

In the Morning Wednesday, October 7, 2020
BIRGITTA OF SWEDEN, Mystic and Prophetic Witness, 1373

Welcome

Opening prayer

O God, who beholds all things and whose judgment is always mercy; by the example of your servant Brigid of Sweden, give to us in this life the vision of your Kingdom where Jesus Christ is all and in all, that we may pattern our lives on things heavenly, where our lives are hidden with Christ in you, O Father, who with him and the Holy Spirit live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

Dwelling in the Word

Matthew 11:2-11

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

This is the one about whom it is written,
'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.'

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

As you hear the passage being read, what word or phrase is God calling you to notice?
As you hear the passage read a second time, what might God be calling you to try on at this time?

Following your silent meditation after the second reading, please type your word or phrase into the Chat if you would like to share it. The officiant will invite all of us into a quiet time for a few minutes to prayerfully read and reflect on the words offered in the Chat.

The officiant will end this time of silent prayer with The Lord's Prayer.

(Host will mute all phones so you will not be hearing one another due to various time lags. You will hear the host of the call)

Zoom call

At end of zoom call

Prayer

Father, Mother God,
Thank you for your presence
during the hard and mean days.
For then we have you to lean upon.

Thank you for your presence
during the bright and sunny days,
for then we can share that which we have
with those who have less.

And thank you for your presence
during the Holy Days, for then we are able
to celebrate you and our families
and our friends.

For those who have no voice,
we ask you to speak.

For those who feel unworthy,
we ask you to pour your love out
in waterfalls of tenderness.

For those who live in pain,
we ask you to bathe them
in the river of your healing.

For those who are lonely, we ask

you to keep them company.

For those who are depressed,
we ask you to shower upon them
the light of hope.

Dear Creator, You, the borderless
sea of substance, we ask you to give all the
world that which we need most -- Peace.

-- Maya Angelou

<http://spmcrector.blogspot.com/2008/08/prayer-by-maya-angelou.html>

Blessing

Birgitta Birgersdotter came from a noble Swedish family and was born around 1302 or 1303. Early in her life she discerned a religious vocation, but was married against her will at the age of 13 to a member of the Swedish nobility. The couple had eight children. Brigid sought to live a holy, religious life. When her husband was absent, she openly practiced a strict asceticism, and when he was home, she did so secretly. Both she and her husband became members of the Franciscan Third Order which admitted laypeople.

From childhood, Brigid had experienced visions. Christ, Mary, and the saints spoke with her often in Swedish and shared with her warnings intended for others, which Brigid would write down or dictate to her confessor. Eventually these messages became increasingly political, which caused her great discomfort. Although Brigid enjoyed a good relationship with the royal family, she sharply criticized the king, becoming a symbolic leader for the aristocratic Swedish opposition.

Brigid advised popes and rulers throughout Europe, and criticized the extravagant lifestyles of the clergy, monastic orders, and laity, challenging four popes to return to Rome from Avignon. She also tried to persuade the rulers of England and France to negotiate peace and end the war that would later be called the Hundred Years' War. Because of her struggles, she was recognized throughout Europe as an uncomfortable counselor and a visionary.

After the death of her husband in 1344, Brigid devoted herself entirely to the religious life. The Order she founded, the Brigittines, was based on the revelations she had received earlier in her life. Her monastery would always have a women's and men's cloister next to one another, joined by a shared church, in which the monks, nuns, and laity would pray together. The abbess would be in charge of both the men's and women's cloister. To get papal approval for her

order's founding, Brigid traveled to Rome. In 1370, Urban V recognized the new Order and allowed its foundation at Vadstena, Sweden. Brigid was, in fact, not the first abbess there, but rather her daughter Catherine.

Except for several pilgrimages, Brigid remained in Rome for the rest of her life. She ministered to rich and poor, sheltered the homeless, and worked untiringly for the return of the pope from Avignon to Rome. In 1372, she was spurred by a vision to visit the Holy Land. On the return trip from Jerusalem Brigid fell ill and entered eternal life on July 23rd, 1373. In Sweden she is celebrated on October 7th, which is the anniversary of her canonization.

Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2018