

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of June, 1303, the moment Bridget was born, Benedict, the curate of Rasbo, prayed for the happy deliverance of Ingeborde. Suddenly he found himself enveloped by a luminous cloud out of which Our Lady appeared and said: “A child has been born at Birger; her voice will be heard by the entire world.”

St. Brigitte or St. Bridget, daughter of Birgir, royal blood prince of Sweden, was born of highly pious parents. Having lost her virtuous mother soon after birth, little Bridget was brought up by one of her highly virtuous aunts. She could not speak before the age of three, but as soon as she spoke, she began praising God. In early childhood serious discourses pleased her, and grace powerfully filled her heart so that only pious readings attracted her.

At the age of ten she was particularly touched by a sermon she heard on the Passion of Our Lord. The following night she believed that she saw Our Lord nailed to the cross and all covered with blood and wounds. At the same time she heard a voice saying: “*Look upon Me, My daughter.*” “*O Dear Lord,*” asked St. Bridget, “*who has treated You so cruelly?*” Our Lord replied: “*Those who despise Me and are insensible to My Love for them.*” That mysterious dream left so deep and impression on her that, from then on, she continually meditated on the sufferings of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which drove her to tears.

At the age of 15, through obedience, she was married to Prince Ulf, a very pious young man, and they had eight children. One of her daughters became St. Catherine of Sweden.

St. Bridget’s example more than her instructions sanctified her large family. Her revelations and other celestial favors made her all the more fervent and humble. She died in Rome in 1373 after having returned from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. She practiced mental prayer and meditated often on the life and sufferings of Our Lord Jesus Christ. She founded the Brigittines.

For a long time St. Bridget wanted to know the number of blows Our Lord received during His Passion. He one day appeared to her and said: “I received 5480 blows on My Body. **If you wish to honor them in some way, say 15 Our Fathers and 15 Hail Marys with the following prayers ( which He taught her ) for a whole year. When the year is up, You will have honoured each one of My Wounds.**”

Visitors to the Church of St. Paul at Rome can see the crucifix, above the Tabernacle in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, sculptured by Pierre Cavallini, before which St. Bridget knelt when she received these fifteen prayers from Our Lord. The following inscription was placed in the church to commemorate the event: “Pendentis, Pendente Dei verba accepit aure accipit et verbum corde Brigitta Deum. Anno Jubilei MCCCL.” ( Translation: “Bridget not only receives the words of God hanging in the air, but takes the work of God into her heart. Jubilee Year 1350. “ )

#### Promises

*The 21 St. Bridget Promises, while traditionally associated with the St. Bridget Prayers, are not covered by an imprimatur.* In Jan. of 1954 the Holy Office issued a warning that the supernatural origin of these promises has not been proven.

The Church has always recommended meditations on the Passion of Our Lord. The Blessed Virgin Mary said to St. Bridget: “The consideration of the Passion of my Son ought to be frequently in man’s thoughts.” St. Bonaventure said: “Let him who desires to attain union with God keep the eyes of his soul ever fixed on Him who hangs dying on the Cross. It’s from those wounds of the Saviour that man draws power to suffer not merely with patience but with joy.”