

ST. ANSGAR'S



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AD MAIOREM DEI GLORIAM

NOTICE

With this 100th Anniversary Issue of St. Ansgar's Bulletin, having completed its mission, the League will cease its publication. In this final issue on page IV, are listed the web sites of the five Roman Catholic Dioceses in Scandinavia where one can read about the ongoing Catholic life in these countries and contact the offices of the seven Bishops.

Here in New York, the League will celebrate St. Lucia's Feast Day with all former "Lucias" invited to participate in the Lucia Procession at St. Thomas More Church (65 East 89th Street) at 1:00 pm on Saturday, December 12.

There will be a 100th Anniversary Celebratory Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral at 10:00 AM, Saturday, February 6th with the Bishop of Copenhagen as Principal Celebrant and the Bishop of Stockholm as the Homilist. All members and friends are invited.

Thereafter, there will be no organized activities of the League which will cease to function. The office will close.

The St. Ansgar's Bulletin has been the only publication about the Catholic Church in Scandinavia, past and present, in a universal language for the last one hundred years.



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An Appreciation of St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League

1910-2010

The Roman Catholic Church in the United States is not only part of the Universal Church present and working in that country, making up the greatest single denomination. It has also united Catholic identity and tradition of the many nations whose people have come as immigrants. For a significant period of recent history Catholic culture, especially of many European countries has contributed to the growth and development of the Church in the United States. As a solidly established institution the Catholic Church here has also continuously been able to offer a small piece of home for a large variety of immigrants coming to a new and challenging world.

Scandinavia is only a small part of the World. The Catholic Church in these countries is a still smaller minority and the Catholics of Scandinavian origin in the United States are almost invisible. For this tiny group of people St. Ansgar's Catholic League has been a point of reference, a place to meet, and its Bulletin an important source of documentation and an instrument of information.

This year we are happy to celebrate the centenary of these two important Scandinavian institutions: St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League and its Bulletin. For one hundred years the League and its year book have nourished the identity of Catholics with a background in the Nordic countries, supporting a sense of fellowship among persons who could easily disappear in the multitude of people of new surroundings far from home. Having been founded by a small group of committed Catholics it could just have remained focused on its own people in the New World. But it has not been like that. Apart from informing about and keeping up contact with the Catholic dioceses in Scandinavia, St. Ansgar's League has also been a great help to the Church in the mother countries of its members.

This support has been expressed in generous financial aid to the Catholic Church in the Nordic countries, mass stipends and involvement in various projects. This part of the League's activities has definitely been important and much appreciated, but especially through its Bulletin it has also been a voice of the Catholic Church in Scandinavia. The Catholic Church is a minority here and mostly with only little impact on the societies it is part of. Outside Scandinavia most will be unaware of the presence of a small but vibrant Catholic community here. We do need financial support, but just as important is the awareness of the outside world that we exist, that we are happy to be church, that we appreciate the Catholic past of our countries and try to be a leaven in present day society. We are not silent and do have our media outlets. Nevertheless we are grateful that others are interested in our situation and promote knowledge about it. For this purpose St. Ansgar's Bulletin has been a valuable instrument and has become an important source of research regarding the past.

Strangely enough, apart from the Bishops' Conference, Catholics in the Nordic countries live separate lives, concentrating on the situation within their own boundaries. Organizations like St. Ansgar's League and its Bulletin help even us, Catholics in Scandinavia, to get to know each other better, being informed about what is going on with the neighbours. Very often Scandinavian Catholics have to go abroad to meet fellow

believers from another Nordic country. Spiritually and through the Bulletin St. Ansgar's League is promoting such encounters.

Looking back on the hundred years since the foundation of the League make one feel very grateful. As Catholics from Scandinavia we would like to express our gratitude for the support we have experienced through all these years. At the same time we want to show admiration for the founding members and those part of the League today for the faithfulness to their roots and then zeal to keep together a tiny flock of fellow Catholics. Many are those, who have committed themselves to the activities of St. Ansgar's League, and so many deserve to be named. Without diminishing the merits of others I would like to mention the Rambusch family who continuously has been part of the League, from the founding fathers to the members of today.

Everything indicated above is a reason for joy, and normally when you celebrate a jubilee, you go on by extending wishes for the future. Unfortunately this is not obvious on this occasion. We are celebrating and giving thanks for what has been done and achieved during a century. But sadly enough the 100th anniversary of the foundation of St. Ansgar's League is at the same time the marking of its dissolution. Alongside things in the Church that are stable and even founded by divine command, there are also institutions and practices that come and go, that correspond to a need and an interest of a certain time. On the background, though, of what has been illustrated above it would be contradictory to say that St. Ansgar's League is not necessary anymore, that its role has been outplayed. Very often we would like to see things continue, but must accept the facts made up by lack of personnel to carry them on. This and not because it is irrelevant, has made St. Ansgar's League turn to dissolution.

Thanks to God for this extraordinary century and thanks to all the committed people who zealously have kept up this great work. This gratitude expresses the sentiments of all the Nordic Catholic Dioceses.

Czeslaw Kozon, Bishop of Copenhagen

Websites for the five Scandinavian Roman Catholic Dioceses:

Denmark: www.katolsk.dk

Finland: www.katolinen.net

Iceland: www.catholica.is

Norway: www.katolsk.no

Sweden: www.katolskakyrkan.se

1918

CHRISTIANIZATION OF SCANDINAVIA

Frode C. W. Rambush

During the sixth and seventh century the Danes first came in contact with Christianity, partly through their commercial intercourse with Holland, partly through their perpetual raids on Ireland, and tales of the "White Christ" were frequently told among them, though probably with no other effect than that of wonder. The first Christian missionary who visited them and worked among them was Willibrord. Born in Northumbria and educated within the pale of the Celtic Kirk he went out in 690 as a missionary to the Frises. Expelled by them he came, about 700, to Denmark, where he formed a congregation. But his work seems to have been of merely temporary effect. Although the Danish king was hospitable and kindly disposed toward him he did not accomplish much, "for," as we are told by the Franks, "the Danes were cruel people, and their King, Yngvin, was wilder than a beast and harder than a stone." Willibrord bought thirty Danish children, whom he educated in the Christian religion. These children went with him when he left Denmark, and one of them, Sigwald, is still remembered as the patron saint of Nüremberg, St. Sebaldus.

Soon, however, the tremendous activity which Charlemagne developed as a political organizer, was felt even on the Danish frontier. Political relations sprang up between the Roman empire and Denmark, and they opened a freer and broader entrance to the Christian missionaries. In Itzehoe, in Holstein, Charlemagne built a chapel for the use of the garrison; in Hamburg he settled Heridock at the head of a Christian congregation, and it appears that a conversion of the Danes did not lie altogether outside of his plans. Under his successor, Louis the Pious, Harald Klak, one of the many petty kings among whom Denmark was then divided, sought the emperor's support and decision in a family affair, and Louis sent Archbishop Ebbe of Rheims, celebrated both as a political negotiator and as a zealous missionary to Denmark. In 822 Ebbe crossed the Ejder, accompanied by Bishop Halitgar of Cambray. In the following years he made several journeys to Denmark, preached, baptized, and established a station of the Danish mission at Cella Wellana, the present Welnu, near Itzehoe, in Holstein. But he was too much occupied

with the internal affairs of the empire, and the opportunity which now opened for the Danish mission, demanded the whole and undivided energy of a great man. In 826 Harald Klak was expelled and sought refuge with the emperor, Ebbe acting as a mediator. At Ingelheim, near Mentz the king, the queen, their son and their whole retinue, were solemnly baptized, and when Harald shortly after returned to Denmark with support from the emperor, he was accompanied by that man who was destined to become the Apostle of the North,—the great and illustrious patron saint of our League, Holy Ansgar.

Ansgar was born 801 (his birthday is believed to be September 9th) in the diocese of Amiens, of Frankish parents, and educated in the Abbey of Corbie, under the guidance of Adalhard. Paeschasius Radbertus was among his teachers. In 822 a missionary colony was planted by Corbie in Westphalia, and the German monastery of Corwey or New Corwey was founded. Hither Ansgar was removed as teacher in the new school, and he soon acquired great fame both on account of his powers as a preacher and on account of his ardent piety. When still a boy he had holy visions, and was deeply impressed with the vanity of all earthly greatness. The crown of the martyr seemed to him the highest grace which human life could attain, and he ardently prayed that it might be given to him. The proposition to follow King Harald as a missionary among the pagan Danes he immediately accepted, in spite of the remonstrances of his friends, and accompanied by Autbert, one of his confrères, he repaired, in 827, to Denmark, where he immediately established a missionary station at Hedeby, in the province of Schleswig. The task was difficult, but the beginning was not without success. Twelve young boys were bought to be educated as teachers, and not a few people were converted and baptized. His kindness to the poor, the sick, to all who were in distress, attracted attention; his fervor as a preacher and teacher produced sympathy, without, as yet, provoking resistance. But in 829 King Harald was again expelled. Ansgar was compelled to follow him, and the prospects of the Danish mission became very dark, the more so as Autbert had to give up any further participation in the work on account of ill-

health, and return to New Corwey, where he shortly after died on Easter Sunday, 829. At this time an invitation from the Swedish king, Björn, gave Ansgar an opportunity to visit Sweden, and he stayed there till 831, when the establishment of an Episcopal see at Hamburg promised to give the Danish mission a new impulse. All Scandinavia was laid under the new see, and Ansgar was consecrated its first Bishop by Bishop Drago of Metz, a brother of the emperor, with the solemn assistance of three Archbishops, Ebbe of Rheims, Hetti of Treves, and Obgar of Mentz. A bull of Pope Gregory IV confirmed the whole arrangement, elevated Ansgar to an Archbishop, and also named him legate to all the Northern nations. Ansgar received personally the pallium from the hands of the Pope. In 834 the emperor endowed the See with the rich monastery in Turholt, in West Flanders, and the work of the Danish mission could now be pushed with vigor. Enabled to treat with the kings of Denmark on terms of equality, and possessed of means to impress them with the importance of the cause, Ansgar made rapid progress, but as was to be expected, the progress soon awakened opposition. In 845 a swarm of pagan Danes penetrated with a fleet of six hundred small vessels into the Elb under the command of King Erik, son of Godfred, and laid siege to Hamburg. The city was taken, sacked and burnt, the church which Ansgar had built, the monastery in which he lived, his library containing a copy of the Bible which the emperor had presented to him, etc., were destroyed and the Christians were driven away from the place. For many days Ansgar fled from hiding-place to hiding-place in imminent danger of his life. The revenues of Turholt he lost as the emperor, Charles the Bald, gave this monastery to one of his favorites. Even his own pupils deserted him.

In this great emergency Ansgar's character shone forth in all its strength and splendor; he bore what God laid upon him in silence and made no complaint. Meanwhile Louis the German came to his support. In 846 the see of Bremen became vacant. The See of Hamburg was then united to that of Bremen, and Ansgar was called to fill this new see. Many obstacles had to be overcome, and the arrangement was not confirmed by the Pope until 864. Installed in Bremen, Ansgar immediately took up again the Danish mission and again with success. He won even King Erik himself for the Christian cause, and obtained permission from him to build a church in Hedeby,

the first Christian church in Denmark, and dedicated to Our Lady. Under the son of King Erik this church was allowed to have bells, a particular horror to the pagans, and a new and larger church was commenced in Ribe. By Ansgar's activity Christianity became an established and acknowledged institution in Denmark, and not only in Denmark but also in Sweden, which he visited once more, 853.

The principal feature of Ansgar's spiritual character was ascetic severity; he wore a coarse hair shirt close to the skin, fasted much and spent most of his time in prayer. But with this asceticism he connected a great deal of practical energy; he demanded of his pupils that they should have some actual work at hand, and he was often occupied in knitting while praying. His enthusiasm and holy raptures were also singularly well-tempered by good common sense. To those who wished to extol his greatness and goodness by ascribing miracles to him, he said that the greatest miracle in his life would be, if God ever made a thoroughly pious man out of him. Most prominent, however, among the spiritual features of his character shines forth his unwavering faith in the final success of his cause and the never-failing patience with which this faith fortified his soul. In spite of apparent failure he never gave up his work; overwhelmed with disaster, he still continued it. From his death-bed he wrote a letter to King Louis to recommend to him the Scandinavian mission. When he realized death was near, he asked that the *Deum Laudamus* be sung, he forgave his enemies, and then died peacefully on February 3, 865, with the following words: "Lord, God of Truth, who has redeemed me, into thy hands I commend my spirit." He was buried under the altar dedicated to the Blessed Virgin in St. Peter's church in Bremen, and was canonized by Pope Nicholas I.

Ansgar's successor in the archiepiscopal See of Hamburg-Bremen was his friend and biographer, Rembert, 865-888. In his time all the petty kingdoms into which Denmark was divided, were gathered together under one sceptre by King Gorm the Old, but this event, in one respect very favorable to the rapid spread of Christianity, was in other respects a real obstacle to the Christian cause, as it placed Denmark, politically, in opposition to Germany, which was the basis and only support of the Christian mission to Denmark. King Gorm himself was a grim pagan, but his queen, Thyra Danebod, had embraced Christianity, and both under Rembert and his successor, Adal-

gar, the Christian missionaries were allowed to work undisturbed. A new church, the third in Denmark was built in Aarhus. But under Adalgar's successor, Unne, King Gorm's fury, half political and half religious, suddenly burst forth. The churches were burnt, the missionaries were killed or expelled, and nothing but the decisive victory of Henry, King of Germany, over the Danish king saved the Christians in Denmark from complete extermination. By the peace it was agreed that King Gorm should allow the preaching of Christianity in his realm, and Unne took up the cause again with great energy. Between Unne's successor, Adeldag, and King Harald Blue Tooth, a son of Gorm the Old, there grew up a relation which almost might be called a co-operation. Around the three churches in Jutland Schleswig, Ribe and Aarhus, and a fourth in Funen Odense, bishoprics were formed, and Adeldag consecrated four native bishops. The church obtained right to accept and hold donations, and instances of very large endowments occurred.

The war between King Harold and the German Emperor Otto II arose from merely political causes, but led to the baptism of the former, and soon after the royal residence was moved from Lejre, one of the chief centres of Scandinavian paganism, to Roskilde, where a Christian church was built. Among the Danes, however, there was a large party which was very ill-pleased at this turn of affairs. They were pagans because paganism was the only religion which suited their passions. They clung to Thor, not from conviction, but from pride. They looked down with indignation and dismay upon the transformation which Christianity everywhere effected both of the character and the life of the people. Finally they left the country and settled under the leadership of Palnatoke, at the mouth of the Oder, where they founded a kind of republic, Jomsborg. From this place they waged a continuous war upon Christianity in Denmark for more than a decade, and with dreadful effect. Adam of Bremen says that the names of the martyrs would fill a whole volume. The church in Roskilde was burnt. The bishopric of Fünen was abolished. The king's own son, Svend, was one of the leaders, and the king himself was finally shot by Palnatoke. This happened All Saints' Day, November 1st, and probably in 985, but the year is uncertain. Svend, however, soon fell out with the Joms vikings, and his invasion of England gave the warlike pas-

sions of the nation another direction.

From the conquest of that country and its union with Denmark, the Danish mission received a vigorous impulse. King Svend himself was converted, and showed great zeal for Christianity. He rebuilt the church in Roskilde, erected a new church at Lund, in Sweden, placed the sign of the cross on his coins, and exhorted, on his death-bed, his son Canute to work for the Christianization of Denmark.

King Canute the Great reestablished the bishopric of Fünen, and founded two new bishoprics in Sealand and Skaane, and these three sees were filled with Englishmen consecrated by the archbishop of Canterbury. He invited a number of English monks to Denmark, and settled them partly as ecclesiastics at the churches, partly in small missionary stations, scattered all around in the country and everywhere, in the style of the church-building and in the character of the service, the English influence was predominating. This circumstance, however, did in no way affect the ecclesiastical relation between Denmark and the archiepiscopal see of Hamburg-Bremen. The authority of the archbishop, though not altogether unassailed, was nevertheless generally submitted to with good grace, and until in the twelfth century, when an independent Scandinavian archbishopric was established at Lund, he, with the exception of the above cases, always consecrated the Danish bishops. Also the relation to the Pope was very cordial. Canute made a pilgrimage to Rome, and founded *Hospitium Danorum* there.

The last part of Denmark which was converted was the island of Bornholm. It was christianized in 1060 by Bishop Egin of Lund. It is noticeable, however, that in Denmark, Christianity was not made a part of the law of the land, such as was the case in England and in Norway.

Just when the expulsion of Harald Klak compelled Ansgar to give up the Danish mission, at least for the time being, an embassy was sent by the Swedish king, Björn, to the emperor, Louis the Pious, asking him to send Christian missionaries to Sweden. Like the Danes, the Swedes had become acquainted with Christianity through their wars and commercial connections with foreign countries, and with many this acquaintance appears to have awakened an actual desire to become Christians. Accordingly Ansgar went to Sweden in 829. While crossing the Baltic,

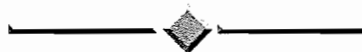
the vessel was overtaken and plundered by pirates, and he arrived empty handed, not to say destitute, at Björkö or, Birka, the residence of King Björn, situated on an island in the Mälaren. Although poverty and misery were very poor introduction to a heathen king in ancient Scandinavia, he was well received by the king, and in Hergeir, one of the most prominent men at the court of Birka, he found a warm and reliable friend. Hergeir built the first Christian chapel in Sweden and during his whole life he proved an un-failing and powerful support of the Christian cause. After two years successful labor, Ansgar returned to Germany, but he did not forget the work begun. As soon as he was well established as bishop in Hamburg, he sent, in 834, Gautbert, a nephew of Ebo, to Sweden, accompanied by Nithard and a number of other Christian priests, and well provided with everything necessary for the work. Gautbert labored with great success. In Birka he built a church, and thus it became possible for the Christians, scattered all over Sweden, to attend Holy Mass and partake of the flesh and blood of Our Redeemer in their own country. But here, as in Denmark, the success of the Christian mission aroused the jealousy and hatred of the heathen, and, at last, even Hergeir was not able to keep them within bounds. An infuriated swarm broke into the house of Gautbert. The house was plundered, Nithard was murdered, the church was burnt, and Gautbert himself was sent in chains beyond the frontier. He never returned to Sweden, but died as bishop of Osnabrück, shortly before Ansgar. When Ansgar first heard of the outbreak in Sweden, he was himself fleeing before the fury of the Danish heathen, and for several years he was unable to do anything for the Swedish mission. Ardgar, a former hermit, now a priest, went to Sweden, and in Birka he found that Hergeir had succeeded in keeping together and defending the Christian congregation but Hergeir died shortly after, and with him fell the last defence against the attacks of the heathen and barbarians.

Meanwhile Ansgar had been established in the archiepiscopal See of Hamburg-Bremen. In 853, he determined to go himself to Sweden. The costly

presents he gave to King Olaf, the urgent letters he brought from the emperor, and the king of Denmark, the magnificence and solemnity of the appearance of the mission made a deep impression. The king promised that the question should be laid before the assembled people, whether or not they would allow Christianity to be preached again in the country. In the assembly it was the address of an old Swede, proving that the God of the Christians was stronger even than Thor, and that it was poor policy for a nation not to have the strongest God, which finally turned the scales, and once more the Christian missionaries were allowed to preach undisturbed in the country. Before Ansgar left, the church was rebuilt in Birka, and, for a number of years, the missionary labor was continued with great zeal by Erimbert, a nephew of Gautbert, by Ansfrid, born a Dane, and by Rimberty, also a Dane.

