pontifical High Mass was celebrated in the chapel, and in his sermon the

Bishop expressed his joy and thankfulness for the fulfillment of this long cherished dream. May God's blessing rest upon this new little foundation under Don Bosco's name.

A three-days' retreat, with spiritual exercises, took place at Whitsuntide for men at Marielund Convent, near Maria-Ön, in beautiful Lake Malar; for Catholic women, at St. Birgitta's Convent in Djursholm.

During the last year Catholic chapels (temporary) have been established in Lund and Landskrona. The mission in Lund is attended by priests from Malmo, the one at Landskrona from Helsingborg. A lot has been bought in the city of Jonkoping for a permanent chapel or church there.

Open air processions with the Blessed Sacrament on the Feast of Corpus Christi took place this year in several places in Sweden, for example, in Stockholm (St. Eric), Malmo, Helsingborg, Oscarstrom and Forssa.

Two beautiful jubilee celebrations, marking milestones in the Catholic renaissance in Sweden, have taken place this year. The Golden Jubilee of the parish of St. Paul, the Apostle, in Gavle, and the ten years' anniversary of the dedication of St. Arild's Chapel in St. Arild. The Golden Jubilee was celebrated with a Pontifical High Mass at which the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Finland, Dr. J. Buckx, former pastor of St. Paul's, presided, and in an eloquent sermon called attention to the splendid apostolic work accomplished in St. Paul during its fifty years of existence. On the evening of the fourth day (it was preceded by a triduum) a great parish festival took place, enjoyed by the multitude taking part in the celebrations.

St. Arild! Why, many a Swede perhaps never heard the name of it. And small wonder. It is only a small fishing village on the northwestern coast of Skanie. But in later years it has turned out to be quite an up-to-date watering place and summer resort, located as it is in a very beautiful part of the country. The traditions from the Catholic period are particularly rich in this territory. During the Middle Ages St. Arild was well-known for the pilgrimages from Denmark and Sweden to the Shrine of St. Arild, the boy-saint and martyr. The old chapel of St. Arild is now in ruins, but out of the old has the new St. Arild's chapel risen. And this year, on the 5th of July, it was ten years since the dedication of same, and it was celebrated by a Solemn High Mass by its



founder, Monsignor Assarsson from St. Clemen's Church, Helsingborg. The choir from St. Clemen's came out for the occasion, rendering beautiful music. In the afternoon a civic festival took place in Hotel Arild, with a speech by Monsignor, music and dramatic performance and dances, etc. Afterwards the crowd went in procession through the streets, with music and banners flying, to the Chapel, where Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament and a Te Deum ended the beautiful celebration.

During a visit to Iceland this summer Mme. Sigrid Undset received the decoration of the Falcon.

Rev. F. Krijn has left Norway to return to his diocese in Holland. Father Krijn only came to stay for five years, and he has during that time been very active both in parish work and with his pen. Remember his excellent little book "disclosures" (*Afsløringer*) against Martha Steinsvik. His successor as pastor at St. Olav's Church in Oslo will be Rt. Rev. Msgr. Dr. K. Kjelstrup, from Hamar. Rev. Dr. A. Sund, Molde, will succeed Monsignor Kjelstrup in Hamar.

Norway will in the new year be divided into three ecclesiastical parts: Southern Norway with Oslo will be a diocese and the middle and the Northern part will be two Apostolic Prefectures.

During the visit in Oslo of Crown Princess Astrid of Belgium she assisted at Mass in St. Olav's Church.

His Grace, Archbishop J. O. Fallize, has celebrated his sixty years sacerdotal jubilee in his retreat in Luxemburg. The beloved old Prelate, for thirty-five years supreme head of the Church in Norway, was remembered all over his former diocese by the clergy and by the people, who will never forget the good work he has done for the Church and for the benefit of Norway. The old Archbishop is in delicate health.

Martha Steinsvik again comes forward with her attacks on the Church, this time against Lourdes and Konnersreuth.

St. Olav's Union has decided to distribute free of charge Rev. Krijn's book "disclosures" in the towns where Mrs. Steinsvik gives her lectures.

St. Olav's Church, Trondhjem, has been embellished with a new wood carved altar, which was for the first time in use at the evening service the day before the pilgrimage to Stiklestad on the Feast of St. Olav, which was transferred to Sunday, August 2.

Besides the Norwegian pilgrims there also took part several of the four hundred passengers on the Polish tourist steamer *Pollandia* that just happened to be in port. The boat carried forty-five priests among its passengers, and the little church was filled almost to its capacity.

Arendal is to have a new St. Franciskus Hospital. The foundation stone was laid on October 24 under the greatest sympathy from the whole town. The St. Franciskus Sisters have worked in Arendal for twenty years, and have gained the admiration and love of all who come in contact with them.

On August 21 Miss Julie Fallize had her seventieth birthday. Miss Fallize accompanied her brother, Bishop Fallize, to Norway, and remained with him the thirty-five years of his stay there. She is known as "the Mama of the Mission," which best of all, proves what she has meant to everybody who came in contact with her. Many kind thoughts will be sent to her in her retreat in Ito-Litho Convent in Luxemburg, and many good wishes and many a hearty thanks.

The Catholic weeklies in Scandinavia have all contained very appreciative articles on the St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League of New York, recognizing the twenty years work of the League for the propagation of the Faith among Scandinavians in the United States.

Rev. Pater Spaus, S.J., was towards the end of last year solemnly installed as pastor of St. Andrew's Church, Ordrup, Denmark, being thus the successor of the late Rev. L. Günther.

The eighth centenary of the death of St. Canute, Lavard, caused an especially grand Corpus Christi Procession to take place in Haderslev. Canute was Lavard (Lord) over Southjutland and is looked upon as the special Patron Saint of that part of Denmark. The annual pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Canute at Ringsted, and to the ruins at Haraldsted, where St. Canute was murdered, also took on greater proportions in honor of the centenary. Four hundred and fifty pilgrims took part.

Rev. Père Leseur, O.P., visited Scandinavia, where the subject for his lectures was rather unusual, as he spoke of his wife who died in the odor of sanctity in the year 1914. After her death her husband edited her diary, the reading of which caused his own conversion and later has caused the conversion of untold numbers who read it in the many different languages into which it has been translated.

Slagelse new church to Our Lady was dedicated in May with all the beauty and solemnity of the Catholic Church.

Stud. Mag. Alf. Otto, S.J., has received the Gold Medal of the University of Copenhagen for a treatise on the guilds (fraternities) in Denmark, in the fifteenth and sixteenth century. These guilds were, of course, all Catholic, and thus died out with the advent of the Reformation.

Another young Danish member of St. Ignace of Loyola's Order has returned to Denmark. Rev. Christian Lonskov, a convert, has after ten years of study been ordained in August in Valkenburg, Holland. He has been attached to St. Andrew's Church, Ordrup.

Rev. Franz F. Maurer celebrated his sacerdotal silver jubilee in March. Father Maurer, although born in Oslo, was brought up in Germany to where his German born mother took him at her husband's death. But soon after his ordination the young priest went to Denmark, where he for fifteen years was the beloved pastor of Køge till he was called to Copenhagen. Forced by ill health he was obliged to go back to Germany, where he is Rector of the Ursulinen-Lyceum at Neheim a. Huhr.

Father Maurer was a well-known writer of apologetic books and many of St. Ansgar's correspondents will know him through his book, *Veje til Moderkirken*, of which many copies have been given out. Rt. Rev. Monsignor Olrik speaks beautifully of him in *Nordisk Ugeblad* of March 15.

Another silver jubilee was celebrated by Rev. F. M. Flyn, C.M., Pastor of St. Vincent Church in Elsinore. Father Flyn was born in Ireland, studied in Holland and France, where he entered the Vincentian Order and was ordained in 1906. The brilliant student was then sent to Denmark, Elsinore, where he has spent his whole sacerdotal life. Father Flyn has seen his parish grow slowly but steadily, and had the joy and satisfaction last year to have his beautiful new church dedicated as the only St. Vincent Church in Scandinavia. He is respected and beloved far exceeding the confines of his parish. His assistant, Rev. J. Kelly, C.M., will be remembered by our members from his visit in October, 1929. Father Kelly toured the United States to collect funds for the new church, and was received everywhere with great kindness.

The St. Hedvig's Sisters in Dalum had their new church dedicated on January 21, the Feast of St. Agnes, as the sixty-seventh Catholic church in Denmark. At

the same time the Rt. Rev. Bishop received four postulants as novices into the Congregation.

In the month of May Kolding Catholic parish had a welcome visit of the sailors from a big Italian steamer. It had a crew of thirty. Monsignor Olrik made the occasion a veritable feast for the men who were made the honored guests both in the church and in the parish house and on a tour to visit the sights of the town. The visit included Sunday, at the services of which both the pastor, Monsignor Olrik, and the pastor of Aabenraa, Rev. Erkens (see *Scandinavia, Yesterday and Today*) gave sermons in the Italian language. Many of the men went to Confession and received Holy Communion the following day.

A new Catholic monthly has begun in Denmark. Its name is *Universal*, and it contains articles both in Danish, Polish and German.

St. Elizabeth Hospital in Holbaek was dedicated on August 27. The hospital is being conducted by the Elizabethiner Sisters from Breslau, and thus a new order takes up work in Denmark.

The Maria Congregation, Stella Maris, for men in the world, has been founded in Copenhagen.

Danish Catholic Women's Union has for its new Spiritual Director, to succeed the late Father L. Gunther, Rev. Pater Sialm, S.J., well-known as a devoted priest and leader of souls. The Union is to be congratulated on the choice.

The excellent organ for the Scandinavian Catholic Women's Unions is issued twice a year in Copenhagen, and contains interesting and well written articles, as well by the clergy as by prominent Catholic women.