Nevertheless, although the persecutions ceased, Christianity made little progress, and when, in 935, Archbishop Unni himself visited Birka, his principal labor consisted in bringing back to the Christian fold such members as had strayed away among the heathen, and forgotten their faith. Half a century later, however, during the reign of Olaf Skötkonung, the mission received a vigorous impulse. The king himself and his sons were won for the Christian cause, and from Denmark a number of English missionaries entered the country. The most prominent among these was Sigfrid. By his exertions many were converted, and Christianity became a legally recognized religion in the country beside the old heathenism. In the southern part of Sweden, heathen sacrifices ceased, and heathen altars disappeared. In the northern part, however, the old faith still continued to live, partly because it was difficult for the missionaries to penetrate into those wild and forbidding regions, partly because there existed a difference of tribe between the northern and southern Swedes, which again gave rise to political differences.

The Christianization of Sweden was not completed until the middle of the twelfth century.



1919

ST. OLAV, ALSO CALLED OLAF OR OLAUS, THE PATRON SAINT OF NORWAY*Frode C.W. Rambusch.*

St. Olav, or "Hellig Olav" as he is popularly called by the Scandinavians, was born in the year 995. His father, Harald Granske, was one of several provincial kings, but, according to royal law, Olav inherited the right to succeed his father not merely as a petty king, but as the supreme ruler over the entire kingdom of Norway. Following the custom of Scandinavian princes, and in order to equip himself with the knowledge and experience, particularly in military science, consistent with his high calling, he left his home at the early age of fifteen, and accompanied by his foster-father, Rhane, and one hundred picked warriors, he set out on a long journey.

A few years later, 1013, Olav made himself very conspicuous in the battle of Londonbridge, having joined forces with King Ethelred against King Svend of Denmark. In this battle, as on many subsequent occasions, he won a great victory over superior forces, and he proved himself an able and clever strategist. He fought many battles in Denmark, Sweden, Finland and in the Slavonic countries on the south coast of the Baltic Sea participated in wars in France and Spain, and everywhere did he win fame as a fearless fighter and a valiant hero. His small army of one hundred men had been growing rapidly. Vikings from the North and warriors from foreign countries joined him in large numbers, and he soon became the commander of a large fleet and the chief of a great force of excellent fighters.

Twenty years old, Olav Haraldson, as he was then called, was cruising in the Mediterranean. One night he had a vision in a dream. He saw a man of saintly and commanding appearance who told him to return to Norway where the task of his life was awaiting him, and where "he should be king forever." Prince, Olav wondered at this strange message, but his own interpretation of the dream was that his descendants should in the coming ages be the rulers of his native land. He changed his course, however, and instead of proceeding onward to the Holy Land, whither he was bound, he immediately returned to the North.

When Olav Haraldson reached the land of his forefathers he at once went to his old home to visit his mother, Ause, and his step-father Sigurd Syr, who

was the provincial king of Ringerike. Here he was received with heartfelt joy and great honors. The celebrations given in honor of Olav upon his return to Norway are narrated minutely in the sagas, especially in Snorre Sturlason's "Heimskringla." Queen Ause ordered the festive hall profusely decorated; the walls were covered with costly tapestries, fresh straw was spread over the floors, and an abundance of rich silver and copper vessels were placed on the many tables in front of the settees about the walls. Sigurd Syr himself headed a procession of mounted men, and rode to meet Olav and his entourage, to whom he extended a cordial welcome. During the festivities Olav shared with his foster-father the seat of honor, which, in those times, was a large settee of richly carved wood resembling a throne.

During Olav's absence a great change had taken place in Norway. The larger part of the country had been divided between the Danish and the Swedish kings, and the remainder was ruled over by native chieftains who had assumed the name of kings. This state of affairs was very displeasing to Olav, as it was in direct opposition to his own plans. Having conceived ideas which he thought would enable him to change conditions, he called a meeting of his trusted friends a few days after the celebrations in his honor had subsided. To these he confided his plans of ousting the Swedes and the Danes, and overpowering the small "Nasse-Kings." "I will," he said, "make all Norway one kingdom, a Christian kingdom, and a land of just laws and practices." Olav's step-father Sigurd, not only promised to support him in his undertaking to the extent of his own influence and might, but would also try to win his many powerful relatives and friends for the cause. He, however, strongly advised Olav to be very careful and prudent in this hazardous scheme. Queen Ause was delighted to hear about Olav's plans, but censured her husband for his perpetual admonitions. "You will make a better farmer than king," she told Sigurd Syr, "only by fearless and heroic deeds will Olav's noble designs be accomplished." Turning to Olav she added, "I am now firmly convinced that you are a true descendant of your great ancestor King Harald Haarfagre. Our people will soon hail you as their true king and lib-

erator." And, indeed, Ause's prophecy came true. Barely one year later Olav Haraldson had by courage and shrewdness attained his goal. He was king of all Norway, from Lindesnäs to Northcape, ruling with a strong hand, and meting out justice to everybody by the enactment of just laws, and by restricting the power of the proud and obstinate earls and "hersers" (barons).

The Christian king, Olav Trygvason, had persuaded Olav's mother and step-father to embrace Christianity in the year 998, and Olav, therefore, was baptized when three years old. During his extensive travels he had come in close contact with Christianity and gradually had developed into a deeply religious man. Having ascended the throne as the supreme ruler of Norway, it was now a matter of paramount importance to him that the Christianization of his country should be systematically and vigorously pursued. There were at this time comparatively few Christians in Norway, and the missionaries were making very slow progress. Bishop Grimkil and many pious and learned priests had followed Olav from the western countries, and although the king himself accompanied these missionaries from province to province throughout the entire land, they met with strong opposition. Whenever they arrived at a valley, messengers were dispatched in all directions to summon all free men for a great council or "Thing" as it was called. The missionaries explained the doctrines of the Catholic faith, and the king then addressed the people, stating that the time had come when all pagan sacrifices and practices should stop, and that in the future such would be considered as crimes. He implored all to receive the sacrament of baptism, and to believe in the only true God, Who had created heaven and earth, and in His only Son, Our Saviour, Jesus Christ. If anybody choose to adhere to the pagan customs, they were warned to leave the country or else prepare themselves to fight for life and property. Here and there it came to a fight between the people and King Olav's men, but the zealous missionaries were rewarded by a rich harvest of souls, due chiefly to Olav's extreme kindness and sound arguments.

Among the many interesting events which are on record from this time, the following incident is quite characteristic. Olav and his men were advancing towards the valley of Gudbrandsdale. The local chieftain sounded the war-cry and made the follow-

ing announcement: "A certain Olav is on his way hither. He is burning our temples, desecrating our sacred things, and insulting our gods. He claims that the God in which he believes is greater and stronger than our own powerful gods to whom we and our forefathers have always had recourse. If the earth has not yet swallowed this blasphemer, we will, when he arrives here, confront him with our mighty god Thor, whose terrible eyes surely will put Olav and his men to flight." A noisy demonstration of approval hailed the speech of the chieftain, and seven hundred armed men went into the mountains to halt the king and his followers. When Olav encountered the mob, he addressed them in a dignified and kindly manner, warning them to be obedient to their lawful ruler and advising them to listen to the missionaries. But the insurgents yelled, "No, you have insulted us and our gods, and you must suffer the penalty of death." Olav had only a few hundred men, but these were all skilled fighters and well-armed. By a quick attack the rebels were thrown into confusion and forced to retreat. But only a few days later they returned with great reinforcements and met the king at the "Thing" which had been arranged at Hundtorp. Olav had spent the preceding night in prayer and the Bishop celebrated Mass early in the morning. The "Thing" was opened with a speech by the king, and Bishop Grimkil delivered a sermon explaining the doctrines of the Christian religion. Meanwhile the people were hooting and jeering and presently brought a large wooden image of Thor, richly adorned with precious gold and silver ornaments. While the chieftain, Dole Guldbrand, was waiting for Thor to assert himself in some awful manner the king explained to the people the absurdity of idolizing such an object, and suddenly, pointing toward the rising sun, he exclaimed: "Look, my creator is now watching us." The attention of the people was diverted for a moment, and Olav quickly made a sign to a member of his body-guard who jumped forward and struck a heavy blow at Thor with his battle-axe. The idol was shattered into pieces, and snakes, worms and other reptiles escaped from its inside. The people were paralyzed with fear, but with Olav's cooperation the missionaries had overcome almost insurmountable obstacles, and paganism had been vanquished. Idolatry was abandoned, and churches were erected in all parts of the country.

The old sagas and the monastic records describe St.

Olav as tall and very powerful. He was of light complexion, and his eyes were bright and very expressive. In time of war, or if somebody tried to deceive him, he could frighten people by merely looking at them. But in his everyday life he was kind and forgiving, and very conscientious in the fulfilment of his religious duties. His saintliness is vividly portrayed in the following legend: Returning from Mass on a Sunday, Olav busied himself with woodcarving. One of his courtiers respectfully remarked, "My King, tomorrow is Monday." Olav raised his eyes, and, quick to grasp the meaning, answered, "Yes, you are right; bring me a candle." He gathered the shavings of the wood, seated himself on his throne, and, surrounded by all the members of the royal household, he burnt the shavings in the palm of his hand as an act of atonement.

St. Olav's ideal of government was a democratic monarchy. He restricted the power of the privileged classes, but at the same time wanted everybody to enjoy their lawful rights. He prohibited the ancient pagan custom of a public Yule festival which invariably ended in wild orgies, but encouraged the yeomen and peasants to drink their ale at home. A large number of the people, however, hated "the new foreign customs," and the enemies of Olav multiplied rapidly. He soon realized that "you must ask your neighbor if you shall live in peace."

Canute the Great, King of Denmark and England, plotted to wrest from Olav the sceptre of Norway. With a lavish hand he bestowed honors and gifts upon some of the most influential men in Norway, and these in return entered into a conspiracy against Olav. He, however, was well informed about the treachery of his own subjects, and intent upon frustrating Canute's scheme, he allied himself with his brother-in-law, King Omund of Sweden, and made an unexpected and successful attack on Denmark. Prince Hardy-Canute and Earl Ulf, failing in defending the eastern provinces and Danish lands, mustered a great army in Jutland, and King Canute speedily arrived from England with a great number of ships and a vast army. Olav was in a desperate situation, and, in spite of the valor of his troops, he was forced to retreat with a great loss of men and ships. His friends deserted him, and open rebellion broke out all over his country. In order to save his life, Olav, accompanied by only three hundred faithful men, went to Sweden and from thence to Nowgorod, the capital

of Garderike, a part of the present Russia, where he sought refuge with his brother-in-law, King Jaroslav. He was received with extreme kindness, and the king and queen even asked him to remain there, offering him the viceroyship of a large district in southern Russia. Olav declined this offer, his sole ambition being to return to Norway when conditions became more favorable. He stayed with King Jaroslav and Queen Ingeborg until shortly after the following Christmas, when he received encouraging news from home. His friends rallied to his assistance, and he immediately set sail for Sweden where a number of warriors joined him. Early in June, 1030, he crossed the borderline, and once more he set foot upon Norwegian soil. Advancing slowly he was hailed with great joy by the poor and lowly who were very devoted to him, and his small army was constantly joined by armed yeomen and peasants. The news of the king's return spread rapidly, and the rich landowners, who received strong support from Denmark, succeeded in getting together an immense army.

Arriving at Stave-Myre, King Olav decided to review his army, which was found to number three thousand well armed men. He issued the proclamation that only Christians would be allowed to fight under his banner. Nine hundred unbaptized men withdrew, but four hundred of these returned presently and asked to be baptized. Several of the leaders considered this action very imprudent, but Olav told them that not the number of men but the will of God would decide the final outcome of the battle.

King Olav's firm belief in the righteousness of his cause, and his unshakeable faith in Almighty God is reflected in the many beautiful stories which are told about the saintly king. "What reward will we receive if we join you?" he was asked by many. "Lose your life and property for the sake of Christ and His kingdom" was the answer he gave. Others, who offered him their services, said that they wanted to take part in a real fight. "Then your place is with the enemy," said Olav, "I and all my men do not fight for the sake of fighting, but for Christianity and justice."

A Rnljot Gelline, and many other famous vikings, renounced their belief in Odin and Thor, and told Olav that henceforth they would believe in him. "Believe in Christ," said Olav, "the Son of God, Who came into this world and suffered and died in order to save all sinners." Many were converted after Olav

had given them his royal word that there was no witchcraft connected with baptism.

King Olav had a large sum of money which he gave to a priest whom he met on his way to the city of Drontheim (Trondhjem). He requested that the money be divided among the churches, the clergy, the sick and the poor. He also ordered that some of the money should be used for Masses to be said for the repose of the souls of the enemies who would be killed in the battle. This last arrangement aroused some discontent among his followers, who said: "We are all sinful men and we need the Masses ourselves." But Olav answered: "If we suffer death, we die for God and He will have mercy on us, but the traitors and the poor misled people need the Masses sorely."

At Stiklestad in Vaerdalen, the vanguard of the enemy could be seen in the distance, and King Olav arranged his army in three divisions. Surrounded by his body-guard and trusted friends he unfurled his royal banner which bore the emblem of the Holy Cross, and ordered that all the men should have a white cross painted on their helmets and upon their shields. After the following slogan "Fram, Fram, Kristmäänd, Korsmäänd, Kongsmäänd" (Forward, forward, Christians, Crusaders, Kingsmen) had been adopted, the order was given to rest before the battle.

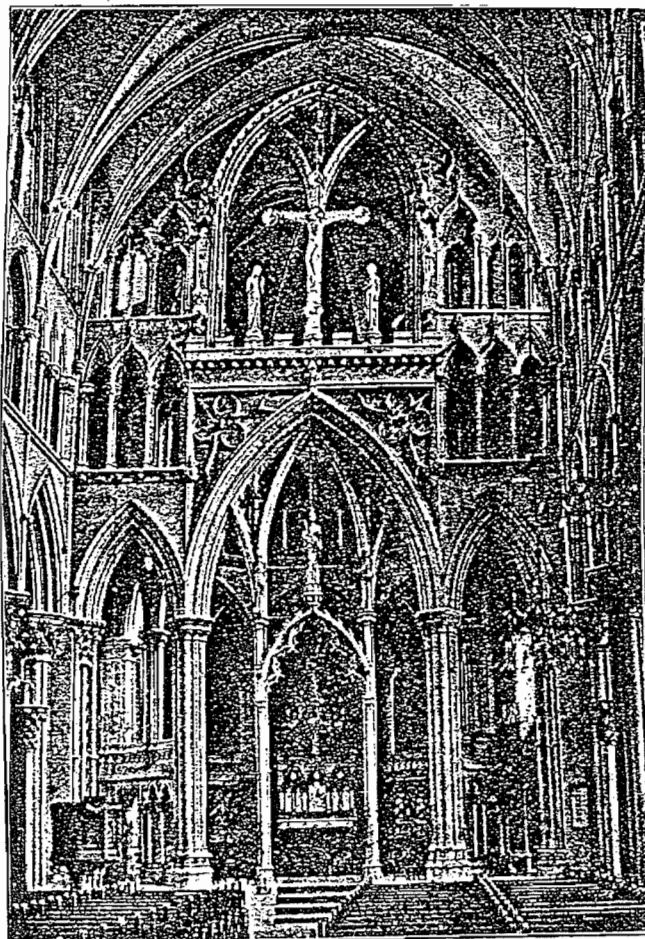
The king fell asleep with his head resting on the knee of his old friend, Fin Arnesen. At daybreak the enemy's activities could be plainly observed, and Fin, therefore, awoke his master. Olav gently rebuked him, saying: "You should have let me sleep a while longer, for I had such a beautiful dream. I saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and I

ascended it joyfully. When you called me I was near the top longing to see my God." Fin answered: "The dream may soon come true, for the countless army over there may mean your death."

The army was soon in battle array. The war trumpets were sounded, all the banners unfurled, and the battle-cry was given. This was on the twenty-ninth day of July, 1030. All records and traditions, from friend and foe alike, praise the marvelous valor of the Christian army, but the enemies outnumbered King Olav's army to such an extent, that victory was impossible. After a great massacre, Olav ordered the ring of steel-clad men that surrounded him to open, and he joined in the battle himself. The old sagas relate, that when King Olav appeared on the battlefield, "his enemies were frightened, for his face shone radiant as the sun. He struck down several of the leaders with his own hand, but soon, bleeding from many wounds, he staggered, and, lifting up his eyes toward heaven, he cried, "God have mercy

on me." He then fell dying upon a large rock. This happened early in the afternoon, but the sky became dark as in the evening, and a feeling of horror seized Olav's victorious opponents. Kalf Arnesen, one of the lords who had wounded the king, said afterwards that Olav's blood had healed a gash in his hand. Many other miracles which had been wrought, and which were ascribed to the saintly king, were told only a few days after his death. The years that followed were very unlucky for Norway and the people realized that a terrible crime had been committed. Olav's son, Magnus, surnamed "the good," became King of Norway, and later, also King of Denmark.

St. Olav was canonized, and a magnificent cathedral was built in Drontheim, his principal residence.



Great Cathedral of Drontheim, Norway, Interior of the Cathedral

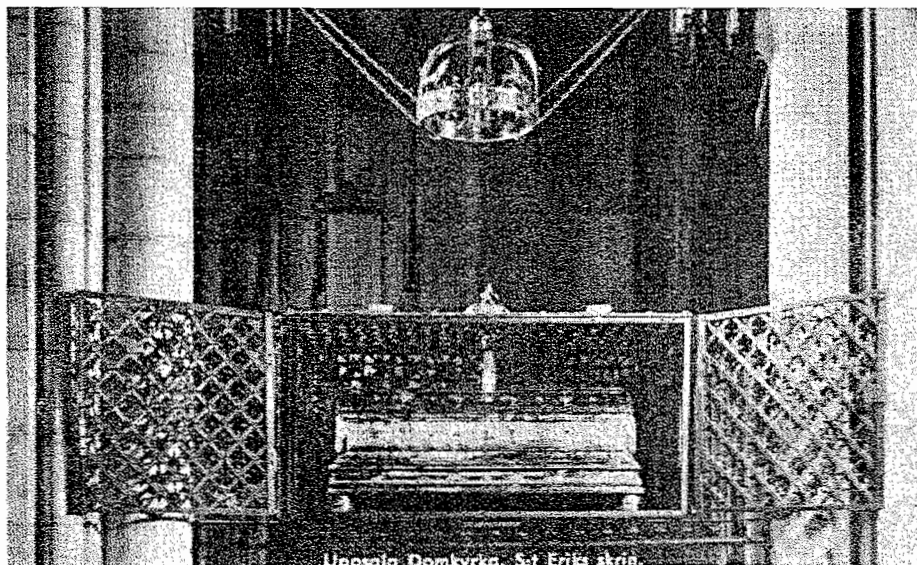
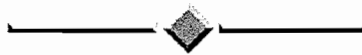
This monumental ecclesiastical structure stands today as a proof of the deep religious sentiments and of the high culture of the Norwegians in the glorious Catholic ages. Pilgrims from far-off countries came to worship at the shrine of St. Olav in Drontheim. In London there were not less than three churches, and in Rome one church, all dedicated to Norway's great patron saint.