In Denmark the Union discharges the greatest amount of work. Naturally, as there, we find a greater number of Catholics.

Its energetic President, A. Utke Ramsing, has during the year visited many towns in Denmark and also in Norway and Sweden, and has everywhere addressed the meetings in excellent lectures.

The influence of the Union is being felt, not only within the Union itself, but also in public affairs where it tries to have Catholic representation regarding school books used in the public schools and to have the Catholic Church and teaching presented in a correct manner.

The General Meetings in all three countries saw delegates from the other countries and thus a mutual influence will be felt and the Unions will profit by the exchange.

Rt. Rev. Buckx, Bishop of Finland, has celebrated his sacerdotal silver jubilee. The Bishop's work in Finland has been anything but easy, but he has succeeded, and several native priests now assist him, and Dutch Sisters conduct the schools in Helsingfors and Viborg, and Finnish and Swedish literature is being printed. The Bishop celebrated his jubilee without ostentation, but he enjoys the respect and love of his faithful people.

IN MEMORIAM

After an unusually long and active work-day, died on January 11, this year, one of the most prominent Catholic laymen in Sweden, Count Raoul Hamilton. For more than forty years as a member of the Swedish Parliament (Riksdag) and for more than twenty-five years as its speaker, Count Hamilton had as few gained the love and respect of his countrymen, regardless of creed or political affiliation. Like a warrior he died at his post. He was just delivering a speech in the Parliament when seized by a heart attack. A priest was immediately called and he received Extreme Unction in the Houses of Parliament. In the afternoon he was taken to St. Elizabeth Hospital in Stockholm, where he died the following day, fortified with the last sacraments of the Church. His funeral, at which the Rt. Rev. Bishop Mueller officiated, was broadcasted, and in that way could be followed all over the country. Tens of thousands attended his last rites, a mighty manifestation of the love and esteem in which Count Hamilton was held by his countrymen. R. I. P.

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Baroness Charlotta Armfelt, mother of the well-known convert and author, Gustav Armfelt, died on the 21st of August, eighty-five years of age, in her home, Kulla pr. Odensviholm. Baroness Armfelt, who in her younger days, with competence and interest, managed her big estate and gained the love and respect of her many domestics, was received into the Church by Rev. Erik Benelius in Stockholm, 1911.

BOOKS BY SCANDINAVIAN CATHOLIC AUTHORS

Johannes Jorgensen's new book, *Som en Kaerte*, is the life story of Paula Reinhardt, a present day apostle, who not only accepted her physical and spiritual sufferings heroically, without a murmur, but with joy, sacrificing them for the souls. Her life reminds in much of the diary of Elizabeth Leseur written with the inspired pen of J. J.

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*Monachism in the Occident*, by Rev. Peter Schindler. This is the first volume of a trilogy, the nucleus of which is St. Benedict of Nursia, and ought to be accompanied by the reading of *The Benedictine Monastic Rule*, by the

same author. Father Schindler, a profound student of ecclesiastical history, has his own individual manner of writing, but always interesting, always his own.

Countess Karin Sparre has sent out a little book, *Swedish Saints*, giving a short interesting life of ten Saints, beginning with St. Ansgar and ending with St. Catharine of Vadstena. Besides the great outstanding Saints of whom we all know something, we learn about Vastmanland's Apostle, St. David, and the two Sodermanland's Apostles, St. Eskild and St. Botvid. In a future issue of our BULLETIN we shall be pleased to take up the lives of these saints.

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Rt. Rev. Msgr. B. D. Assarsson has written a little pamphlet, thirty-two pages, on St. Arild. This ought to be read before going to visit St. Arild's at Kullen. It is well written, beautifully gotten up and ends with the folk song that tells the old legend.

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*Norden's Apostel*, by Ivar Saeter, has been edited by Gyldendal Norske Forlag. By the same author in 1911 we find *Ignatius Loyola*, which was highly recommended to the public by the Norwegian clergy.

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Sigrid Undset's book from the present time has now been translated under the name of *The Wild Orchid*. *The Commonweal* writes about it on October 21: "The great Norwegian novelist's latest book (set in modern Norway) is merely half of a projected study in contrast between earthly and heavenly love. We get here the impressionable young manhood of Paul Selmer, whose parents are progressive, free-thinking and divorced. Paul's passionate love affair with a girl of the people, and his sudden, overwhelming attraction to Catholicism, give dramatic intensity to the first part of the book. The lull that supervenes upon these ardent experiences when his sweetheart leaves him and he lapses into a defensive cynicism, occupies the closing chapters. This period in Paul's development must have a significant place in the completed pattern of his life, when that is put before us, but that its effect here is anticlimactic, is undeniable.

"This is enhanced by the penetration and richness of the first chapters. The book lacks, of course, the splendor and spaciousness inherent in the author's earlier material; the romance of full physical life and the romance of holiness, which colored mediaeval society at its hardest, have no counterpart in the brightly sanative, positivist atmosphere in which Julie Selmer brings up her sons. But this, soberer, less glamorous chronicle confirms one's sense of the novelist's truly extraordinary powers. There is the same encompassing, inexhaustible knowl-

edge of each separate soul, the same simple method of gradual revelation: the method, one might call it, of unconscious infallibility.

"This gallery of people lacking all relation to an organically religious society, must be studied in themselves; and yet place must be found within the unity of the story for Paul's religious awakening. This is finely and fully achieved. We see why his relations with them led him beyond them: yet we do justice to them all. To Lucy, an artless Lillith who tempts Paul into an illicit relation, not from depravity but from an unformed, undisciplined generosity infinitely more tragic and touching; to Erik, Paul's uprooted and bewildered father, chivalrously upholding his divorced wife; to his second wife, touched with commonness, but deeply kind; above all, to his mother Julie, efficient, conscientious, widely generous, seriously devoted to her conception of liberty. It is most of all this sufficiency of his mother's type, of course, which defines Paul's discontent with the emancipated life.

But when, under his decomposing gaze, Julie's optimism shows to us as childishly immature, and her radicalism suddenly becomes a mere neat, manageable accessory to her own career, it is not that propagandist standards are invoked to judge her. Julie fails, for all her genuine fineness, by the deepest human tests. This is her son's point of departure toward the realm of revealed religion.

"Such is Paul's preparation for the Faith. He has, on the positive side, only the most superficial knowledge of it, though that is backed by a deep intuition. But his own world has prepared him. He knows its superior types; they are inadequate. His training in moral and conventional freedom has permitted him a love affair without assuring its stability, or obviating his feeling of secret, solitary shame. Finally, his 'rational' resistance is the pull of the Church, as to a blind, merely emotional attraction, is gradually presenting itself to him as a deliberate opposition to grace. The specifically Catholic half of Paul's story will make powerful reading."

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#### MENDICANT'S COLUMN

WE all know the importance of the press. We must have newspapers, we must advertise. We are asked to support the Catholic press, the daily and weekly papers and magazines.

We ought to buy Catholic literature.

But before the literature has come to the stage of being presented in book form to the reading public, much expense is incurred by the author and often years of study precede.

Nevertheless, how important are these books, how instructive, how indispensable!

St. Ansgar's League knows the importance of Catholic apologetic literature, in a way the least remunerative of all for the author, as the number of readers of such books is naturally limited, especially when we speak of non-Catholic countries like the Scandinavian, where the lan-

guage in itself is a hindrance for further propagation.

Among the prominent authors of splendid apologetic literature is the Danish priest, Rev. Peter Schindler. His *Liturgy* and the first volume of his *Monachism in the Occident* have been spoken of in this paper, but besides these, Father Schindler has a long list of splendid smaller books to his name, amongst others: *Katholsk Kristenliv* (Catholic Christianity in Life), *Katholicisme* (Catholicism), *Prayer Book for Catholic Scouts*, *The High Mass in the Catholic Church*, etc., etc.

Now Father Schindler has applied to us and through us to the readers of this paper to help him in his work by sending him Mass stipends. The American dollar will go a long way turned over in Danish kroner.

Rev. Peter Schindler's address is: Rosenkranskirken, 8 Boyesgade, Copenhagen.

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#### PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF DECEMBER 13, 1930

THE meeting was opened with the usual prayers. The Secretary read the minutes from the November meeting. These were accepted. The Treasurer's report was accepted as read.

Since the last meeting the following letters had been received:

A correspondent from St. Paul, Minn., asked for literature in the Scandinavian languages to be sent to a long list of people. Our policy has always been, with the

approval of our Spiritual Director, to send our literature only to such people who desire to know the doctrine of the Church, and thus we sent a package of literature only to our correspondent asking him to distribute it among people of that category.

Mr. William J. Osmon, Hollywood, Cal., sent thanks for letter received and for BULLETINS. He gave a donation of \$5.00.

Mrs. John H. Donohue, St. Paul, Minn., chairman of

the Department of Arts and Letters in the Guild of Catholic Women of St. Paul, gave thanks for material sent on the present position of Scandinavian Catholics and on the Ninth Centenary of St. Olav. She also sent her article on the Norwegian Runestone found in Minnesota (see BULLETIN 29). She said that she had read extracts of our letter and BULLETINS to the meeting of the Guild members.

We have lately had circulating among our members Catholic literature, for instance, the diary of Elizabeth Leseur and *A Carmelite Nun in Letters to Her Son*, by Dr. P. Perch. The former in French and the latter in Danish.

Mrs. Rambusch continued her talk on the most important churches and places she had visited in Rome.

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#### PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF JANUARY 6, 1931

MONSIGNOR opened the meeting with the usual prayers. The Secretary read the minutes from the December meeting. These were approved.

The Treasurer laid her report before the meeting and it was accepted as read.