By his martyrdom St. Olav conquered Norway. For many centuries his ideals were the ideals of the Norwegians. A marvellous development took place in poetry and prose. Ancient literary products of priests and laymen are today read more than ever, and they are being reprinted and translated into different languages. The Norwegian nation became strong and honored. The Archbishop of Norway was at a time also the ecclesiastical superior of Iceland, Greenland, Orkney Islands, Shetland Island, Faroe Islands, and even of the Isle of Man.

After the dark ages that witnessed the desecration of St. Olav's shrine and the decline of the Norwegian nation, a new era has dawned. The Vicar Apostolic and his clergy are again celebrating Mass, preaching and baptizing, as they were in the time of St. Olav,

and with St. Olav's son, Magnus, we may joyfully exclaim: "St. Olav is now praying for Norway before the throne of God."

Over the place where the remains of St. Olav were originally buried Magnus, son of Olav, built a wooden church. Later King Olav Kyrre built the first stone church. In 1151 the Pope made Norway an Archiepiscopal See. Cardinal Nicholas Brekspær made Nidaros (Trondhjem) the ecclesiastical capital, and he installed the first archbishop, Jon Birgeron, who at once commenced work on the contemplated great cathedral. His famous successor, Oistein Erlendson, 1162, a friend of Thomas à Becket, studied in Italy several years, but after a prolonged stay in England he changed the plans of architecture, and the work was carried out in the style of early English Gothic. The ornamental details are wonderfully artistic. The length of the cathedral is three hundred feet. The width including the transept is one hundred and fifty feet. The tower to the top of the spire is two hundred and seventy feet. The height of the roof of the sanctuary is ninety-three feet. In the transept the ceiling is seventy-five feet above the floor, and in the nave sixty-six feet.



ST. ERIC'S SHRINE, UPPSALA CATHEDRAL

1923

ST. VILLEHAD OF DENMARK (One of the Gorkum Martyrs)

St. Villehad (or Villads) was a Franciscan Father, born in Denmark, 1482, the date is not known, but some writers think that he was born on the day of St. Villehad of Bremen and called after him. In his long life, he was nearly ninety years old when he died, he must have suffered greatly, both in spirit and in the flesh. His life must have been like one long martyrdom that found its crowning glory when he, with the other Gorkum friars was put to death in Brielle in Holland. During his younger years he saw the beginning and the spreading of the so-called Reformation, and lived under the rule of the tyrant King Christian II, who ruled Sweden, Denmark and Norway, from 1513 to 1523.

Christian was the first Protestant King and a friend of Luther, although he pretended to be a Catholic. When we talk about St. Villehad, it might be well to look upon the historic facts of the time in which he lived, and remember the awful things that happened in many places, and not least in the Scandinavian North. It is indeed strange to think that such things were possible in the Kingdoms that not long before were good Catholic countries, where religion and culture were flourishing, where constantly more schools, churches and convents were being built, and lately even a University had been founded and

authorized by the Pope; but there was, at the same time, great unrest and trouble brewing in many places between the nobility, the yeomen and peasants. The latter found themselves more and more subdued and losing their influence and rights like the farmers in the foreign southern countries. King Christian declared himself a great friend of the burghers and peasants, but made no secret of his hatred for the clergy and nobles. His demands for money as loan or gifts were endless. He showed great cruelty in many places, especially, to the old Bishop of Hammer in Norway, when he could not get any more money from him, and in various ways acted most scandalously both in Denmark and in Norway. In Sweden he had serious difficulties with the parliament or state council, and at one of his stays in the Swedish capital he invited all state counsellors to meet him there, guaranteeing them peace and safe conduct, but after they had all arrived, the gates of the castle were closed, and the King ordered all members of the state council to be beheaded. The blood of the best men of the old nobility of the country was running through the gutters of Stockholm. In Denmark, King Christian accused the noble Torben Okse, Governor of Copenhagen Castle, of having poisoned his mistress, Dyveke, a Dutch girl. The court declared the accusation to be absolutely without foundation, but the King had, nevertheless, Torben and his cousin and best friend beheaded. Several other Danish noblemen were also executed without any cause whatsoever, and when the awful carnage at Stockholm became known in Denmark the people were horrified, but the King tried to excuse himself by saying that the Swedish noblemen were heretics, as they had caused the Bishop to be deprived of his ecclesiastic possessions and, furthermore, that it was Didrich Slaghog, a German adventurer, who had persuaded him to kill the Swedish noblemen. This Slaghog was an intimate friend of King Christian, who had appointed him Archbishop of Lund and Primas of Denmark, of course without any authority and sanction of the Pope. Slaghog, nevertheless, tried to rule as Archbishop, but a papal delegate who, at this time, visited Denmark condemned him and his unlawful actions, and King Christian now gave order that Slaghog should be burned alive,



Danskeren Villehad,
Martyr 1572.

(Efter et Maleri.)

Uro ham drev fra Hjemmet,
og Gorkums Brodre ham
venligt i deres Kloster gav
Plads efter Landflygtigheds
faerd. Jaevn og oprigtig han
var, beskeden af Aasyn, og
altid kom han med kristeligt
Sind Ben og Betragtning
ihu.

which promptly took place. King Christian was an epileptic, which may partly, or to some extent, explain his insane cruelty. The Jutland nobility in Denmark now arose against him, and Sweden elected another King. Soon after he had to leave Denmark and, having lost all his three Kingdoms, he sought shelter with his brother-in-law, the German Emperor. Later on he was caught by the Danes and spent twenty-two years as a prisoner in a dungeon, walled up in a tower at Sonderborg in Slesvig. His successor, an uncle, Frederik I, was a very shrewd man and a hypocrite. He also pretended to be a Catholic, and at his coronation took the solemn oath to protect the Holy Catholic Church and prevent the Protestant preachers from overrunning the country, and talking against the Catholic Church, but as soon as he got in possession of the military and civil power he broke his oath and with all his power tried to do just the opposite of his promise, only in a slow and sly manner. He began in the Southern part of Denmark, in the Dukedom of Slesvig, by forcing out Danish Franciscans from the monasteries in Slesvig city, Tønning. He replaced them with German Franciscans, and after some time had elapsed the German Franciscans were again quietly replaced by German Protestant preachers. In one place after another the Franciscans were driven out, from Flensborg and Tender, from one town after another, throughout the Kingdom. In some instances the King declared he needed the buildings for housing his soldiers and that the Franciscans did not need them, as they could pray to God anywhere. We have the full authentic record of the expelling of the Franciscans, the gray Friars, as they were mostly called, from every city and town in Denmark. In most cases it started by the robbing of valuables from churches and provisions from the monasteries. The stealing was done by hoodlums, tramps, or other scum of human society without interference of the authorities. The Franciscans were from the beginning the only order that the King wanted expelled, because they were more loved, and had more influence than anybody else, by the rural population throughout the country. As soon as the news was brought to King Frederik that trouble had broken out in this or that town with the Franciscans, he quickly ended the complaint and argument by giving the monastery to some of his favorites, or to the people of the town for public use.

St. Villehad was with all the other Danish Francis-

cans expelled from Denmark around 1525 or a little later. We do not know at what monastery he was stationed at that time, but we know that he stayed some time in Holstein, in northern Germany, from where he went to England, and then to Scotland; but in both places the Reformation was in full swing, and the persecution great, and no shelter could be found for a homeless old Franciscan. St. Villehad again went out in the world and this time he came to Gorkum in Holland, where his Franciscan brothers received the old Saint kindly and gave him a home. Later on when an old man, St. Villehad with his dear Franciscan brothers had to face worse misfortune and suffering than ever before. In the latter part of the sixteenth century Calvinism had spread very much in Holland, which at that time, was under Spanish rule, but the Protestant Hollanders, "the Seageusers," had become very powerful and were successfully fighting for independence from Spain. The lower classes in the country used the opportunity to rob and steal and commit the most brutal crimes. One church after another was ransacked, everything of value was carried off or demolished, countless objects of fine art made of precious metal, or fine carvings were ruined and lost. The Catholic clergy was the special object of hatred of the Calvinists. One of the most unspeakable barbarisms happened when the Seageusers, in the month of June, 1572, conquered the city of Gorkum. Eleven Franciscans who had lived in the monastery were taken away in chains and soon eight other Catholic priests were added to their number. In all seventeen priests and two lay brothers were defenseless prisoners in the hands of the fanatics. They were now taken to Dortrecht and later to Brielle. Wherever they came, the poor prisoners were the object of almost heartless and unbearable insults and tortures. Even the women tried to surpass the men in finding new disgusting ways of showing their spite and hatred. In Brielle they were thrown down in a dirty and absolutely dark place where filth of the worst description constantly was dripping down. The martyrs were tempted in many ways to give up their holy faith. It was especially their belief in the Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist and the supremacy of the Pope that their tormentors sought to wring from them, both by good promises and threats of torture, but all without avail. Just then a letter arrived from Prince William of Orange with the instructions to all civil and military officers to leave priest, or monk unmolested; but

the excitement among the Seageusers was too great and the leaders too proud to obey the order from the prince. On the contrary, the prisoners were now taken out from the dungeon, whipped in the most cruel manner, and finally hung in the gallows. Their dead corpses were even now, after various parts of their bodies were cut off, taken around in the town for further insults and mutilations. The place in Brielle where the martyrs suffered has since become a place which many pilgrims have visited and where great processions and devotions have been celebrated. The greater part of their relics are now in the Franciscan Church in Brussels in Belgium. 1675, the Gorkum martyrs were declared venerable, and on the twenty-ninth of June, 1867, they were canonized. Nobody can read the history of the awful suffering these holy martyrs passed through, without feeling the deepest pity and wonderful admiration for these holy priests who, as we are told, in the greatest misery could be steadfast and pray to and praise God. We Scandinavian Catholics feel a certain joy in remembering that one of the martyrs was our countryman, the Dane Villehad, the Franciscan Father. We could wish to know more about the early life of St. Villehad, but at least we know this about his personality that he was a tall man, extremely lean, arid about his character that he was very quiet and unassuming. The purity of his life and his soul made him dear to God and his fellowmen. He acquired the Dutch language very quickly, although he had not known anything about it before he came to Holland. A great many came to his confessional, as he was looked upon as a very saintly man who prayed constantly. When the prosecution got near to Gorkum, they asked him to pray fervently to Almighty God to protect the Church. St. Villehad answered: "I do that day and night," and nobody that knew him doubted that this was the case. In the prison, he continued his life of prayer. He and a brother, Nicasius, knelt in prayer almost continually. They were both filled with such peace and joy that it looked like they did not suffer any pain in this awful black and dirty dungeon, but seemed almost

comfortable, in spite of hunger and the undescrivable surroundings. The prison keeper wanted to make fun of St. Villehad and whispered nasty and blasphemous words into his ear and asked him then: "What do you say to this confession?" The Saint only answered: "I will pray to God for you." "What?" roared the keeper. "You will pray for me?" and beat the old man unmercifully, but every time his tormentor beat him, Villehad said "Deo gratias;" and in such a spirit the old priest suffered his martyrdom. No promise of relief or threat of torture had the slightest influence, he proclaimed till his death his belief in the Real Presence of the Holy Eucharist and in the Pope's supremacy over Holy Church. In the new, beautiful church on Nørrebrogade, in Copenhagen, we find a beautiful statue St. Villehad, and the name of the church is "The Church of the Blessed Sacrament." Most of St. Villehad's life he spent in foreign countries, but he was true Dane and Catholic, that in life and death clung to the faith of his fathers.

St. Villehad of Denmark is the last of the Scandinavians who has been canonized by Holy Church.

The priest, Wilhelm Estius Hesselius, born in Gorkum, was, as a young man, an eyewitness to the suffering of the martyrs, when the Seageusers (or Watergeusers) took possession of Gorkum. His description was printed in German, *Geschichte de Martyren van Gorkum*. A new book about the same subject is *Les Martyrs de Gorkum*, Paris, 1908. In *Nordisk Ugeblad for Katholske Kristne*, 1898, Rev Keff, also has told the story about St. Villehad and his brother martyrs, and furthermore Niels Hansei Cand. Mag., in his excellent book, *Vore Helgent Livssktidring of danske og islandske Helgene*, Copenhagen, 1917, has told all known facts about St. Villehad. The statement about King Christia II is translated from the Danish history as well as the facts about Frederik I's prosecutions of the Franciscans and also from the old Latin records of the expulsion of the Franciscans from Denmark, which are now translated into Danish.

1937

BISHOP NIELS STEENSEN

Nicolaus Steno

Anatomist and Father of the Science of Geology

Three hundred years ago on January 1, 1638, Niels Steensen was born in Copenhagen, Denmark. He came from a family of clergymen of the State Church in the Province of Skaane. His father, however, was an esteemed goldsmith in the city. The young Niels, even as a student, was noted for exceptional ability. He pursued his studies in philosophy and philology at the University of Copenhagen, finally devoting himself mainly to medicine, a department (especially anatomy) for which the University was then distinguished. As customary, he went abroad for his post-graduate studies and it was in Holland that he made his great anatomical discovery, the duct of the parotid gland, named after him, Ductus Stenonianus.

After four years study in Holland, he went to Paris, where he read his famous paper on the anatomy of the brain. He visited Rome and then went to Florence, his favorite city. The Grand Duke Ferdinand II of Tuscany gave him a cordial reception, and the Duke's brother, Leopold, installed Steensen (or Steno in the Latin form) as anatomist in the Hospital of St. Maria Nuova. Here in Florence surrounded by distinguished scholars and artists, he began his most important work in geology, and in a small work he laid down the principles of the science. This book was intended as an introduction to a more extended work, but this was never completed.

In spite of his brilliant career in science, he was at all times modest, unassuming and very devout, as shown by his own words: "When the anatomist examines that which is created, he often raises his eyes to Heaven to honor and glorify the wisdom of the Creator." The lack of unity among the leaders of Protestantism introduced only a century before disturbed him and his clear mind accustomed to scientific methods of investigation saw in the Catholic Church not only the Unity lacking in Protestant sects, but the deep learning, holiness, and faith he longed

for as a devout Christian. Niels Steensen became a Catholic on the fourth of November, 1667.

Steensen knew many modern languages, Greek, Hebrew, and Latin, the language of science and of educated people of that day. He continued his scientific studies and did much writing, including correspondence with the philosopher, Spinoza, and the Calvinist, J. Sylvius. His congenial work in Florence was interrupted in 1672 when he accepted an appointment as Royal Anatomist in Copenhagen. In his native city he gave much impetus to the study of anatomy. He interested himself in the plight of his fellow Catholics in his native land and tried to aid them, but the misunderstanding and intolerance of his countrymen forced him to leave Copenhagen and to return to his beloved Florence. Here he became daily more and more impressed with the needs of the soul, and in the year 1675, he laid down his dissection instruments and decided to become a priest. To the vow of celibacy he added the vow of voluntary poverty. When the newly converted Duke Johan Frederik of Hanover wished to have a Bishop appointed to his domain, the choice fell on Steensen. He was consecrated in 1677, and with his vow of poverty in mind, walked on foot from Rome to his new See in the northwestern part of Germany. In his coat-of-arms was the picture of the Sacred Heart.

Nine years of untiring work for souls and energetic striving for personal holiness were to elapse before his death. From 1680 to 1683 he was Auxiliary Bishop of Munster, where he is still remembered. He was later in Hamburg. After a severe illness with great suffering, he died in Schwerin on the sixth of December, 1686. At the request of the Medici family, his body was taken to Florence and entombed in St. Lorenzo.

Our space does not permit a detailed account of his great scientific work in geology and anatomy, nor



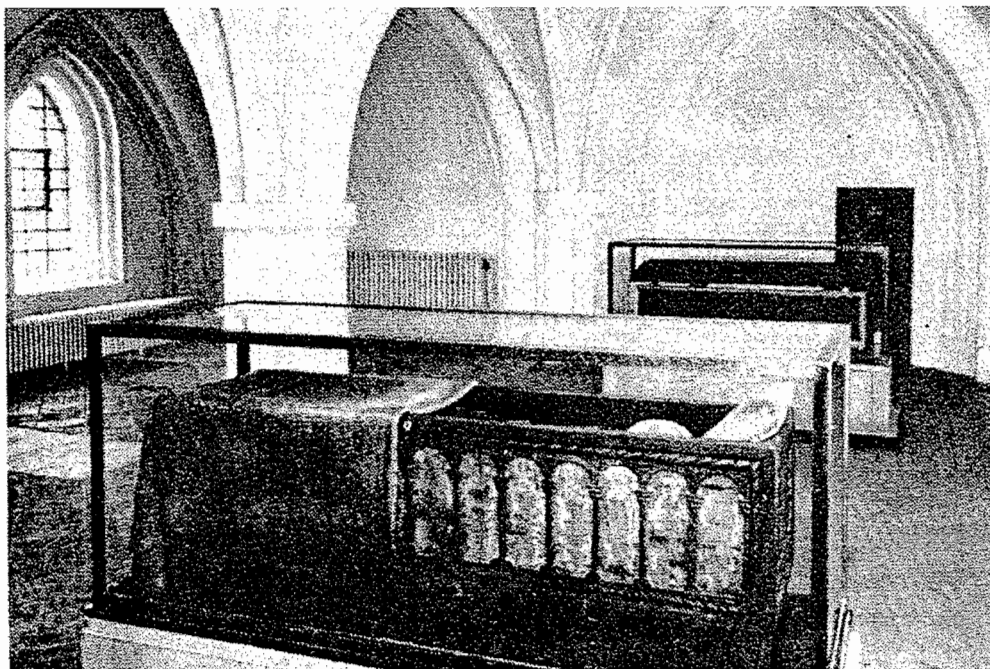
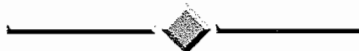
*Painted by Vermekren
Original Painting in the
Fredericksborg Museum, Denmark*

of the greatness of his saintly, religious life, but this account is sufficient to awaken interest in his centenary. His contemporaries regarded him not only as a great scientist but as a great saint. The Grand Duke of Tuscany at the time of his death wrote: "This prelate was renowned for his holiness, not only among Catholics, but by the Lutherans as well, all of whom certify that he lived a most holy life."

The International Congress of Geologists which met in Bologna in 1881 assembled at his tomb in Florence in order to do him honor, after the regular sessions of the Congress had closed, and erected to his memory a tablet with the following inscription:

"You behold here, Traveller, the bust of Nicolaus Steno as it was set up by more than a thousand scientists from all over the world, as a memorial to him, on the fourth of the Kaland's of October, 1881. The geologists of the world after their meeting in Bologna, under the presidency of Count John Cappellini, made a pilgrimage to his tomb, and in the presence of the chosen representatives of the municipality, and of the learned professors of the University, honored the mortal ashes of this man, illustrious among geologists and anatomists."

In Denmark, a movement has been started in behalf of his canonization, and prayers are requested.