Since the December meeting the following letters had been received:

Mr. Gergus Cronin, student at the Jesuit University at Rathfarnham, Castle County, Dublin, sent thanks for BULLETINS. He told in his letter that there are fifty-six scholastics studying at the University, and they have there a Mission Society among themselves, and once a month they read a paper on some Mission or other. These papers generally treat on some pagan foreign Mission, and thinking the Missions in Europe of at least equal importance he wished his paper to deal with the conversion of Scandinavia. He had found material for his paper besides in the magazines sent by us, also in *America* and the *Catholic World* and in *Blackfriars* and others. He donated five shillings for our work.

Likewise, a letter had been received from San José, Cal.

A Danish convert from Pittsburgh wishes to study for the priesthood, and asked for advice from our Spiritual Director.

Mrs. Fanny Laitinen, Peabody, Mass., our distributor of Finnish literature, expressed her willingness to translate into Finnish tracts and pamphlets for the League. It was decided though for the time being to postpone it, and only distribute the literature bought directly from Finland.

Rev. George Esterguard, Big Stone City, South Dakota, honored the meeting with his presence.

In order to replenish the funds of the League, it was proposed and decided to arrange for a card party on March 12 in the rooms of our headquarters, and committees were appointed to take care of the different arrangements.

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#### PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF FEBRUARY 11, 1931

THE meeting was opened with the usual prayers. The Secretary's minutes from the January meeting were read by Mrs. Rambusch, the Secretary being out of town. The minutes were approved. The Treasurer's report was accepted as read.

Communications had been received from:

Rev. J. Lucas, Marquis, Sask., who asked for some literature in English on the history of the Church in Scandinavia. Our just printed 1930 BULLETIN, and back numbers of the BULLETIN, treating on the question, were sent. Rev. Lucas had sent a donation of \$2.00.

A correspondent from Rio, Wisc., asked for literature to be spread among Scandinavians. He was told that we cannot send our literature indiscriminately, but that we shall feel happy to send literature to anybody named who is interested in knowing the doctrine of the Church. The latest BULLETIN was sent to him.

Rev. H. A. Campo, of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and Editor of *Catholic Missions*, wrote and asked for our latest BULLETIN as the March number of *Catholic Missions* would deal with the Missions in Scandinavia. BULLETIN 29 and back numbers treating on the subject were sent. *Catholic Missions* is printed in 100,000 copies and reaches all parts of the U. S. A.

Rev. Q. Benedict Denges, C.S.S.R., wished for the 1930 BULLETIN, which was sent. A very gracious thanks was received and Father Denges asked if we had a New Testament in Norwegian. We regretted not to have that in stock.

Letters of thanks for the BULLETIN have been received.

Regarding the card party reports were given and different members offered to donate the refreshments.

## PROCEEDINGS OF MARCH MEETING

THE March meeting took the form of a card party. Somewhat more than twenty-three tables had been sold and donations were given to the extent of \$21.00.

It was a fine gathering that at about 9 P. M. sat down at the tables to take up the cards, and from the very start the spirit was high. The only shadow being the absence of the President, Mrs. Frode C. W. Rambusch, who was sick in bed, and unable to assist at the party to which she had looked forward with so much pleasure.

Monsignor remembered her in his address to the guests, and expressed his hope that this illness might be only of short duration.

Everything was so well prepared, and the arrangement in such capable hands that the affair progressed beautifully, and the prizes were appreciated, as well as the excellent refreshments.

The Chairman of the evening and the assisting committees and the members present acted as splendid hosts, so that everybody felt the party to be almost like a private affair in a hospitable home.

Monsignor Stillemans in bidding the guests welcome gave a short account of the League's work, and called the attention of anybody interested to the twenty year's review of the existence of the League found in the latest ST. ANSGAR'S BULLETIN.

Mr. John Madsen, Pittsburgh, Pa., had donated a beautiful door prize, which was won by the young daughter of one of the members. Mrs. Einar Nordenstreng had donated a beautiful Rococo pincushion which had been bought by one of the members and the money turned in to the proceeds from the party.

The net proceeds of the evening was \$109.25.

## PROCEEDINGS AT THE MEETING OF APRIL 9, 1931

THE meeting was opened with the usual prayers. The Secretary's minutes from the February meeting were read and accepted. The Treasurer's report was likewise read and accepted as read.

The President was still ill and unable to go out. Mrs. A. Andersen presented her kindest regards to the members and her hope to meet them all again at the November meeting.

Mrs. Andersen reported on the business carried on since the February meeting:

Twenty-seven letters had been received and almost as many had been written. The Rt. Rev. Bishops of Sweden and Finland had sent their cards and magazines. Bishop Muller of Sweden sent his Encyclical letter for Lent, 1931, and the Bishop of Finland, Rt. Rev. Buckx, sent the first number of *Vox Romanum*, an excellent magazine in Swedish, answering to its name, "Catholic Voice."

The Apostolic Administrator of Norway, Rev. H. Irgens, sent the Christmas magazine, *Kimer I Klokke*, as a kind greeting.

Several correspondents asked for our latest BULLETIN, or thanked us for same, and mentioned some or other of the articles that had been especially appreciated. The review seemed welcome and our supply has been exhausted. He

A Norwegian catechism was sent to one of our members who is instructing a Protestant.

Swedish literature has been sent to two people in Minnesota, and to three in Illinois.

A selection of Scandinavian literature was sent upon request to Rev. McEvoy, Hawthorne, N. Y.

Finnish literature was requested from Rev. B. M. Aitken, N. Y. C.

Rev. J. Fraling, Remidji, Minn., wished for BULLETINS, and sent a donation of \$1.00.

Mrs. John H. Donohue, who contributed to our BULLETIN 29 the interesting article on the Rune-Stone found in Minnesota, asked for an additional copy of that BULLETIN for the files of the Minnesota Historical Society. She sent \$1.00 as a contribution from the Department of Arts and Letters Guild of Catholic Women.

Mrs. Olga Jesaitis, East Setucket, St. Is., joined as a new member.

On the third of March Miss Fanny Laitinen, on a visit to New York, was present at a luncheon given by the President in her honor, and to which all the lady members of the League were invited. Monsignor Stillemans honored the ladies with his presence.

The members present all expressed their satisfaction with the very successful card party, and hoped that each year we might be able to have a social gathering like that.



## PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF NOVEMBER 12, 1931

THE meeting was opened with the usual prayers. The President then made the announcement that Monsignor Stillemans was ill and could no longer be our Spiritual Director. This was very sad information to all the members.

A motion was made and seconded that a rising vote of thanks be given to Monsignor Stillemans for the many years of service he had given us in the way of attendance, advice, prayers and personal interest.

It was also proposed and seconded that the Secretary write a letter to Monsignor Stillemans, expressing the sincere feelings of the Society.

A motion was made and seconded that a letter be sent to the Belgian Bureau, thanking them for their hospitality to St. Ansgar's League.

In the discussion that followed in regard to a new Spiritual Director, the President mentioned that it should preferably be a clergyman who already had an interest in and a knowledge of Scandinavian Catholic affairs. Further, that inasmuch as the League had very little money, the problem of obtaining a meeting place free of charge was very important, which almost automatically meant that the meetings would have to take place in some centrally located place such as the Belgian Bureau, the Paulist Fathers and the Dominican Fathers have. The President mentioned that Father LaFarge, of the Society of Jesus, had an interest in Scandinavia, belonged to the Jesuit Order, had been approached and had mentioned that if it met with the approval of the League and the Cardinal he would be pleased to accept the position of Spiritual Director, and that he would be glad to place the library of the Reader's House, West 108th Street, at the disposal of the League for their regular meetings. He mentioned, however, that his Superior had made the one condition that he should not be connected with any drive for funds.

It was then decided to learn if His Eminence had any particular desires in the matter of Spiritual Director, and if the occasion presented itself to request that Father LaFarge be appointed our Spiritual Director.

The meeting then proceeded with business done since the April meeting: Thirty-three letters had been received and thirty written.

Rev. Joseph P. Merrick, S.J., College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Mass., asked for Swedish literature, which was sent.

Rev. Hughes, Alberta, Canada, wished for and got Swedish literature and pictures of Scandinavian saints.

Rt. Rev. Msgr. W. V. Nolan, Garriston, South Dakota,

sent thanks for the BULLETIN he had received for several years, and donated \$10.00 to the work of the League.

Rev. Clause, Luxemburg, sent thanks for the BULLETIN and best wishes for the New Year. His letter was written in Danish by a young Dane, Brother in the Abbaye.

A Dane in Newark, N. J., asking for a Danish hymn book with music, received this from Mrs. Rambusch, who had procured it in Copenhagen during her visit there last year. The recipient was most happy again to be able to play the hymns which he in his young days had played on the organ in Fredericia Church when the late Bishop v. Euch was pastor there.

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Assarsson, Helsingborg, Sweden, sent thanks for BULLETIN 29, which he had read with great interest.

Rev. Lysander, pastor of St. Petri Church, Malmö, Sweden, sent thanks for BULLETIN 29 on a card representing his church, mentioned in the same BULLETIN in the article by Mr. Selvin: "The Catholic Parish at Malmö."

Rev. J. Code, St. Ambrose College, Davenport, Iowa, asked for back numbers of the BULLETIN. He had with great interest read BULLETIN 29 and with particular interest the article by Mrs. J. H. Donohue on the Minnesota Rune-Stone.

Rev. Joseph Luke, Marquis, Sask., Canada, thanked for BULLETINS and magazines sent, and said the papers had been of good use in preparing a lecture given by him on the Church in Scandinavia.

Rev. John LaFarge, S.J., N. Y. C., wished for information about books in English regarding Danish literature, critics, etc. A list was given of The American Scandinavian Foundation's books, and the letter was sent on to the Literary Secretary of the Foundation, who will get in touch with Father LaFarge. Several demands for BULLETIN 29 were made and complied with as far as our supply permitted.