TOMB OF ST. CANUTE THE KING, ODENSE

1940

SIGRID UNDSET VISITS AMERICA

John LaFarge, S.J.

(America)

So few Norwegian Catholics visit our shores, that the coming of Sigrid Undset, distinguished writer and lecturer, appears as somewhat of a novelty. The newest things, however, are sometimes closer to the past than we think. So that when Mme. Undset dropped in to see us a few days ago at the editorial office of *America*, I was rather overawed by the thought that the very first woman who ever came from the Old to the New World as a Norwegian Catholic. There is actually a statue of that remote lady at the New York World's Fair, with her child, the first white child born in the New World. Further knowledge of her I have none, and leave the inquiry to the antiquarians. But it was the Norse Catholics who were the beginning of beginnings here and we have been waiting a long time for just such a representative as Sigrid Undset.

There is, however, a distinct element of novelty in Madame Undset's case. She comes as an exile—for the time being—not as a wholly free seafarer. The peoples of the North, Norway and Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, have been great wanderers by sea and land from the dawn of history. In their old pagan days they traveled as Vikings for adventure and conquest, and raised particular hell in England and Ireland. When the Irish monks and the Irish virgin St. Sunniva returned the compliment by converting and civilizing the Norsemen, teaching them to read, bless themselves and confess their obstreperous sins, the Norsemen traveled for adventure, exploration and piety. They pilgrimaged to Rome, Jerusalem and other holy places.

Then, in our own times, after their forefathers had been robbed of their ancient Catholic Faith, they voyaged to this country in search of a different kind of adventure: the building of a new life across the

seas. But wherever and whenever they traveled, they could, for the most part, go and come as they pleased in their native land. They were adventurers, not exiles.

Only in these last hours do we see the grievous sight of a Norsewoman who has done more than any living person to make her country known and respected through the world, obliged to seek refuge thousands of miles away from home. And home *is* home for Sigrid Undset. You need talk to her but five minutes to be convinced of that.

Mme. Undset can be sure of a warm welcome in this country for these and other very human reasons. But, I feel sure, she is much less concerned over the welcome to be given to her person than she is over the welcome for her ideas.

Her ideas will, I believe, bring considerable light to the American public upon matters that are beginning to concern us seriously in this country. I am not speaking of her

literary judgments, which are numerous and penetrating, but of her deep absorption in recent years with questions of woman's role in the preservation of the family, which is naturally linked up with the influence of religion in a largely irreligious world.

These interests are not a mere private hobby of Sigrid Undset; they are matters which have come to a head more acutely in the Old World than in the New, and in the Scandinavian countries they reached a crisis, reflected in legislation.

Mme. Undset's first exploration, I imagine, will be the American home: the typical home, if there be such a thing. If she will read the *Saturday Evening Post* and some of the collateral family journals she will learn fairly well what most Americans think the home more or less ought to be. If she will drop into



Sigrid Undset

various family circles, which is easier here than in the Old Country, she will learn what it actually is. And if her habit of cool appraisal has not been lost on the voyage three-quarters around the world, she will probably conclude that here in America we had best be preparing ourselves fast for the acute shocks to our domestic self-complacency which are long familiar abroad.

We usually credit Henrik Ibsen and Ellen Key for upsetting certain fond delusions about the tranquillity and automatic operation of family life. They were called realists and to a certain extent they were. But the true realist is not he who discovers *some* reality, but the person who discovers *the* reality or realities in a given situation. Like General Foch, they ask: "What is it all about?" Then they answer the question precisely.

Once upon a time Sigrid Undset was an agnostic. She and her associates saw in those days with painful clearness the inconsistency of a State Church which would permit divorce, in line with pagan principles; yet attempt to confer upon the divorced and remarried couple a Christian blessing. She saw that you cannot be pagan and Christian at the same time. She learned through her studies that this singular inconsistency was but one of many which came from the abandonment of the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic Church. And her position is today that it is a sheer illusion to expect to keep even the shell of monogamous marriage once the Catholic doctrine of sacramental marriage is lost. With no Christ, no Cana, there is no guarantee against the harem. Indeed, as she in one place conjectures, if marriage is actually deprived of its religious sanction and religious content, it might even be advisable from purely prudent and humanitarian reasons to revive the harem. In such a case, women would at least preserve a certain status when they are rejected. They would not be cast aside as a "stove-length of wood," as they are today by the whirring of the divorce mills.

The glory of America, as Mme. Undset will doubtless observe, is its incomparable Indian Summer, which makes us forget that the cold will ever return. She will likewise observe that family life and woman's status in this country share, too, some of the glory but likewise the illusion of the American Indian Summer. In Scandinavia they dreamed of a de-Christianized marriage which would somehow keep

the sweetness of the Christian home but evade its tremendous responsibilities. But the fierce frost came of a dwindling population. They were casting about for remedies when the war seized them. In Sweden, the birth rate was found to be lower than in any other country of the world except, possibly, England. Only seventy per cent of the children necessary to keep a stationary population were being born, and soon there would be but fifty per cent, or lower. The same rude awakening has begun in this country. We begin to realize that the present drift is to destruction. We have lost our land and are losing our children. In the pregnant words of the economist, Dr. O. E. Baker: "The consequences of the loss of land ownership and of the decline in births will not appear as flashes of lightning and roar of thunder, like a summer storm; but, rather, they will develop slowly and silently, like the progress of the seasons. There will be warm days and cool days as in autumn, but with a steady drift toward winter."

What Mme. Undset has to tell us is not the tale of the winter, for we are growing aware of that already, but the much more important message of the new Spring, the resurrection which the modern world and the modern family must make in Jesus Christ. "It is impossible," she wrote in the Scandinavian Catholic weekly, *St. Olav*, "to advocate lifelong monogamy unless one believes that each individual soul is worth God's dying in order to save it. Nothing but such a belief can justify the Catholic idea of marriage. No other belief can give the people of our day the courage to live according to nature and to accept the children which God gives them: only this, to believe that every child has a soul which is worth more than the entire, visible, created world."

Sigrid Undset is exact in her judgment that there can be no lasting human welfare without a doctrinal foundation in the teachings of Christ. A neo-pagan or "after-Christian" world cannot hope to revive the partial achievements of pre-Christian paganism. The Christless Yule of the Nazis will not even give us back, she remarks, the "Lord Frey" of the old pagan North.

But she is likewise unrelenting in her demand that Catholics practice to the very fullness, to actual heroism, the tremendous tasks of justice and charity which our Faith imposes upon us. She cannot tolerate the easy-going and worldly-minded Catholic, the

person who seeks a comfortable spiritual minimum and accommodates himself to the established order of things for the sake of avoiding effort and self-sacrifice. The spiritual nuptials of the Church with her crucified Bridegroom, like the earthly nuptials of man and woman, impose a fearful responsibility that rests upon each member of Christ's Mystical Body. Painful as the task is, we are called to change the modern world with its cult of power and success. There can be no compromise in any part of the world today with that power for evil which in a few short months has wrecked the peace, unity and much of the budding Catholicism of the Scandinavian countries.

Mme. Undset is quiet when you meet her. Were it not for her occasional swift changes to a childlike smile, you could call her impassive. The effect is heightened by her large stature. She seems more of a person to stay with and learn from than merely to converse with. But on one point she spoke passionately: her dislike for mere sentimentality, whether it be of the pious or of the worldly type. She is as opposed to fat angels and glass-eyed statues as she is to historians who fail to grasp the essential humanity of the Middle Ages. Sentimentality, in her view, indicates the death of true sentiment; and the sentimental peoples are those who feel the least deeply. And her next pet detestation is uncharitable talk. It is the Nordic peoples, she observes in one of her genially biting moments, who have invented all the social apparatus whereby woman may gossip: five-o'clock teas, Kaffe-klatsches, women's committees, etc.

In a vivid description of the Saviour's Temptation in the Desert, Sigrid Undset warns the Catholic against the temptation to rely upon force, physical or political, as the God ordained remedy for the healing of social or religious revolt. There is temptation in our day to hope for a glittering structure of politically reinforced Catholicism and to compromise with Fascism, as there was temptation in medieval times for the timid and pious to rely unduly upon the secular arm.

Regeneration in this day, as in all previous days, she expects to come through tremendous lovers of God and of suffering humankind. This is the lesson of the Saints whose lives she has so eagerly chronicled. In her own words, she wants people who will "pull the door wide open, so that Christ may enter and hold festival within." The poor and the outcast

must enter and integral justice must be done for all persons and for all peoples, Christians, pagans and Jews. Only then, and by the work of such individual and heroic souls, does she expect to see the Kingdom of Heaven realized on our earth.

Address of Welcome to Madame Undset

Viggo F. E. Rambusch

Our League is named after Ansgar, a young Benedictine priest, born in Brittany. In the year 826, at the invitation of King Harald of Denmark, Ansgar sailed northward and did the first successful and permanent missionary work among the Vikings.

Ansgar's life had been so good and his piety so outstanding, that after his death he was canonized by the Church and given the title Saint.

In Greater Scandinavia, and by this I mean not only Norway, Sweden and Denmark, but also Finland, Iceland and Greenland, we find from the Church records, that there are forty-eight (48) saints, the outstanding among whom are: St. Olaf of Norway, St. Eric of Sweden, St. Canute of Denmark and St. Henrik of Finland. These and many more of the Scandinavian saints have been faithfully and beautifully portrayed, against the stirring times in which they lived, by Madame Undset in her well-known *A Saga of Saints*.

In 1910 with the encouragement of Their Excellencies, the late and beloved Cardinal (Archbishop) Farley of New York, and Bishop McDonnell of Brooklyn, a small group of Catholic Scandinavian men here in New York formed a society. It was only natural that they should choose as their inspiration and guide, St. Ansgar, Patron of the North.

The object of this group of Scandinavian Catholics and American Catholics who subsequently joined them is to work and pray for the progress of the Church among Scandinavians. Their activities during the years have varied and increased.

A recent and probably the most important work, it has ever been our privilege to undertake, has been to conduct an annual, national drive so that funds could be sent to the Bishops of Scandinavia. It should be noted that these Bishops never have been able to exist on the income received from their own dioceses. They have always been very dependent upon the missionary-minded in Europe.

With Germany in the hands of the Nazis, all funds from that source have ceased, and now with Holland, Belgium and France occupied, they are practically without support. These Bishops are really in desperate need of help.

With the encouragement of Cardinal Fumasoni-Biondi, we secured several western branches, and now, in addition to the New York Unit, there are seventeen (17) branch units of our League, located through the Middle West and extending even to the Far West.

It is my great privilege, as the National President of St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League, to join you this evening in extending to Madame Undset a sincere welcome.

While many of you may hail her as one of the really outstanding women of our times, as a profound thinker, a distinguished writer, or as a Nobel prize winner, we, of St. Ansgar's League receive her as a convert and greet her as a Scandinavian Catholic.

We all wish Madame Undset to feel that we over here are fully conscious and deeply appreciate what the Scandinavian countries have done for us and for the world. We know of their great contributions to medicine and science; their high standards in literacy and education, their creation and development of the Folk School and co-operatives; and their outstanding and exemplary achievements in the field of Democratic Government.

We wish Madame Undset to feel that she is among kinsmen and friends and that we, the people before her, and the people of this great nation, all know, respect, admire, and many of us love the countries she so graciously represents.

Sigrid Undset comes to us saddened, but consumed with a love of all the very things which we Americans also hold dear. She comes to tell us a "Saga of Sorrow." We all hope and pray that the day is near when she shall again stand before us, but then bringing "Tidings of Good Cheer."

Washington, October 18th

Walter Lippmann

It is a privilege which I deeply appreciate to appear on the same platform with the great lady whom you have come here to honor this evening.

You will have heard, I am sure, that she has said to those who speak about her visit to America that, whatever else they do, they should not be sentimental about her—if they can help it. I shall try to respect her wishes. But I am sure she will understand that it is impossible to contemplate without profound emotion even the bare recital of the mere circumstances which cause her to be in America.

The fact that this woman of genius is driven from her home, the fact that her country is subjugated, are facts which cannot be explained away by any device of sophistication. She is herself the innocent victim of a calculated evil; and her case, and the case of her country, present to the conscience of anyone who has a conscience, a clear, unmistakable, indisputable issue of good and evil. Not to be able to see this, not to be willing to see this, not to be ready to say this, is to have fallen into the sin which the great moralists call "spiritual sloth," that "sluggishness of the soul in the exercise of virtue" which causes men to find it tedious and irksome to recognize, and then to act upon, the difference between right and wrong.

Her country, Norway, did not participate in the first World War, nor in the settlement of the war, nor in the diplomacy of the post-War era, nor in the events which preceded the present war, nor in the conduct of the present war. If any peoples are innocent and are blameless, the Norwegians, and their Scandinavian neighbors, the Finns, the Swedes and the Danes, are innocent and blameless. These are the peoples who more than any other peoples on earth, with the exception of the Swiss, have made their own innocence the first line of their national defense.

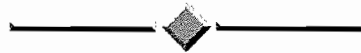
The fact that, nevertheless, they have been attacked without provocation, the fact that they have been subjugated and mutilated and oppressed, is, therefore, undeniable evidence that there is loose in the world organized, mechanized evil against which innocence, as such, is no adequate protection, an organized, mechanized evil which only an armed righteousness, only good men militant, can withstand.

For this reason the attack on Finland and the invasion of Norway will, I believe, be recognized by historians as the events which most profoundly altered the moral judgment of the American people about the issues of the present war. After Finland and Norway, the doubts as to where Americans stand have not arisen from their moral doubts. The questions which

Americans have been debating have been questions of expediency and prudence and of ways and means. For the destruction of the neutrality of Finland and Norway destroyed the moral foundation of neutrality in the United States.

So, when Madame Undset speaks to Americans she will find—I believe she has already found—that they

have not come to look at a gifted and noble writer, or to be entertained by hearing a dramatic story about a distant country. The suffering of Norway, as it is represented in this lady, is an experience which we have shared in our imaginations: it is an experience which, in its ultimate significance, is our own experience. When she speaks, she will be putting into words the travail of the conscience of the American people.



STATISTICS FOR SCANDINAVIA 2008							
	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Oslo	Tromsø	Tronheim	Stockholm
Population	5,505.995	5,236.611*	319.756	3615.513	461.977	666.164	9253.675
Catholics	37.123	9,067	9.351	69.120	2.373	3.694	89.956
Bishops	2	1	1	3	1	1	1
Priests	79	19	16	64	9	9	165
Secular Priests	39	8	6	33	2	7	81
Religious Priests	40	11	10	31	7	2	84
Deacons	5	1	0	2	0	0	21
Brothers and Male Religious	2	13	0	2	1	0	6
Religious Orders of Men	15	2	5	7	2	0	14
Sisters and Female Religious	196	37	34	92	21	23	194
Religious Orders of Women	25	7	6	8	3	3	18
Parishes	47	7	5	23	7	5	42
Churches and Chapels	63	8	15	49	13	7	126
Catholic Schools	22	0	0	3	1	0	11
Baptism	567		183	789	36	76	1,411
Confirmations	450		94	527	10	48	714
Marriages	113		24	115	5	18	284
Ordinations to the Priesthood	2		0	2	0	0	2
Deaths	287		24	148	0	14	713

*(2006)

1943

GREENLAND, YESTERDAY AND TODAY*Greenland's Catholic Past*

*The Rev. Lambert Erkens, S.M.A., Chappaqua, New York
Spiritual Director, St. Ansgar's League*

Greenland Today

Somewhat triangular Greenland, with its apex pointing towards the south, its most southerly point in 59° 45' N., its base 1,650 miles farther north, extending into the Arctic Circle, with a breadth at 70° N. of eight hundred miles and a total area twice that of Texas, sends glaciers from its immense field of ice and its coastal mountain regions, down into the fjords and the ocean, where the North Polar current drives these massive glaciers southward.

The impenetrable interior is a stupendous and usually storm-swept sheet of ice, and except for some towering rocky peaks rising above it, all valleys and mountains are buried deep below its surface. The coasts are well-nigh inapproachable during the long winter and are not easily accessible in the summer months either, with all the fjords and innumerable islands.

Hills and valleys in the southwest are the only regions where vegetation finds a soil to nourish it, and even here the growth is stunted. Some goats, sheep and cattle have been introduced into these parts.

Numerous species of birds, the eggs of sea gulls, the reindeer, bears, foxes, plenty of fishing, whaling and seal hunting and last but not least the imports, which have twice the value of exports, furnish the 18,000 inhabitants of Greenland with the essentials for their existence.

With Eskimos in every locality and only one entire tribe left, numbering about 250, called the Polar Eskimos, living near Smith Sound, the whole population is scattered through a few villages on the east and a dozen of them on the south and west coasts.

Godthaab and Godhavn, the seats of the government, are comprised of two Danish "inspectories" responsible to the directors for Greenland, at the board of the colony in Copenhagen. Each inspectory is divided into districts and counts a number of outposts or trading settlements and some so-called Eskimo hunting stations.

The chief trading settlements following the west coast northward are Sydhoven; Julianehaab, near which are the remains of the early Norse settlements of Eric the Red; Frederikshaab, known for its neighboring and rich cryolite mines; Godthaab, which is the principal settlement and has still some Norse remains; Sukkertoppen, a most picturesque locality, and Holstenborg. Godhavn on the south coast of Disko Island is the seat of a Danish station for scientific research. The few east coast settlements are not under the Danish inspectorate and the station of Thula is also privately owned.

While the winter months comprise the seal killing season, no navigation takes place between November and May. In order to prevent any foreign profiteering or any sale of spirits, the prices for both European and native articles are fixed, printed in the Eskimo papers and distributed at the beginning of every year.

The only tax, one-sixth of the price of everything, is spent for public works, charity and all other contingencies. With no police, the Inspectors, being also trade superintendents, are magistrates and pronounce judgments. Besides them, the local parish councils or "parsissaet" for which no Danes are eligible, render justice and are guardians of the poor. Their meetings are conducted exclusively in the Eskimo tongue.

The coastal regions have a very uncertain climate, where the weather even in the best months is liable to change suddenly from sunshine to icy winds. The least inhabitable of the coasts of Greenland is the east coast which is ever washed by cold currents. The best part of the country is the southwest, where people boast of having only a rare frost in June, July and August! During these months they are blessed with heavy rainfall, but since it is only rain, they enjoy the relative but yet appreciable warmth of their short summer.

A village in Greenland then hardly seems to any of us to be a cheerful place at best, though in the long days of the short summer months a place on the

southern fjords might be found comparatively pleasant. The fact is, however, that most people who have lived in Greenland always long to go back! A letter, written by a doctor who has spent almost thirty years in Greenland, claims there is no place on earth that he would exchange with his Greenland colony. A so-called colony counts generally three or four Danish houses, built of wood and pitched over, in addition to storehouses and a blubber-boiling establishment. A Danish colony may include, besides a "coloni bestyrer" or director and his assistant, a "missionaer" or clergyman and a few places also a doctor and perhaps a carpenter and a schoolmaster. In some places there are from twenty to several hundred Eskimos who live in huts built of stone or turf, or of imported wood, each entered by a short tunnel.