Most Rev. Archbishop Fallize, former Bishop of Norway, gave thanks for congratulations sent to his golden sacerdotal jubilee.

Norwegian apologetic literature was asked for and sent to Minneapolis, Minn.; Newport, Ky., and Minwaukan, North Dakota.

Mr. James V. Doherty, South Boston, Mass., sent a donation of \$3.00.

A student at the American College in Rome, preparing for a diocese in the United States, to study Swedish in order to be able to work among Scandinavians.

He asked advice regarding which books to get and where to get them. A suitable list was sent from Bonnier's bookstore, New York City.

Mr. Oppermann, a Dane, studying for the priesthood at the College of the Propaganda in Rome asked for BULLETIN 29. (See under Items and Interest.)

Mr. Carl Sund, Nampa, Alta., a brother of Rev. Dr. Sund, Hamar, Norway, has entered as a new member.

Miss Fanny Laitinen sent a very encouraging report regarding the distribution of Finnish literature. Miss L. has during the year received twenty letters and written nineteen and sent out seventeen pieces of literature in the Finnish language and five BULLETINS 29. The

communications have been with Detroit, Mich.; Rome, Italy; Canada and Washington, D. C. In Rome a student for the priesthood interested in Finland, although not of Finnish extraction, wishing to visit the country this summer, wanted some information about the Church in same. Miss Laitinen gave same.

Mr. Ivar Saeter, Norwegian author, wanted the League to have his two books, *Norden's Apostel* and *Ignatius Loyola*, translated into English. Although a very interesting task, it is outside of our program, and we are unable to undertake it.

Rev. O. A. Nys, Administrator p. t. of the Belgian Bureau, who had been present during the meeting, said the closing prayers.

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#### GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

MASS was said by our Spiritual Director for the intentions of the League on the feasts of St. Canute, January 19; St. Ansgar, February 3; St. Olav, July 29, and St. Bridget, October 8.

Anybody interested in our League is kindly asked to send in to the Secretary whatever they find that might be of interest to the BULLETIN, and the members are earnestly requested to pay their dues regularly, either yearly, quarterly or monthly, to the Treasurer, as it is quite an expense to buy, print and send out the literature, as well as the BULLETIN, which the members receive free of charge. The membership dues and donations from kind friends are the League's only source of income.

English is the official language of the League. Correspondents are, however, at liberty to use any of the Scandinavian languages in addressing officers on matters of business, information, etc.

Monthly dues and application for membership should be sent to the Treasurer.

Literature in the Finnish language can be had by applying to Miss Fanny Laitinen, Farnham Avenue, Peabody, Mass.

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#### VERY IMPORTANT

One of the objects of our League is "the work for the conversion of Scandinavia by such lawful means as may be available." The most important means we have been using is the free distribution of Catholic apologetic literature in the Scandinavian languages.

We ask leave to remind the clergy and lay people who come into contact with Scandinavians interested in getting further knowledge of our Holy Faith to send in such names and addresses, and we will feel very happy to mail literature and enter into correspondence with them.

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#### OFFICERS OF THE LEAGUE

*Spiritual Director,*  
REV. JOHN LAFARGE, S.J.,  
329 West 108th Street, N. Y. C.

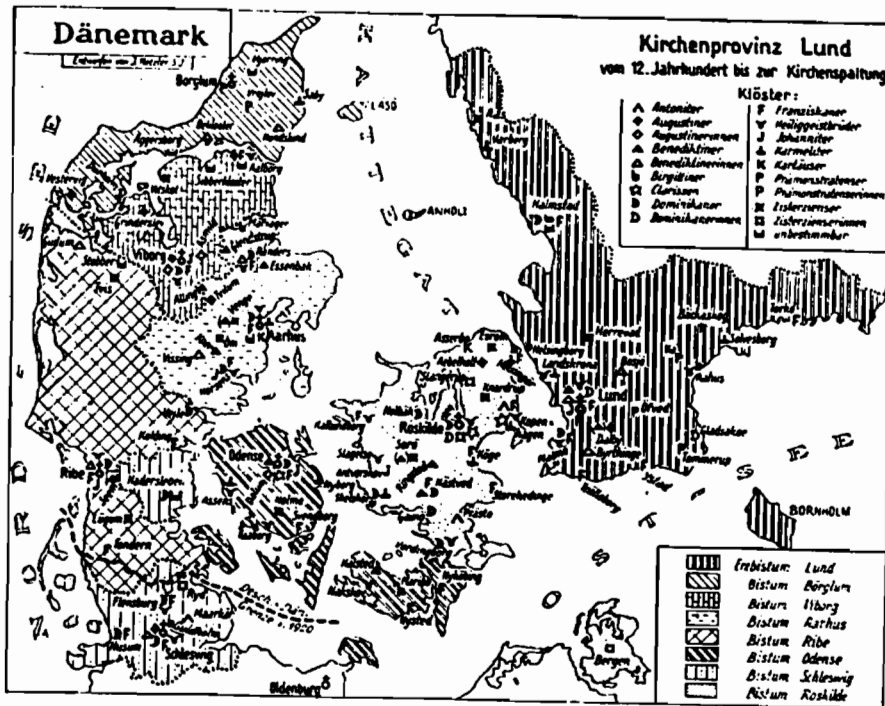
*President*—MRS. FRODE C. W. RAMBUSCH.