Ecclesiastically Lutheran Greenland is reckoned in the province of the Bishop of Zealand and the Danish mission of Greenland is allotted a yearly grant from the State. The Moravian mission, which had labored in Greenland for a century and a half, resigned its parishes in 1900 to the preachers of the Danish Lutheran National Church. The Moravians disposed of six mission stations with twenty-seven male and female missionaries. Their largest number of people had been in the year 1857 when they were 1,968 members strong, comprising about 900 adults. Since then decay had set in, ascribed variously to difference of opinion among the brethren, millenarian tendencies among the neophytes and friction with the Lutheran ministers of the established Church.

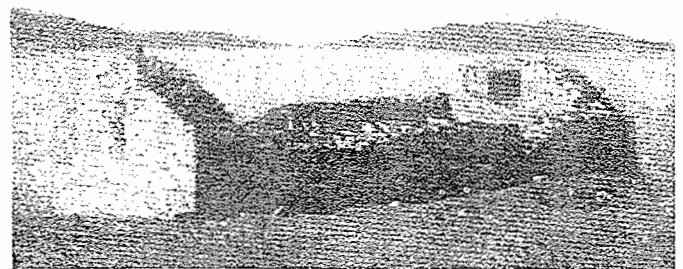
Without doubt the winter months are favorable to whaling, but that takes away from church and home at the best time for prayer and instruction. Also the action of the government in dispersing the Greenlanders over their extensive hunting territories was an obstacle to their conversion. Their concentration during the winter season would naturally have made them more amenable to spiritual influences. Under the circumstances, their conversion to Christianity was superficial. The History of the Moravian Brethren states that the education of the Lutheran Eskimos was limited to reading, writing of singing of songs, that thrift and benevolence were unknown amongst them and that their morality was, at least questionable. When they left the scene of their self-sacrificing but thankless labors, they claimed a nominal membership of about eight hundred.

The village of Godthaab has a seminary from which all that wish to be ordained are sent to Copenhagen. All settlements of Greenland have schools, generally, under native teachers. There are three monthly newspapers in Eskimo. Wireless stations are working at Godthaab, Godhavn, Julianehaab and Angmasalik.

The trade of Greenland has decreased in modern time, so that before the present war, the Danish State had an annual deficit of about \$120,000 on the administration of Greenland. The minerally rich island of Disko and the great abundance of cryolite, used to produce aluminum, may prove an asset for the Allies in our present war. Cryolite, being of private ownership, is the only export which is outside the State monopoly and is certain to become a source of great wealth to Greenland. Walrus tusks and walrus hides, which in the days of the Old Norse settlements were the chief articles of export, are now of little importance. The chief articles of export, outside the cryolite, are seal oil, seal, fox and bear skins, fish products, eider down and worked skins. The imports consist of manufactured goods, foodstuffs, etc.

Greenland's Catholic Past

The first trustworthy historian of the Arctic regions was Adam, Canon of Hamburg, "the Rome of the North," under Archbishop Adalbert (1043-1072). He gathered his information and data from the cathedral library, from church archives, from reports of travelers and from King Sven Estruthson of Denmark, "on whose memory as on a tablet was engraved the whole history of the barbarians!" The Heimskringla or Book of Kings, by an Icelander in Norway, the



Courtesy of "The America Scandinavian Review"
The Church Ruin at Rakortok from the time
of the old Norsemen

Saga of Eric the Red and the Flatey Book or Icelandic "Flateyjarbok," are all works from which are gathered the beginnings of the Norse church in the

New World.

Eric the Red and his father Thorvald came from Jaedern in southwestern Norway to Iceland, because Eric had been guilty of manslaughter. In Iceland he was again guilty of murder and other crimes. Being outlawed at Thorsnessting, he equipped his ship for voyage and with his people, set out westward for the land which "Gunbiom, son of Ulf, saw when he was driven westward across the ocean." This was in 982.

He landed at the southeastern coast of Greenland, called the place Ericsfjord, built a home there, then explored the coast and gave it many local names.

After three years of absence he returned to Iceland, where he told of the land he had discovered and called it Greenland, "for," he said, "that might attract men thither when the land has a fine name." The ruse was successful—thirty-five ships left Iceland in Eric's company, but only fourteen reached their destination; the rest were lost or driven back by storms. "That," says the saga, "was fourteen winters before Christianity was established by law in Iceland, hence the year 985."

In 993 Olaf Tryggvason conquered Norway and with the spirit of the crusader and the zeal of an apostle, he immediately set about winning his nation to the Catholic Faith and his ambition was to enroll all the people of Norse blood, scattered over the peninsula and islands of the North, under the banner of Christ.

Hence when Leif, son of Eric the Red, came from Greenland to Norway to see King Olaf at Trondhjem and "the King expounded the Faith to him," Leif and his shipmates accepted baptism. Next summer in the year 1000, Leif was back in Greenland with Thormod the priest and other clerks to preach to the people and baptize them.

On his way he was driven from his course and discovered "Wineland the Good," which it is quite certain, was the American continent. His arrival at Ericsfjord was warmly welcomed by the people. His father, however, was not pleased with him because he had brought the priest, "a trickster," to Greenland. Nevertheless, Leif caused Christianity to be proclaimed throughout the land and announced King Olaf's message to the people. Eric only later accepted the new Faith, but Thiodhild, his wife, received it joyfully and had a church built near her home.

In the lifetime of Leif the Happy, sixteen parishes were founded together with their churches, and even a few monasteries, as the Benedictine nuns' Monastery of St. Michael in the northwest.

The first papal document in which the names of Iceland and Greenland occur, is the controverted bull "Omnium Fidelium" of Gregory IV in 835. In favor of its authenticity is the number of ten later documents from the Papal See, between Gregory IV in 835 and Alexander VI in 1493, all of them just a natural pursuance of Gregory's "Omnium Fidelium."

Charlemagne's son, King Louis the Pious, had requested Rome to organize ecclesiastically all of Scandinavia and to appoint the Picardian Benedictine monk Ansgar, the metropolitan, with Hamburg as his See. In the document, Iceland and Greenland are named as parts of the province. The Heimskringla of the fourteenth century tells us that eleven decades elapsed before the arrival of the first bishop of Greenland. He was Eric the Norwegian. He came in the year 1112; we know he made Gardar his See and he was a great civilizer of the wild and bloodthirsty Norsemen. Ivan Bardsson claimed that Bishop Eric made Steinesnes his episcopal See.

We have no historical records, but only tradition, to assert that Bishop Eric Gnuþsson, as his full name was, joined in an expedition to "Vinland," in the year 1121, for the purpose of locating again the eastern coast of North America, which had been discovered a hundred years previously. The hard living Greenlanders wanted to reach the land where "grew vines



Courtesy of "The America Scandinavian Review"

Gardar, showing the Cathedral and Belfry, the Bishop's Residence and the Farm Buildings belonging to it. Reconstruction by the architect A. Roussell, 1931.

and self-sown wheat!" This was not indeed the first journey of exploration and attempt to colonization of Vinland, but none so far had been permanent. The hero of the saga, Thorstein, with his wife Gudrid, were amongst these explorers. The historians Reeves and Fisher tell us that Bishop Eric perished in Vinland, as is indeed very probable, for a year or two later, the people of Greenland took measures to obtain a permanent Bishop. Canon Adam writes that no Bishops were ever appointed for Greenland by the Archbishops of Bremen.

Soon difficulties arose between Norse kings and Saxon Archbishops, which led to the establishment of the metropolitan See of Lund which received Greenland under its jurisdiction. Later again the archiepiscopal See of Trondhjem (Nidaros) was erected and once more Greenland came under another province.

Politically, Greenland was an independent democracy. As such, the Althing had chosen to accept Christianity and under the influence of Socke Thorarsson, a hero of the Saga and descendant of Eric the Red, had petitioned King Sigurd, the Crusader, for a Bishop of its own, to succeed Eric Gnuvsson.

When Cardinal William of Sabina came to Norway in 1247 to crown Haakon Haakonson, he said it was unfair that Iceland and Greenland should not be subject to a King, like all other countries of the world. Consequently, the next Bishop that went to Greenland, Olaf or Olaus, in 1246, was ordered to persuade the Greenlanders to submit to the Norwegian crown. In 1261 Greenland finally consented and acknowledged King Haakon, resolving to pay taxes and fines!

The Union of Kalmar, which in 1395 made Eric, son of Margaret of Denmark, the king of the three Scandinavian countries, put Greenland definitely under the crown of Denmark, a crown which for the next two hundred years neglected that colony and practically forgot its existence.

It appears from the ten papal documents that the inhabitants of Greenland, in spite of their wretched economic conditions, were generous towards the Church and the poor. The tithes system and Peter's Pence were introduced, but were mostly paid in nature. Tusks, walrus hides, cheese, fish were collected and sold "for the succor of the Holy Land" and when finally those proved insignificant, in an attempt to ex-

change them for silver or gold, not only had Greenland to be excused from all contributions, but the Holy See had to beg the Archbishop of Trondhjem to send wheat and wine for the Mass and food to a starving Greenland. The difficulty in securing the material for the Mass raised the well-nigh unbelievable question that was addressed by Sigurd of Trondhjem to Gregory IX, whose reply of May, 1237, tells us that question: "You state, beloved Brother, that in some churches of your suffragans it is impossible to have the Eucharist, because of the scarcity of wheat and that wine can never or hardly ever be had in those countries, and you ask whether it is allowed to deceive the people with some simulation of piety and to distribute to them mere oblations made of some other substance, and give them beer or some other beverage instead of wine. To this we answer that by no means can you do either of those things, because bread of wheat and wine of grapes, consecrated through the ministry of the priest by words of the Creator must needs be the elements of the Sacraments."

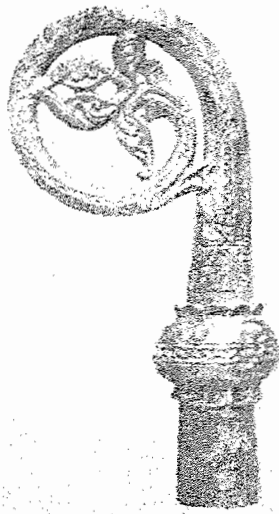
Yet there were at that time priests and a Bishop in Greenland. Between 1124 and 1379, Greenland counted 9 Bishops, two of whom failed to reach their destination. The last, called Alf, was, as Dr. Larson writes, "A typical medieval prelate; humble and devout in private life but unbending in all matters, touching what he regarded as rights of his office or diocese."

After him, no less than 17 Bishops were consecrated for Greenland, yet none of them ever resided there or was even obliged to go there. The lamentable conditions on the island made a residence impossible and probably unnecessary. The Black Death in 1359 had killed the clergy and religious and decimated the population. Then we learn from Ivan Bardsson, who for a period of twenty years had been the episcopal administrator and returned in 1364 to Norway, as also from the letter of Nicholas V to the Bishops of Skalholt and Holar in Iceland, that numerous hordes of Eskimos, called the Skraelings "from neighboring shores" had invaded the country in 1345. The Pope wrote: "The land was laid waste with fire and sword, churches were destroyed. Only nine parishes escaped, since they were among the mountains and so could not be reached. People of both sexes were carried away as prisoners. Nevertheless many of them returned and rebuilt some of what had been destroyed."

One of the objects of Paul Knutsson's expedition to Greenland in 1355 was, "death for the Eskimos, for the preservation of Christianity." Yet frequent attacks continued in subsequent years, according to the Icelandic Annals for 1379.

The fact that Rome continued to appoint Bishops during more than a century shows that the Church never abandoned the hope of keeping Catholic life in Greenland.

In 1448 the letter which Nicholas V wrote to Iceland, lamented: "They have been without the comforts of a pastor and the services of priests for thirty years." And to Bishop Mathias, monk of St. Benedict and last appointee for Greenland, Alexander VI wrote in 1490: "We are informed that on account of the freezing of the sea, no ship has touched Greenland and no resident Bishop or priest has ruled its church for the last eighty years. It is said, so pursues the papal letter, that the people of that land have no other relic of the Christian religion than a corporal that they exhibit once a year, upon which the Body



Courtesy of "The America Scandinavian Review"
The Bishop's Crozier found in a grave in Greenland.

up from the breast of the corpse and afterwards, when priests came here, they would pull up the pole and pour in holy water and hold chants over it, though it were a long time after. But soon no priests remained for that blessing."

Shut off from civilization, walled in by barriers of ice in a land of hardship, the Norse Christians of Greenland, children of the Vikings, still kept aglow the spark of Faith that in earlier and happier days had flared up in their homes.

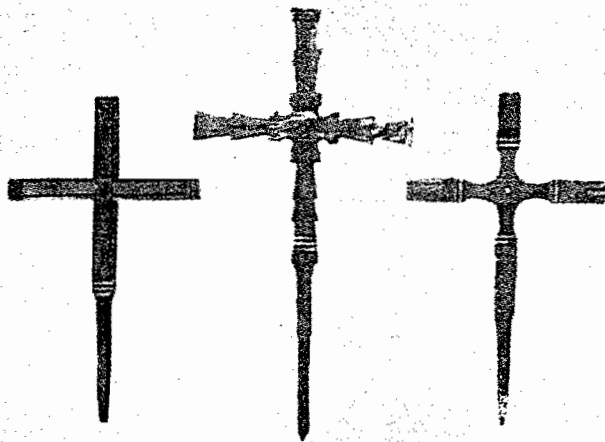
The last Archbishop of Trondhjem, Eric Walkendorf, sought in the year 1520 to gather information of the long-unheard-of See of Gardar, with the intention of renewing communication with the lost suffragan; but the Reformation swept over Norway, ended the Hierarchy there and then silence and oblivion fell upon Greenland.

In the middle of the fourteenth century, the trade between Norway and Greenland, being a Crown monopoly, was conducted by one annual ship (Knarren). That was brought to an end by the growing dominance of the Hanseatic League over Norway's shipping, as the league had no interest in Greenland.

When the alarmed King Christian III gave a general permission to emigrate to Greenland, his subjects were deterred by the perils of the sea for their small vessels. The permission remained fruitless and Greenland became the forgotten land.

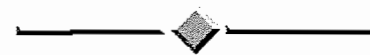
Frobisher under Queen Elizabeth practically re-discovered that island. It was then reclaimed by the Danish King as sovereign of Norway and expeditions were sent, only one of which, that of Dannels in 1654, reached its goal. Greenland had fallen back into heathenism and ignorance. Only in the nineteenth century the Lutherans and the Moravian brethren went to convert the little population of Greenland to a new Christianity.

Today with the American occupation of Greenland, Holy Mass is once more offered up on its shores and Catholic life has returned to that unhappy country. May the land where, nearly 500 years before Columbus saw the New World, the Norse Catholics planted the standard of the Cross, see again, after an exile of another five hundred years, the true Cross replanted forever on its soil, as brought back by the Eagle, the Stars and the Stripes.



Courtesy of "The America Scandinavian Review"
Carved wooden crosses laid on the breasts of the dead

of Christ was, consecrated by the last priest who was resident one hundred years ago." The Karlesfni saga says: "When people were buried at the homesteads in unconsecrated earth, carved wooden crosses were laid on their breasts and at their feet, a pole was set



1946

SUFFERING EUROPE

By Rev. Edward E. Swanstrom, Ph.D.

It has only been a few weeks since I returned myself from a five-months' visit to the countries in Europe that have been most seriously afflicted by the war. Arriving in England in the middle of August, I had the great privilege during the ensuing months to literally cover the length and breadth of France, Belgium, Holland, Germany and Poland. I also spent a short time in Switzerland, Austria and Italy. Traveling by car and by jeep as well as by plane, stopping in the little towns and hamlets as well as the great bombed-out cities, I had an opportunity to get a pretty complete picture of war-ravaged Europe.

I would like to talk to you this evening about some of the indelible impressions that visit left upon me, to tell you something of what the present world situation means for its "little people"—in whom you testify by your very presence here you are deeply interested—and to attempt to analyze, if I may, the greater responsibility you and I have toward them because we are a group of people who, above all others, should *understand*.

I had been engaged in war relief work for about two years before I left for Europe, and I thought I had about as good an understanding of the situation—being fairly close to the picture—as the next fellow. I had read numerous reports from all over the world about the sufferings and hardships of the people. I had seen pictures of starving people, and, at the time, some of them weren't easy to look upon. But there is no comparison between the written word or picture and the reality.

I have said time and time again since I returned that I don't think very many Americans, outside of returning officers and GI's can possibly conceive the horrible destruction that exists everywhere, the completeness of the devastation of homes, schools and churches, and, what is worse, the suffering and hard-

ship that it means for the vast majority of Europe's millions. It has been reliably estimated that there are at least ninety million people who actually find themselves facing the dangers of starvation and disease at this very moment.



If there were not this lack of understanding on the part of the American people, I do not think that the National War Fund, for example, would have been undersubscribed by more than twenty-five million dollars at this time when its agencies are in greater need of its resources than at any other time in their history. It was hard for me to believe it when I heard that such was the case upon my return.

I cannot help but feel that some of the American people have reached the erroneous conclusion that with the end of the war all the problems brought about by the war are solved. Actually, victory by our armed forces has been won—and it was a glorious victory—but the real peace for which we fought and sacrificed our young men is far from being won.

No line of reasoning will convince the "little people," the world over, that America fulfilled its original promises if we fail during the next all-important months to give our maximum effort to alleviate the great sufferings in the war-devastated countries.

Arriving in London in August, I had some hint of what I was to find on the continent because I had an opportunity to attend two very important world meetings. In a sense, the two world meetings represented what we sometimes call public and private charity. The leaders of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration were holding their London Conference, and Pax Romana, a Catholic world student organization, had gathered in London for its first international conference since the outbreak of the war as well as to celebrate the Centennial of Cardinal Newman.

At the UNRRA meeting I saw the leaders of the afflicted nations struggling with the gigantic problems of whole-scale relief as well as the more immediate problem of what to do with the millions of Displaced Persons who were roaming all over Germany and Austria after having been driven from their homes either by the advancing armies of both sides in the conflict, or by having been impressed into forced labor under the Nazis or because they were simply fleeing from the one kind of totalitarian domination or the other.

As is always the case today when world powers come together, there was the usual interplay of power politics, the interlocking of ideologies and the resulting compromises. Thanks to the American and British delegations, there was much in the decisions that were made that meant hope for the suffering millions, but many basic issues, like the future freedom of whole populations, were avoided.

Having been left unsettled, we now find these same basic issues emerging in the UNO meeting, presently going on in London. The same lines are being drawn. The world may well wait with bated breath the decisions to be made for the fate and freedom of many millions are being weighed in their making. And I might refer specifically to the question of whether or not some official intergovernmental body is to be set up and given an opportunity to really tackle the problem of the resettlement of the hundreds of thousands of displaced people who no longer feel they can find a safe haven in their former homelands.

At the Pax Romana meeting, which, as I said, represented in a sense private social work, I met men and women from all over Europe. These were some of the leaders who had struggled to keep agencies of mercy and education alive while the war was raging. Two things stood out in the message I took away from them.

First, their deep-hearted appreciation for all that our agencies in America had done for them during the war. Even though, for the most part, they were the leaders of Catholic agencies, they did not confine their thanks to our group alone, but spoke devotedly of the assistance they had received from the great war relief agencies for specific countries that had been developed over here during the war. Their names are legion—French War Relief, British War Relief, and the like.