*Vice-President*—MR. G. A. ESTERGUARD.

*Treasurer*—MRS. JOHN FICH, 9 Rutgers Avenue, Jersey City, N. J.

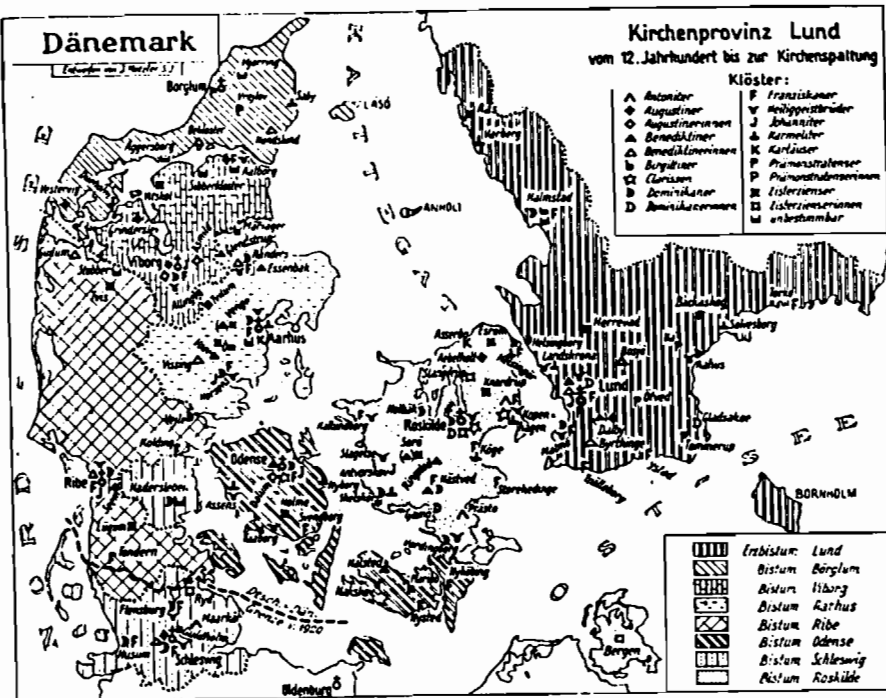
*Secretary*—MR. VIGGO F. E. RAMBUSCH, 2 West 45th Street, N. Y. C.

Headquarters of the League: 329 West 108th Street, New York City



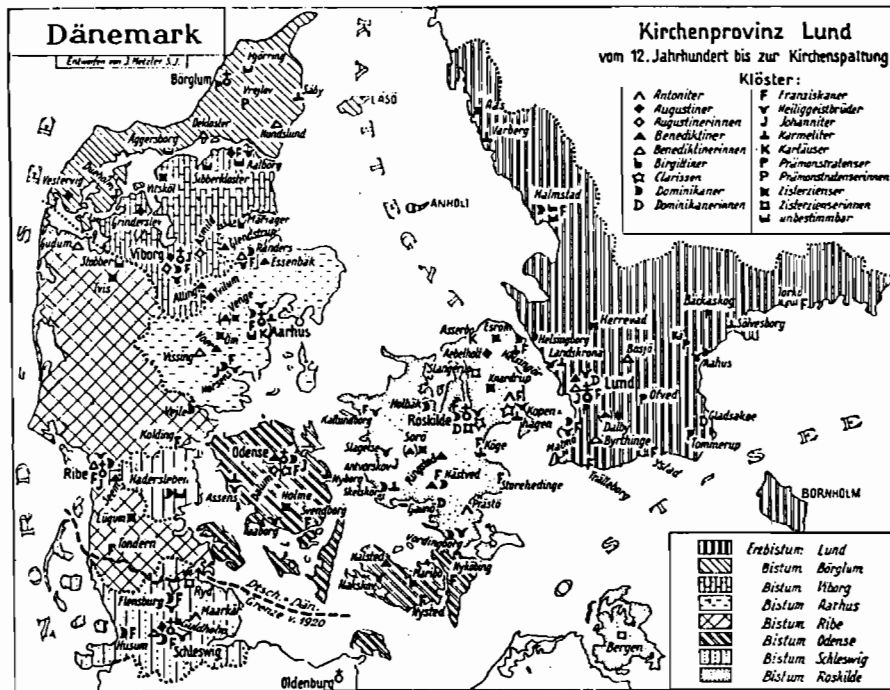
Monasteries and Convents in Denmark (Lund's Kirkeprovins) before the Reformation 1536.

Put together by J. Metzler, S.J.



Monasteries and Convents in Denmark (Lund's Kirkeprovins) before the Reformation 1536.

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