But the second, and perhaps most important, consideration was how much they placed their hope in the future in the same America. They have seen their

hospices and hospitals, their schools and their churches destroyed, many of their leaders sacrificed, their social welfare, educational and religious programs in many places literally obliterated. But, nevertheless, they emerged with a firm, though dim, hope in the future for a stable and peaceful world—provided America does not let them down.

It would not be possible for anyone to give you in a few minutes a picture that would do justice to the situation in Europe as it exists today. In England, Belgium and Holland one sees some signs of recovery, but the farther south or east one goes, whether it be into France, Italy or Austria or east-ward into Germany and on into Poland, you wonder how those war-stricken lands and their peoples can ever recover from the devastation that has befallen them.

England, though she bore the full brunt of the Nazi bombing, will somehow or other rebuild again. Her people, tired and war-weary, had to steel themselves against a still further reduction in their food and clothing rations, but are convinced that once the wheels of industry are again in full motion their recovery will be assured. Belgium and Holland, the latter more seriously wounded than her neighbor, with characteristic industry, are probably much further advanced on the road to rehabilitation than any of the other European States.

For a while, it looked as though France also would be in a position to so re-establish its internal economy as to give some security to her people. When the bread ration was lifted at the beginning of November, the French population saw in this development some assurance that things were looking up. Those of us who had been engaged in a relief effort over there for many long months knew that there were still thousands of children all over France whose lives were being saved daily by the milk and other foods we were sending from America.

We knew we would have to keep these relief goods flowing. When the bread ration was restored on the 1st of January, at a scale much lower than before, we saw in it the beginning of the crisis which has now become a stark reality. The whole political future of France may well be tied up with this chaotic food situation, not to say the lives of thousands of her people.

In Italy, we are told that the situation is far worse this winter than it was last year. A serious drought last fall didn't help a farming situation already complicated by the country's inability to demine the fields with any rapidity. With a shortage of raw ma-

terials and fuel, her industrial production, even in the north, is at a standstill, and so there has been little in the way of reconstruction in a country that was pretty completely bombed by both sides in the conflict.

While I was in Rome, I met a Buffalo priest who had just come over, and he thought he had some appreciation of what Italy must have suffered until he tried to make his way from Naples to Rome by box-car, hitch-hiking and on foot. I know that some of his relatives here heard of his amazement at conditions he experienced.

For the past several weeks Austria has been begging us for food and raiment for her children. We are still struggling with the serious problems of transportation that are involved in bringing relief into that country, but both UNRRA and ourselves are now ready to send the first shipments on their way. I might mention in passing that UNRRA is doing a magnificent job of keeping children alive throughout Italy.

But let us take a look at Poland—one of the countries for whose freedom we entered the war. That poor little country is undoubtedly the most devastated region, the most seriously afflicted land in all Europe. Most of the big cities are totally destroyed. In Warsaw there are exactly five large buildings that are still standing. One wonders where its five or six hundred thousand people are living in that city, until he goes into the dug-out cellars which they have made their homes. All over Poland transportation has broken down completely, and bridges and roads are in ruins.

Father Wycislo, a young Polish American priest from Chicago who was with me, and I, travelled from Warsaw, through the east of Poland, south to Krakow, and up its western half to Poznan, and across the country again to Warsaw. In other countries through which the war has passed you frequently see at least the farm houses and the farmlands intact, but this is not true in Poland. As the world well knows, both the German and Russian Armies passed back and forth across Poland, and so complete is the devastation that you seldom see a tree, much less than a house standing.

The people of Poland, almost without exception, are without food, clothing or shelter. At this very moment there is a continuous movement of Poles from the east to the west. The farms in the south and west of Poland have not been worked for many, many months, and as a result, even while I am talking, thousands over there are facing hunger and famine. The new Cardinal Sapieha and Cardinal Hlond told

us while we were in Poland in December, that they feared a country-wide famine by the end of January or early in February.

You can imagine what an absence of food will mean to a people without clothing or shelter, their resistance already at an end after their long years of hardship. I saw Sisters of Charity in the streets of Warsaw, their feet wrapped in burlap bags for want of shoes. I saw children barefooted, on their way to school on roads that had already been touched by the winter's first snowfall. Before we left Poland the winter had really set in, blizzards were raging, and that would mean many months in which it would be impossible for these children to go to school. It is difficult for anyone who has been there and seen conditions as they actually exist to conceive how pestilence or plague can be avoided. One third of the children are already suffering from tuberculosis; cholera and typhoid have broken out in some places.

The American Red Cross is bringing in some medicine, but this will have to be multiplied many times, if whole thousands are not to die. In Poland, the Caritas and other agencies who somehow or other miraculously have survived, are doing what they can to assuage all this suffering with the limited resources at their command. Like a number of other agencies, the National Catholic Welfare Conference is now sending clothing and food to Poland, and that will help, but many, many tons must flow from this country before too many months have passed, or our aid will come all too late.

Four representatives of the Polish War Relief, or American Relief for Poland as it is now known, are presently over there laying the groundwork for a program of assistance. Their first report to this country, which I had the privilege of reading, reiterates what I have tried to tell you.

I didn't get to Germany until late in September, but even then with the war already five months at end, there were still thousands of Displaced Persons roaming the roads, jamming the roof-barren railroad stations or seeking shelter in the bombed-out hovels of homes in the little towns. When I left Germany in December, many of these early wandering thousands had settled down in the camps provided for them or found their way to their homeland. But there were new millions of wanderers or refugees crowding these same roads and railroad stations. These were the Germans, mostly women and children, being driven from the east and the Sudetanland returning to find as best they may some haven amidst friends or

relatives or with some charitable agency in the new narrower confines of their country.

While I was in Berlin, I went frequently to the Stettiner-Bahnhof, the terminal railroad station of the Stettina-Berlin railway. Here every day one could see between four and five thousand German refugees arriving from the east. They arrive with all their worldly possessions wrapped in a sheet or tablecloth, mostly mothers, and little children clinging to their skirts and aprons crying with the hunger that gnaws at empty stomachs. Some pass them by saying "these are the people who made others suffer so why even throw them the crumbs from our tables?" But those who look at them with the eyes of a Christian know that they are the innocent ones, the real sufferers in the last analysis.

Until you see thousands of refugees milling aimlessly up and down the roads choked with the homeless, children huddled in broken angles of walls against mothers who offer them no more than a body's warmth, bodies of men bent against wind and sleet and rain, you can't have the faintest conception of what being homeless and hungry actually means.

Thank God, there also, agencies of mercy have arisen from among the ruins, and are doing what they can with the meager resources at their command to assuage some of this suffering and hardship. The Catholic Charities in Germany, they call it Caritas Verband over there, and the German Protestant Federation are making a valiant effort to save the lives of some of these homeless. Catholic nuns have mended the walls of some of their hospitals, and are healing up the wounds.

As some of you may know, despite the outspoken objections of those who feel all Germans must be treated with hatred and vengeance, we are now making an effort with our State and War Departments to secure permission to assist these German agencies in their Godlike endeavors. It seems now that the day is not too far distant when we may be able to bring them also under the mantle of Christian charity.

At the close of my journey through Europe, I had the happy privilege of visiting the Father of Christendom. I spent almost a half hour with the Holy Father, talking about the tragic situation all over Europe, and all that must be done if European civilization is to survive.

The Holy Father spoke to me of his appreciation of

all America has already done, and asked me to bring back this message. "Tell your people," he said, "that all our hope is in America." He spoke of his concern about the industrial strife that is raging in our country at the present moment. His hope, like ours, is that many of the momentous problems can be settled so that America, the one country that can produce, may go on with its production. If America, led astray by a materialistic philosophy, lets the world down at this moment, no one who sees the world picture as the Holy Father does, can see much sign of hope.

And now at the end some might say I am quite unmindful of the fact that people like yourselves have some very serious problems to face right here at home. Let me assure you that I am not the least unmindful. In an age when democracy is on trial, even in this last stronghold of democracy, it needs more than ever before the precious moral and spiritual values which are involved in voluntary giving and voluntary service. From these values flow the kind of national life we live, the type of government we admire, the laws we write, the culture we attain and the ideals we seek.

In other words, much in the future of America's own "little people" depends upon you as has so much in their past. But it will be said indeed if America, the great democracy of the world with all its great resources, cannot show in a concrete, understandable manner to the other "little people" of the world that democracy does work and can look after the helpless people of other nations as well as its own. Ours is a greater and wider responsibility than ever before.

This is an opportunity unparalleled in history to prove the true worth of democracy. If we fail in giving evidence of the strength of our great land, we fail the cause of democracy and miss, by the same token, to reconcile ourselves to accept a disorderly and chaotic world for some years to come.

Although it has been said often that this world of ours has been reduced in size one hundredfold, I feel the importance of this statement bears repeating tonight. No longer will we as Americans, be able to live as contented people, safeguarded from the problems of the rest of the world by what happens to be two very large bodies of water. The sooner we recognize our close relationship to all the countries of the world and their problems, whether they be economic, social or cultural, the sooner will we be living in a world of reality.

1950

**MESSAGE FROM OUR SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR
THE RIGHT REV. MSGR. EDWARD E. SWANSTROM
WAR RELIEF SERVICES - N.C.W.C.
AID TO SCANDINAVIA**

Though the Scandinavian countries, with the exception of Finland, escaped the bitterest destruction of World War II, there is not one of these countries which does not have a problem that is directly related to the War.

Finland, of course, knew the terrible passing of armies across its towns and villages. It knew, too, that serious problem of World War II, the uprooting of men, women, and children from their homes and farms. At the end of the War, about 450,000 innocent people were herded from the Karelian Isthmus, and surrounding area, into destroyed Finland. These destitute newcomers were welcomed with true charity and real helpfulness by the local population.

It was because of such problems that His Grace, Bishop G. Cobben, came to see us regarding possible relief. War Relief Services, N. C. W. C. was able to send used clothing, bulk foods, and a special consignment of CARE packages to Bishop Cobben for distribution among those in need regardless of race or creed. It is presently planned to make a spring shipment of 90,000 pounds of dried eggs and dried milk to Bishop Cobben for the children of Finland.

Though Sweden was not a center of hostilities, it did feel the effects of war in the influx of Catholic refugees at the end of the War. Special transmittals of funds have been sent in response to requests for aid for these refugees. The influx of Polish, Latvian, Hungarian, and other Catholic refugees into Sweden has resulted in an influx of Catholic priests, includ-

ing five priests from Poland.

Denmark was host to more than a quarter of a million refugees of German origin. Though food supplies were ample, there was great need for clothing for these evacuees. Large shipments of clothing were made to Bishop Theodor Suhr in order to help him meet the problem of these destitute people. The most recent shipment of used clothing was well received by the Vicar Apostolic of Denmark.

Shipments to Norway have consisted of answers to specific requests. One of these requests was for habit material for the Dominican Nuns in Oslo, Norway.

One of our most interesting correspondents is a Danish priest, who is laboring among the natives of equatorial Africa. Father James Peterson writes such interesting accounts of his problems, and of his achievements, that it is hard to refuse to help him.

The relief picture in connection with the Scandinavian countries is certainly a brief one, but I would append to this little report an appeal on behalf of the Four Funds of the St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League. All of these funds are in need of help and it would certainly be of concern to the future of Catholicism in an area where there are only 44,240 Catholics among 17,593,000 people (in Norway, Denmark and Sweden), that these funds be aided. These funds are:

1. MASS STIPENDS (for the Bishops of Scandinavia).
2. SEMINARIAN FUND.
3. LAY STUDENT FUND.
4. MEMBERSHIP DUES.



1951

Music Composed for Poem "LOVELY LADY DRESSED IN BLUE"

Rev. Dr. Frederic Jul Nelson

Catholic and secular newspapers all over the nation were carrying stories last August of the first recording of the now famous hymn "LOVELY LADY DRESSED IN BLUE." The hymn was written by a member of the League, the Rev. Dr. Frederic Jul Nelson, assistant pastor of St. Mary's Church, New England, North Dakota. Dr. Nelson's parents were born in Värmland, Sweden, and the young priest is himself a convert to the Catholic Church.

Dr. Nelson's publishers, the Antonian Publishers of Portland, Oregon, had been looking for a suitable voice to record "LOVELY LADY DRESSED IN BLUE" for some time when the composer wired them that he had found just the voice in North Dakota, while attending a golden jubilee wedding celebration in Bismarck. Dr. Nelson heard a boy soprano sing several selections at the celebration for his grandparents; at that moment he knew that this was the voice the publishers had been looking for. The youngster is 12-year-old Johnny Kontos of Minot, North Dakota. He was immediately engaged by the publishers and arrangements were made to make the recording in the new Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Bismarck. Dr. Nelson provided

the accompaniment for the record on the new three-manual pipe organ. The reverse side of the record features Master Kontos singing Dr. Nelson's "AVE MARIA." The record was an immediate hit and set a record for a best seller on religious lists. Within a few months several major recording companies and publishers had bought rights on the composition and there will be many recorded versions on the market soon; however, the version done by Master Kontos will no doubt remain very popular.

The publishers are planning to record a number of Dr. Nelson's songs since they have contracted for these rights already. The "HYMN TO SAINT ANSGAR" would be done if the publishers could be assured a wide sale, but because of the fact that the hymn has such a limited appeal, they would first appreciate letters from members of St. Ansgar's League telling them that the disc is wanted and will be sold. Members who would like to see their official hymn recorded may express their desire by writing either Dr. Nelson or the Robert Music Corporation, 1650 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.



THE JELLING STONE,

bearing the first Scandinavian representation of the Crucified Christ, was raised by King Harold Bluetooth of Denmark, C. 985.

1960

THE CONVERSION OF ICELAND IN THE YEAR 1000 AD*Dom Gunthar Rolfson, O.S.B.*

Many historians believe that the first inhabitants of Iceland were Irish monks who arrived on the island about the year 800. Whether or not this is true has never been definitely established. However, it is certain that the island was discovered by the Norwegians in the year 850 and a few years later permanent settlements were made. For the most part these were political exiles from Norway, which was still a pagan country at that time.

The first attempts to introduce Catholicism into the island were made by a native Icelander, Thorvald Kodransson, who, prior to his conversion, had left his home and wandered about Europe as a professional soldier. During the course of his travels he met Bishop Frederick of Saxony and the two became close friends. In the course of time Thorvald was received into the Church.

Thorvald, with an enthusiasm typical of those who have found the faith for the first time, wanted to return to Iceland and convert his whole family to Christianity. He persuaded the bishop to accompany him and they arrived in Iceland in the fall of 980. It was just 107 years after the first settlements had been made on the island.

The bishop spent the winter with Thorvald's family, instructing them in the truths of Christianity. Eventually all, with the exception of one brother, were received into the Church.

In the spring the two traveled about the country preaching the faith, Thorvald acting as interpreter. They had some success, but the actual number of converts was not very large. The bishop became discouraged and returned to Saxony while Thorvald remained in Iceland.

Shortly after the attempts made by Bishop Frederick and Thorvald to convert the island, another missionary appears, also a native Icelander. This was Stefnir Thorkilsson who was very probably one of Thorvald's converts. However, Stefnir's efforts also met with limited success.

At this time a new priest arrived in the country, a missionary sent by King Olaf Tryggvasson of Norway, who was to play a very important part in the

conversion of the country. This was Dankbrand, son of Count Willibald of Bremen.

Count Willibald was a close friend of Albert of Bremen, who had at that time been appointed to the newly erected See of Aarhus in Jutland. When Dankbrand was a young man the count had therefore sent him to study at Aarhus under the patronage of his friend the bishop.

During the course of his stay at Aarhus, Bishop Albert took Dankbrand with him on a trip to England to visit his brother Hubert, Bishop of Canterbury. It was on this occasion that Bishop Hubert presented Dankbrand with a very costly and ornate shield on which was painted a picture of Our Lord on the Cross. This shield, in the mysterious workings of Divine Providence, became a remote cause for the eventual conversion of both Norway and Iceland. It so happened that some years later while Dankbrand was traveling about Europe he met Prince Olaf Tryggvasson of Norway. The prince happened to notice the shield and was intrigued by it and asked many questions of Dankbrand about the figures on it.

Dankbrand seized upon this occasion as an opportunity to explain the death and resurrection of Our Lord and other mysteries of the faith. The prince was very impressed and asked if he might have the shield. Dankbrand presented it to him as a gift, refusing any payment. The prince therefore said that if he were ever in a position where he could be of assistance to Dankbrand, he should not hesitate to ask him. Shortly afterwards Prince Olaf was received into the Church by a hermit on the Scilly Islands.

Some years later Dankbrand killed a man while defending someone who was being unjustly attacked. However, since he was not able to prove his innocence, he was forced to flee from Bremen. Recalling the promise of Prince Olaf, he went to Norway where Olaf was now king. Olaf received him kindly and invited him to live at the court.

Eventually Dankbrand decided to become a priest and after his ordination King Olaf appointed him court chaplain. However, Dankbrand's conscience continued to trouble him because of his having killed

a man, and consequently he decided to devote the remainder of his life to penitential works. He made known his wishes to the king, who thereupon asked him to accept as a penance the mission to Iceland.

Dankbrand therefore cheerfully accepted this mission and left for Iceland with a proclamation from the king that all Icelanders were to renounce their pagan religion and become Christians. However, after a few months Dankbrand returned to Norway and reported to King Olaf that the people had turned a deaf ear to his proclamation. The king was furious at this contempt for his authority and, as an act of revenge, ordered that all Icelanders in the city were to be seized and brought before them. He told them of the effrontery of their fellow countrymen and condemned some to life imprisonment and others to be put to death.

Among this group of Icelanders were two Catholics, Hjalti and Gizur, both very probably converts made by Thorvald Kodransson. These two decided to intercede for their companions, and therefore asked the king if they could be set free if they would all agree to be baptized. Gizur also pointed out to King Olaf that they were blood relatives, since their grandfathers, Hersen Bodvar and Erik, had been brothers. The king was very much moved by the appeal and consented to let them go free. Consequently all were baptized.

Gizur also spoke to the king about the possibilities of the conversion of Iceland. He said that Dankbrand had been very harsh with the people and that they resented such intrusions from foreigners. He recommended that the missionary work be done by native Icelanders, who would be accepted by the people. The king therefore sent Hjalti and Gizur back to Iceland, accompanied by a priest Thormond.

At this time Iceland already had a well organized form of government. Hence Hjalti and Gizur went immediately to government officials, the jarls, and asked them to call a national assembly, which they consented to do. The chieftains and other delegates met on a large open lava field. Hjalti and Gizur set up two large wooden crosses at the meeting place and the priest Thormond offered prayers for the success of Hjalti and Gizur's plans. It is recorded that the priest used so much incense that "one could smell it against the wind as well as with it."

There were at this time a fairly large number of

Christians on the island, and hence the assembly had representatives from both the pagan and Christian groups. After the meeting had assembled, Hjalti and Gizur rose and spoke of King Olaf's desire that they should all accept the Christian teachings and that there should be one law and one faith in Iceland. The reaction to their words, however, was not very favorable on the part of the pagans and tensions mounted. The two camps were on the verge of open combat when a messenger arrived with an announcement that a volcano in another part of the island had erupted and several people had been killed. The pagans immediately interpreted this as a sign of displeasure on the part of the gods over the Christian advances, and were about to fall upon them with drawn swords when one of the Christian chiefs rose and asked, "What were the gods angry about when the lava field where we are standing was burning?" This quieted the crowd, and then the Christians asked to have a public reading of the pagan laws and the Christian laws. Since few people were educated it was necessary to employ a law reader, and a certain Thorgeir was paid fifty silver coins to read them.

After he had completed the reading of the laws he asked everyone to return to the encampment. He remained, however, and covering his head with a heavy cloak, lay down on the rock and remained there all night and most of the next day.

During this time the pagans sacrificed two men from each quarter of the country as an offering to the gods, beseeching them not to permit Christianity to spread in the island. The Christians, on the other hand, under the leadership of the priest Thormond, offered prayers and Mass for the success of the next day's meeting.

When Thorgeir rose he sent for all to reassemble at the meeting place. He spoke to them of the importance of preserving the peace and of having one law and one faith so that there would not be dissensions between them. He spoke of the many hardships that the people had suffered because of the wars between the kings of Denmark and Norway, and that unless the Icelanders would unite they would experience the same difficulties. When he had finished the pagans and Christians decided that they would abide by whatever decision he would make.

Although he was still a pagan, Thorgeir then issued a proclamation in favor of the Christian law and the

pagans agreed to accept it. The latter were allowed to continue to offer their sacrifices, but only in private. This concession was abolished a few years later by King Olaf II Haraldsson (St. Olaf).

It was in the summer of the year 1000 when this historic meeting took place. Nearly all of the Icelanders were baptized before the summer was over. However, King Olaf Tryggvasson did not live long to enjoy the fruits of his efforts as he died that fall on

September 10 at Svold.

After the conversion of Iceland Thorvald Kodranson and Stefnir Thorkilson made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in thanksgiving for the Catholic faith having been brought to their country. On the way home Thorvald died at Polotsk, a small city in Russia. He was buried on an eminence near a little church dedicated to St. John the Baptist and for many years his grave was a place of pilgrimage as he was thought to be a saint.



Santa Lucia Procession
St. Thomas More Church
Dec. 13, 2008

1960

HOW SWEDEN LOST THE FAITH

Rev. B.J. Blied, Ph.D. (*The Salesianum*)

Early in the sixteenth century, Sten Sture roused his fellow Swedes to strike for liberty from Denmark. Few slogans engender more spontaneous enthusiasm than the simple word "Liberty." Unfortunately for Catholicism, Archbishop Trolle of Uppsala happened to be a partisan of the Danish king, Christian II. So, as Sture's fame increased, that of the archbishop decreased. (The Trolle and Sture families had long been rivals.) The contest ended abruptly in 1517 when the Swedes, ignoring all legal procedures, deposed the archbishop. In his place the cathedral chapter elected Giovanni Angelo Arcimboldi who recently had sojourned in Denmark as preacher of the indulgence connected with the building of St. Peter's in Rome. After moving on to Sweden, however, he aligned himself with Sture when the latter catered to his cupidity. By way of retribution, Christian confiscated whatever assets the legate had cached away in Denmark. (Ludwig von Pastor, *History of the Popes*, paints a sorry picture of Arcimboldi.)

Regardless of what transpired in the North, to the Vatican, Trolle remained head of the Swedish Church. Accordingly, the pope excommunicated Sture and placed the nation under interdict. This naturally infuriated the Swedes, and, meanwhile, a resilient Denmark rolled back the Swedish forces anew. On November 4, 1520, Trolle, riding the crest of the wave, officiated at Christian's coronation in Stockholm. A few days later, the Danes, as a sequel, staged "the Stockholm Bloodbath." Among those beheaded were two of Trolle's suffragans: Mathias of Strängnäs and Vincent of Skara. (Christian appointed Jens Beldenak and Didrik Slaghek their successors. The War of Liberation forced them to flee in 1521.)

Naively believing that he had cowed the Swedes, Christian departed in December. Sture, it is true, died from wounds, but his wife inspired the Swedes to persevere in their crusade for freedom. Among the new leaders was Gustavus Vasa who lost his father and brother-in-law in the Bloodbath. Gustavus himself had been taken to Denmark as a hostage but managed to escape via Lübeck to Sweden. Aided by Lübeck, he raised an army of peasants to rout the Danes. By this Vasa clearly proved his mettle, and in

1523 the hero of the battle field was proclaimed king. Antithetically, the archbishop was deposed a second time.

Rarely was ecclesiastical leadership on a national scale needed more than now. Normally Sweden had one archbishop and six suffragan bishops, but the burden of leadership at this time devolved solely upon Bishop Brask of Linköping. Trolle had fled Uppsala, and Ingemar of Växjö was too old to act. The four others were dead. Otto of Västerås died deprived of his liberty in 1522, Arvid Kurck of Abo drowned the same year, and the bishops of Strängnäs and Skara who perished in the Bloodbath were never replaced.

Death also claimed the head of the universal Church in 1521. If Pope Leo X dallied too long with the Danish king (in 1520 Christian invited Martin Reinhard to preach Lutheranism in Copenhagen), his successor, Adrian VI, tried to right matters. Seeking a legate to dispatch to Vasa, the new pope struck on John Magnus, a Swede, whom he had taught years ago in Louvain. Magnus had a two-fold mission: to announce that the Holy Father planned to eradicate abuses from the Church and to urge the government to halt the spread of Lutheranism. The royal council countered with a demand for the deposition of Trolle and the appointment of native Swedes to the vacant sees. Magnus took an optimistic view of the outcome of his mission, and on September 10, 1523, the king assured the pope that, after the dioceses were filled, he would try to extirpate heresy and convert the Lapps.

A few days later, the king asked papal approval for the bishops whom the chapters had elected: John Magnus (the legate), for Uppsala, Magnus Haraldi for Skara, Magnus Seminar for Strängnäs, Peter Magni for Västerås, and Eric Svenonis for Abo. He further requested remission of the usual fees. But Rome still clung to Trolle. News of this enraged Vasa and stunned the legate so thoroughly that he wondered whether the communique might be a forgery. More letters went to Rome, and on November 2, 1523, the king blustered that he himself would provide for the dioceses if the pope would not.

Undaunted, Rome confirmed only Peter Magni, a Brigittine monk, who at the time presided over St. Bridget's hospice in the Eternal City. Following his consecration on May 1, 1524, he left for Västerås not suspecting that he would be the last Swedish bishop approved by the Pope. (There was a financial angle to the choice of Magni. Brask wished Rome would have waived her rights. Others feared lenity would undermine papal authority.)

Startling news from the Arctic Circle slowly trickled southward. Eventually, Pope Clement VII complained to Brask and Magni that the Swedish clergy took wives, changed the Mass, gave Communion under both kinds, and neglected Extreme Unction. Ignorant of Vasa's inmost sentiments, the Pope appealed to him and the nobles to defend the ancient faith. Incongruously, Vasa was just then preparing for the crucial Riksdag of Västerås (1527) which would deal lethal blows to the Church. Harassed by ever increasing duress, the leaders of the Church did draw up a protest, but no one dared to present it. Finally, Brask mustered up the courage to declare at the Riksdag that he could not consent to changes in the doctrine or finances of the Church without consulting the pope. The leader of the nobles sided with him, but, at this juncture, Vasa strategically burst into tears sobbing that he would have to abdicate. Seemingly the fate of free Sweden trembled in the balance. In the midst of the consternation, Bishop-elect Magnus Sommar counseled compliance, and, on second thought, the nobles, sensing an opportunity for aggrandizement, acquiesced. Brask disappeared into exile (he died in Poland in 1538), and thereafter the Church subserved the crown instead of the tiara.

With the time for his coronation approaching, Vasa urgently needed bishops. At long last, Peter Magni yielded to royal pressure and consecrated bishops-elect Magnus Sommar of Strängnäs and Magnus Haraldi of Skara on January 5, 1528, also Martin Skytte of Abo. Though schismatic, their consecration was valid. (This is the studied opinion of Theodore van Haag, S.J., *Die Apostolische Sukzession in Schweden*, Uppsala, 1144. As early as 1526 Brask warned that no protest could justify a schismatic consecration.) The motives of all may have been relatively blameless if the *consecrandi* agreed to seek papal confirmation when this would become possible. Such secret documents abound at the time,

although there is some doubt whether one covered this particular case. At any rate, a mere week after his consecration, Haraldi officiated at the king's coronation. Since Olaus Petri preached the sermon, the event cannot be passed over as a purely traditional ceremony.

Olaus and his brother, Laurentius had studied at Wittenberg where they imbibed the "new" teaching directly from Luther. Upon returning to his home diocese of Strängnäs, Olaus, as early as 1519, began propagating Lutheran doctrine. Whereas the ever-orthodox Brask protested, Vasa invited the upstart deacon to preach in Stockholm. He was still a deacon at the time of the royal coronation, and he served as royal chancellor for several years before becoming a priest. It was, however, by his literary activity, climaxed by his translation of the New Testament into Swedish, that he left an indelible impression on his fatherland.

Notwithstanding Peter Magni's parlous consecrations, half of the dioceses soon stood vacant again. Brask was in exile, Haraldi fled, and Ingemar died in 1530. Most annoying of all was the continuous vacancy of the metropolitan See. Upon invitation, several bishops refused to occupy it. While conceding that the disturbed times might warrant filling the suffragan Sees in an irregular manner, they shied away from taking possession of Uppsala without the pallium and papal confirmation. In the end, an exasperated Vasa named the more pliable Laurentius Petri archbishop. From the purely religious standpoint, the king was not much concerned. As an undisguised opportunist in dogma, he had, in fact, long ruminated the merits of presbyterianism as a means of abolishing the office of bishop entirely.

Precisely who consecrated Laurentius is uncertain. Even if he did, as some allege, receive the crozier from Vasa, the apostolic succession came to him via the *consecrati* of Peter Magni. (Brask regarded the consecration as valid.) Of course, with subsequent attacks on the Holy Eucharist as a sacrifice coupled with the simultaneous exaltation of preaching, the rite of ordination changed and valid orders became extinct, even if the words "bishop" and "priest" continued in use.

Down through the years Laurentius Petri had to take at least passing notice of John Magnus, the legitimate successor to Trolle. This quondam legate left

Sweden ostensibly on some diplomatic mission to Poland but never returned. Magnus uninterruptedly sought papal recognition of his election to the See of Uppsala, but the Danish influence in Rome would not stop. At long last, he was consecrated there in 1533 and invested with the pallium. Eleven years later, his brother succeeded him. The latter attended the Council of Trent in an official capacity, but, since neither brother set foot upon Swedish soil, Rome ceased making appointments to Uppsala. (Laurentius Petri outlived both of them. He died in Uppsala in 1573.)

While the Catholic episcopate withered away, a strong state emerged with all power vested in Vasa. In developing power based upon wealth, he very effectively exploited the resources of the Church. If so coarse a character could have any scruples about this, they were deftly dispelled by Laurentius Andreae, his priest-secretary, who theorized that church property belonged to the believers. As a corollary, it could be used in any way whatever to promote their welfare. (He studied in Germany and visited Rome three times. Andreae favored the office of bishop as a means of safeguarding the Church against royal power. He died in poverty in Strängnäs in 1552.)

As far back as 1522 the Church made a patriotic contribution to Vasa's war of liberation, but, before long, levies took the place of donations, in 1526, for example, when Lübeck pressed Vasa for payments, he requisitioned two-thirds of all parish tithes and two-thirds of the clergy's income for the current year. By way of compromise, the Church paid a lump sum. Later levies were equally specific, such as the surrender of a bell by every church in 1530, also to satisfy the demands of Lübeck. Small wonder, then, that Vasa could "balance the budget" and amass a handsome fortune for himself. (At his death Vasa owned 5,000 large farms and \$6,250,000 in coin. Being fifty years old—in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s. v. Sweden—this figure is much too low.)

Such power politics entrenched Lutheranism in the royal court and in high society. On the other hand, many of the lower classes remained basically Catholic. The nation's leaders purposely retained many traditional customs and ceremonies, yet, despite all ruses, Vasa met with recurring rebellion. For example, the dynamic Dean (or Bishop) Sunnanväder joined in the hostilities only to be decapitated for it in 1527. Similarly, Olaus Petri and Laurentius Andreae,

key characters of the Reformation, were condemned to death and had to pay high ransoms to keep their heads. In 1542 the peasants agitated for the abolition of the Mass in Swedish, and, two years later, the king complained openly at a Riksdag that the old doctrine remained popular. Nonetheless, concessions were not in the offing.

By the time Vasa died in 1560 Sweden ceased to be a Catholic country. Eric, who succeeded him, continued his father's hostility to Catholicism, although he did not oppose the office of bishop as bitterly as his father had done. Peculiarly enough, this lenity was more than counterbalanced by his morbid fear of the nobility. In a few years it became evident that Eric suffered from progressive insanity, and, when this forced his abdication, John III, a half brother, acceded to the throne.

John brought an entirely different attitude to his office. This was partly due to his marriage with Catherine Jagellon of Poland. Such a venture necessarily brought him into close contact with Catholic priests. Envious Eric, who vainly attempted to marry either Queen Elizabeth of England or Mary Stuart, confined him in the castle of Gripsholm, but Catherine remained faithful and bore John a son whom they named Sigismund. Having succeeded in love as well as in domestic politics, John began longing for higher goals and wider horizons. As such, he concerned himself increasingly about the foreign holdings of his wife and carefully appraised the possibilities of ascending the Polish throne. Believing that the Vatican could be of service in such matters, he made overtures to the Roman court. These were well received, one step followed another, and in 1578 Antonio Possevino, a papal legate incognito, admitted the son of Vasa, the reigning king of Sweden, to the Church.

John, to be sure, did not surrender unconditionally. As a disciple of Cassander, he believed that Protestantism and Catholicism could be harmonized. (George Cassander 1513-66 after studying and teaching in Belgium, settled in Cologne. Though many of his works are on the Index, he apparently died in the Church.) So he issued *The Red Book*, a new liturgy derived largely from the Roman Missal. Far from being an irenicon, it stirred up intense antagonism at the University of Uppsala. Expecting to bargain with the Holy See, John proceeded to request several of the current desiderata: a married clergy, a vernacular

liturgy, and Communion under both kinds. Rome replied that she would forego her rights to confiscated property, but would make no concessions in her discipline. Recognizing this impasse for what it was, John receded from the Church, and his subsequent marriage to a Protestant influenced him to move farther in the same direction.

Although John's international projects languished sadly, Sigismund revived them briefly by becoming a candidate for the Polish throne. This could scarcely pass unnoticed in Rome. At first Pope Sixtus V simply recommended the election of a Catholic and urged the preservation of peace, but later a coterie of cardinals who favored an Austrian candidate converted him to their viewpoint. This required little skill because the Hapsburgs could obviously be effective allies of the Holy See when it came to blocking the Turks out of central Europe, but, to the chagrin of the Pope and the Polish Protestants alike, Sigismund carried the election and was crowned in Cracow in 1587. Facing the facts, the Holy See now curried his favor as a means of bringing Sweden back into the fold.

The Vatican hoped and prayed that Sigismund would marry a Catholic, preferably an Austrian. This happened in 1592 when he took Archduchess Anne to be his wife. That same year John died, so in 1593 Sigismund crossed over to Sweden to be crowned. Among those accompanying him were the uncompromising Queen Anne; Malaspina, the papal nuncio to Poland; and two Jesuits. Such an entourage, so suggestive of the Counter-reformation, would hardly engender enthusiasm in heretics of late date. Moreover, the recent destruction of the Spanish Armada (1588) spotlighted the journey. Still reeling from this gigantic defeat, Catholics everywhere hoped to strengthen their position, while Protestants feared lest a Spanish-Swedish alliance provide bases for attacks on England which just then was in the ascendancy. Keenly aware of the multiplicity of critical implications, the Vatican briefed Sigismund meticulously, not forgetting to allocate 20,000 *scudi*

to him to foster the faith in Sweden.

Meanwhile Sigismund's crafty uncle, Charles, rallied prominent men around himself to machinate against the new king. Clergymen who had chafed under John readily joined the cabal. Their deliberations culminated in the Uppsala Resolutions which outlawed *The Red Book* and approximated a profession of Protestant faith. When confronted with the Resolutions, the new king hedged and hedged, but, fearing a revolution, he ultimately capitulated and submitted to a non-Catholic coronation.

Sigismund spurned Angermann, the newly-appointed archbishop of Uppsala, and he promptly defied the opposition by appointing Catholics to high positions in the government, but that was as far as his courage reached. Then he left for Poland expecting to rule Sweden from beyond the Baltic. Paradoxically, he jeopardized his regime in Poland by toying with the idea of entrusting that government to an Austrian duke and himself returning to his native land.

Sweden now staggered from confusion to civil war, and Sigismund muffed the attempt to recapture his country by force. One Riksdag in 1595 exiled all Catholic priests, and another four years later deposed Sigismund as a papist (Sigismund remained Catholic until his death in 1632), an oath-breaker, and an enemy of the realm. Charles, having secured the throne for himself, meted out stern retribution to his opponents. Abetted by the iconoclastic Angermann, the new king quashed all hopes for a reunion with Rome. And few Swedes crossed the Baltic to study in the Scandinavians' seminary at Braunsberg, near Danzig. Back in 1579 Possevino had dedicated it with high hopes, Queen Catherine endowed it in her will, but the families of Sweden produced few vocations to heroism. (In 1613 Gustavus Adolphus prohibited attendance at such schools in foreign countries under penalty of death.)

Sweden had lost the faith. A long, bleak winter lay ahead. To borrow a phrase from John Henry Newman, there would be no early "Second Spring."

1960

ST. ANSGAR'S GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION IN NEW YORK

John T. Dwight

Left to right: Msgr. (now Bishop) Swanstrom, Father LaFarge, Bishop Suhr, Mr. Rambusch and Msgr. Jeffers.

On St. Ansgar's Day, February 3, 1910, some half dozen Scandinavian-American Catholics gathered in a room belonging, it is said, to the Paulist Fathers on West 61st Street, and by wish of Cardinal Farley and Bishop McDonnell (of Brooklyn) founded St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League. Exactly fifty years later, in the company of many others, their descendants were to meet again (indeed, a message from abroad was to be received from one of the original few).

Early in the evening of St. Ansgar's Day, February 3, 1960, there was standing room only within the Lady Chapel of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. Therefore many were obliged to stay in back, out in the Cathedral's Ambulatory, when the Chaplain of the New York Unit, Rev. Henry J. Andersen, S.J., entered the Chapel and knelt before the Altar of Our Lady of New York to lead the Rosary, in the presence of His Excellency, Most Rev. Theodor Suhr, O.S.B., Bishop of Copenhagen, Denmark, and of the then Rt. Rev. Msgr. (now Most Rev. Bishop) Edward S. Swanstrom of Catholic Relief Services, Rev. John LaFarge, S.J., Rev. Hugh K. Wolf (our Field Secretary), and others.

When Father Andersen started Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament, we were much edified to see that Very Rev. Msgr. Charles J. McManus was acting as his Head Server (assisted by our Assistant Treasurer, Mr. John P. Tierney). Meanwhile, standing out back in the Ambulatory, Rev. Joseph R. Foley, C.S.P. (Director of the Paulist Choristers), was leading the Schola Cantorum of the Liturgical Arts Soci-

ety in beautiful Gregorian renditions of the Benediction hymns.

This Rosary and Benediction were in Thanksgiving for the favors granted to our League in its first fifty years, and in Petition that its work be blessed in the years to come. Therefore it seems very fitting that all said aloud the Prayer for Scandinavia (approved anew by the Holy See) and with new and extraordinary indulgences attached.

After Benediction, the congregation strolled in little groups over to Park Avenue and into its Park Lane Hotel, where they spent a social half hour or so before gathering at their tables for dinner in the beautiful Tapestry Room. Here they found at their places tasteful programs designed by Miss Anne E. O'Connell.

On the dais table stood the place cards (from left to right): Rev. Michael C. Wolfe, O.M.I. (the first Catholic missionary to Greenland in modern times) the former Spiritual Director of the N. Y. Unit; Rev. Lambert J. M. Erkens, S.M.A.; Rev. L. Edward Moreau, A.A. (co-founder of the Worcester Unit); Very Rev. Msgr. Charles J. McManus of the Cathedral Information Center; the then Rt. Rev. Msgr. (now Most Rev. Bishop) Edward E. Swanstrom (Executive Director of Catholic Relief Services, and Spiritual Director of the N. Y. Unit); Rev. John LaFarge, S.J.; Bishop Suhr; N. Y. Unit President Viggo F. E. Rambusch (who was Toast-master of the evening); Rt. Rev. Msgr. Vincent W. Jeffers (N. Y. Archdiocesan Director of Propagation of the Faith), representing Cardinal Spellman; Rev. Hugh K. Wolf of Vermillion, South Dakota (Field Secretary of the League); Rt. Rev. Msgr. Richard H. J. Hanley (Diocesan Director of Propagation of the Faith in Rockville Centre); and the Chaplain of the N. Y. Unit, Rev. Henry J. Andersen, S.J.; while Rev. Joseph R. Foley, C.S.P., of the Paulist Choristers, and Rev. John M. Liubauskas, Spiritual Director of the League's Fitchburg Unit, sat at the right end of the line.

Out on the floor, each officer and committeeman of the N. Y. Unit was assigned as host or hostess of a table. Included in their number were Mr. and Mrs.

Sverre B. Withammer, to whom the League owes so much; Mr. Albert F. Westerberg; and Mrs. Alice Nyeboe Root, who from her home in Maine manages so efficiently the distribution of our Mass stipends to Scandinavia.

At these various tables were seated some important guests, among whom, for example, were numbered Rev. Titus Cranny, S.A., of Graymoor's League of Prayer for Unity; Brother Jon Poehler, A.A., beloved Founder of the League's Worcester and Fitchburg Units; Mr. Walter Browning, President of the Worcester Unit, and Mrs. Julian LeClair, President of the Fitchburg Unit. (Altogether we were honored with the presence of a dozen or more members from Worcester and Fitchburg, and we very much appreciated their sacrifice in coming.)

From farthest away, however, arrived one faithful member of the N. Y. Unit, Mr. Henry D. Ellis, from Wallace, Idaho.

Present also were Rev. Austin P. Bennett, J.C.D., who heads the Parish Service Corp. of the Brooklyn Diocese; Mr. Floyd Anderson, Managing Editor of the *Newark Advocate*, who writes so well on various aspects of Catholic Scandinavia; Mr. Gerald L. Carroll, President of the Liturgical Arts Society, and its devoted and eminent secretary-editor Mr. Maurice Lavanoux. Rev. Patrick H. Collins, S.J., represented the magazine *America*, while Mrs. Helen Murphy represented our friends of the Bay Ridge Catholic Action Guild. Mrs. Tjäder Harris was there, who donated "Vikingsborg" to the Brigittine Nuns.

Indeed, the Brigittine Nuns themselves were present, for, after eating in seclusion, in accordance with their Rule, Mother Lucia, O.S.S.S., and a companion nun came in to listen to the talks after dinner.

Besides Mr. Rambusch himself and Father Andersen (already mentioned), there were present other members of our Founders' families, such as Rev. Lawrence Wilson, S.J., Mrs. Russell Baker (granddaughter of Mrs. Bratass), and Mr. Jon Lindner of Jamestown, N.Y. An unexpected pleasure was the receipt of a congratulatory cable from our only living Founder, Mr. Alexander Amann, now residing in Denmark, and of a letter of felicitation from our long-standing member Mrs. Astrid Fich, also now in Denmark. Also present was Mrs. Donald Wells, sister of our former Field Secretary, the late Father George Esterguard.

Then there were long-faithful members from among the clergy, for example Rev. Royal J. Gardner, O.P., of Providence, R.I.; Rev. Arthur P. Herold of Setauket, Long Island; Rev. Maurus Schenck, C.P., and Rev. John A. Sears (down from Methuen, Mass.), as well as valued new members such as Rev. Olav I Waring, who has lectured for the N. Y. Unit several times.

Old friends and members from the laity were also present, such as Mrs. Francis V. Duffy (née Isabella Andersen), and Dr. Marguerite Boylan. But many, many other valued members and guests were present, from both the clergy and the laity, but unfortunately too numerous to be mentioned here individually by name.

For there were over 160 members and guests standing in the Tapestry Room when Bishop Suhr said Grace in Danish, and all sat down to enjoy (among other good things) Breast of Capon Bragance on Danish Ham, Vanilla Ice Cream with Fresh Crushed Strawberries, and Coffee and Kransekage. Indeed, two of these tall almond-cakes, decked with small Scandinavian flags, flanked Bishop Suhr since early in the meal, and had drawn many a glance of admiring anticipation from the Scandinavians present, of inquiring conjecture from the non-Scandinavians!

When these cakes had both been demolished, however, the Toastmaster arose and thanked Msgr. McManus for making the arrangements for the service at the Cathedral; and he expressed appreciation to Father Foley and Liturgical Arts Society for providing the music there. Then, with a word of commendation, he presented to the gathering the Editor of ST. ANSGAR'S BULLETIN, Mr. John T. Dwight. Next to be invited to stand for inspection were the families of the Founders (mentioned above), and then Father Erkens, Brother Jon Poehler and the various representatives of the Worcester and Fitchburg Units. He now said a word about the American Oblate Fathers' new Denmark-Greenland Mission and invited Father Michael Wolfe, O.M.I., to stand, and Mother Lucia was introduced with a few words about St. Birgitta's new convent and guest house at "Vikingsborg" in Darien, Conn.

Finally he turned to the first speaker, our devoted Field Secretary, Father Hugh K. Wolf, who had come all the way from South Dakota. On the way to the St. Ansgar Jubilee he had stopped off in Washington,

D.C. He had been invited to be Chaplain for the Day at the United States Senate. And after this New York celebration at the Park Lane, he was about to go on to his home city of Buffalo to revive its Unit of St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League!

Father Wolf was followed by our Spiritual Director, Msgr. (now Bishop) Swanstrom, in whose charge were the congratulatory cables and letters from the Scandinavian Hierarchy, etc., and who read in full the commendatory letter received by us from the Papal Secretary of State, Cardinal Tardini.

In introducing Father LaFarge, the speaker of the evening, Mr. Rambusch called him "this wonderful person . . . this priest we all here know, respect, admire and love." and "ever since 1931 this writer has been an active member of the League (for the last twelve years he has been our Director of Programs). I say active, for we are keenly aware of the fact that he has done this while giving of himself as Editor of *America*, and Spiritual Director of the De Porres Society and the Liturgical Arts Society and numerous other organizations."

Next to be presented was the Guest of Honor, Bishop Suhr, about whom Mr. Rambusch said: "He was born in Denmark, migrated to Argentina and after several years returned to Europe, took instructions and became a catholic, a Benedictine priest, a prior and then a Bishop, in fact the first native (Catholic and resident) Bishop of Denmark since the Reformation. Please remember that in Scandinavia the Catholics represent less than 1% of the population, therefore, the responsibilities of a bishop there are very many and all very serious. His Excellency, Bishop Suhr, has, during these years, done a number of noteworthy things, such as building additional schools and several rather large, dignified and beautiful churches,

also inviting into Denmark various communities of religious, and establishing youth organizations. Among all, be it the Royal Family, the diplomatic corps, the non-Catholics, or especially his own, he is greatly respected and admired."

In the course of the proceedings Bishop Suhr was presented with generous monetary gifts toward his work by the Worcester, Fitchburg and New York Units.

Finally, Msgr. Jeffers, speaking for Cardinal Spellman (who had graciously lent his name as Honorary Chairman of the Jubilee) as well as for himself, spoke very beautifully, expressing appreciation for the work of St. Ansgar's League and extending good wishes for its future.

Mr. Rambusch had already rendered thanks (for their generosity) to the Jubilee Benefactors, Patrons and an anonymous donor, for making this celebration possible. He now thanked the Committee members for their work on the Jubilee, and urged all present to keep the Church in Scandinavian in their daily prayers.

Bishop Suhr then bestowed his Episcopal Blessing on the gathering, and left the Dais to receive individual greetings from the guests and members.

This Golden Jubilee celebration will long be remembered, and its success should indeed be gratifying to Mr. Edward A. Quinlan, Chairman of the Dinner Committee, as well as to Miss Elizabeth C. Bailey who worked so hard on it and to the others who assisted. The thought, effort and time devoted to preparation for this memorable event found compensation in the words of one of the Jubilee guests: "I was given a real lift tonight; I am so glad I came!"



1987-88

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND LEIF ERICSON

Thor Heyerdahl (News of Norway)

In 1992 it will be 500 years since Columbus's first journey across the Atlantic, and a great celebration is under way in the Mediterranean countries, in Cuba, and all over North America. The great seafarer will be honored for good reason, and the world will be reminded that, in opening shipping routes between Europe and North America, he altered the course of history.

But it is not as discoverer of America that Columbus would be honored. Helge and Anne Stine Ings-tad, with the help of the sagas, have located Nordic settlements and artifacts on the coast of North America which date to Leif Erikson's time, 500 years before Columbus. Their book has just been published, and the average citizen knows nothing about it. In the minds of most people, Erikson appears as a heathen Viking, and the sagas count only as primitive mythology. In fact we can demonstrate today that the sagas are based on real experiences. The truth is that Erikson was a Christian farmer, baptized by King Olav Tryggvason in Catholic Norway and appointed to take Christianity to Greenland. He was on a missionary expedition when he discovered land west of Davis Strait in the year 1000, when Spain was still Moslem territory. We have strong indications that Columbus calculated the width of the Atlantic not by guesswork but with solid knowledge of Erikson's expeditions and of the Scandinavian settlements on the other side.

The church played a key role in world communications in medieval times. How many average citizens in America or in Norway, for that matter, understand the importance of the church in the Scandinavian explorations of a thousand years ago? How many know that Erikson carried a priest on his ship, on orders of the king, or that the first Christian baptism in North America took place when Thorfinn Karlsefne's wife, Gudrun, bore the child Snorri in Vinland? It was not Columbus who raised the first cross in North America, but Erikson, and the occasion was the burial of Thorvald Eriksen, who had been killed by the native North American *skraelinger* in Vinland. The first American Christians were two *skraelinger* baptized by Thorfinn Karlsefne and brought to Greenland to learn Norwegian. Everybody knows that Columbus had close ties with the Catholic Church. Some insist he visited Iceland and heard about Greenland and Vinland there. This may be true, but in any case his church at home would have been already fully

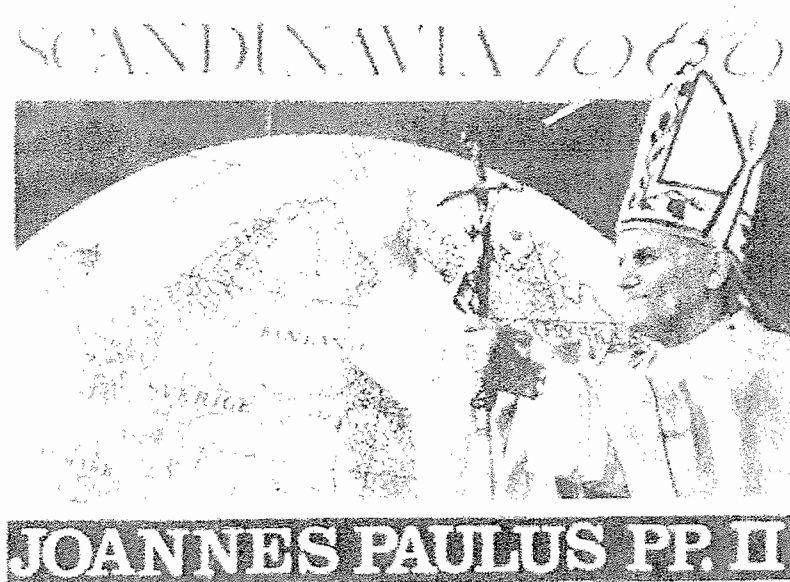
informed about the Norse settlements west of the ocean.

Pope Adrian IV went to Norway in 1153, while he was still a cardinal, to appoint an archbishop for the churches in Iceland and Greenland; Greenland already had a resident bishop. Through the archbishop in Norway, regular communication between the Vatican and the Christian population in Greenland continued for 400 years. Pope Alexander III received an emissary from the people in Greenland asking him for permission to marry relatives closer than the seven degrees removed which Papal edict prescribed; the Pope agreed when he heard that it took 12 days to sail back to Europe for wives. In 1237, Pope Gregory wrote the archbishop agreeing to certain modifications in the Holy Communion for Greenland: the congregation would be permitted to drink beer, since wine was difficult to obtain, but permission was denied for meat to be used instead of bread as the host. [Editor: Nowadays some doubt this occurrence.] Pope John XXI in 1276 refused the archbishop's plea to excuse him from personally going to Greenland to collect contributions for the crusades; however, in 1279 Nicholas III agreed to the sending of a deputy.

Correspondence between the Vatican and Greenland continued into the 15th century, as long as the Norse settlements there were able to hold out in the face of threatening changes in climate and other adversities. In 1448, Pope Nicholas V wrote the two bishops in Iceland requesting assistance for the Greenland congregation which had been sacked by pirates so that only nine of 17 churches remained. The last known papal letter to the Greenland colony is dated 1492, the same year that Columbus set sail on his first Atlantic crossing.

Columbus found land exactly where he thought he would, where Erikson's successors in Greenland knew it was. Was that a coincidence? We do Christopher Columbus no favor by picturing him as an adventurer who set sail on a wing and a prayer. He deserves honor as a brave seafarer and a wise, methodical planner who had carefully gathered the available knowledge of his day. If one looks at it that way, there is room for celebrating both Europeans who brought the cross to America, 500 years apart.

1990



Chronicle of the Pope's Historic Visit to Scandinavia (June 2-10, 1989)

*Excerpts from L'Osservatore Romano's English Edition
of June 5, June 12, June 19, and June 25, 1989*

Norway: June 1,2,3

On Thursday morning, June 1, the Holy Father left Rome by air to begin his 42nd pastoral visit outside of Italy, the first visit of a pope to Scandinavia. Arriving in Fornebu Airport, Oslo (Norway), His Holiness was welcomed by officials, including the Prime Minister, Madame Gro Harlem Brundtland. The Holy Father gave a discourse to which L'Osservatore Romano gives the Heading:

"I come as a witness to the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Among other things he said "I come to Norway as a friend, full of esteem and love for its noble people and its millenary Christian heritage". He also said "My pilgrimage to Norway is also in response to the gracious invitation of the Lutheran Church to participate in a service of prayer for Christian unity at Nidaros (Trondheim) Cathedral, the hallowed national shrine where St. Olav, King and Martyr, is buried." (Editor: He said this, perhaps, in view of the fact that not all the Lutheran Bishops of Norway welcomed his coming.) And at the end, in Norwegian, "Yes, we love this country. God bless Norway! God bless the Norwegian people!"

After his arrival in Norway, the Holy Father went to the Royal Palace for a private visit with King Olav V, which was followed by a meeting with the Bishops of the Scandinavian Episcopal Con-

ference, and then a private meeting with the Prime Minister. In the afternoon the Pope went to Akershus Festningsplass where he celebrated Mass in Latin and preached a homily in English and Norwegian, to which L'O.R. gives the heading: "The Missionary vocation and the call to Church Unity are rooted in the very fact of being Christians."

Following the Mass at Akershus Festningsplass, the Holy Father went into the courtyard of nearby Akershus Castle where a Norwegian translation of some of the Pope's poetry was read. Proceeding to the Hall of King Christian IV, the Pope joined leaders of other Christian confessions and other faiths in an ecumenical prayer service. Following the greeting by the Lutheran Bishop of Oslo, Bishop Andreas Aarflot, the Pope gave a discourse to which L'O.R. gives the heading: "Despite our separation, a certain but imperfect communion has remained."

On the evening of that Thursday, June 1, his first day in Norway, the Holy Father spoke to the members of the Scandinavian Episcopal Conference at the residence of the (Catholic) Bishop of Oslo, to which L'O.R. gives the heading: "Although in a diaspora situation, you are not forgotten or abandoned, the Lord stands at your side."

On the morning of the next day, Friday, June 2, the Holy Father went to St. Olav Cathedral in Oslo,

where he addressed the Catholic priests, members of the Pastoral Council, women religious and members of the Diocesan Committee for the Papal Visit. L'O.R. gives this talk the heading: "Norway needs a new confidence in its authentic Christian calling."

Later in the morning of Friday, June 2, John Paul II left the Norwegian capital to proceed to other parts of the country. At Fornebu Airport government officials gathered to bid the Pope farewell, and the Holy Father gave a discourse in English.

Arriving at Vaernes, the Airport for Trondheim the same day, the Holy Father went to Trondheim's Lutheran Cathedral where he joined ecumenical leaders in a prayer service. The Pope's discourse was headed by L'O.R. as follows: "Let us open a new Christian chapter in history in response to the many challenges of a changing world".

Still later on Friday, the Holy Father celebrated Mass for the faithful of the Catholic Prelature of Trondheim in the Idrettsbygget (Sports Building) of the Institute of Technology. During the Mass of the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, at which twenty-five children received their First Communion, the Pope gave a homily which L'O.R. heads: "You who belong to so many small congregations celebrate today your unity in faith with the Pope." In view of the many immigrants now in Norway and the consequent occasional ill will occasioned by this, the Pope added at one point, "Those of you who are Norwegian by birth and ancestry realize that immigrants too add to the riches of the nation. In the best traditions of this country, you have given your new citizens a chance to begin again in freedom, with all the opportunities that society offers. In this way, you set a noble example for others to follow."

On the evening of this same Friday the Holy Father flew from Trondheim north to Tromsø (Norway) above the Arctic Circle. Here he presided at Vespers in Stortorget Square and gave a discourse to which L'O.R. gives this heading: "Prayer means to live according to the truth about God, about ourselves and about the world."

On the next morning, Saturday, June 3, 1989, the Holy Father celebrated Mass for the faithful of the Prelature of Tromsø in Stortorget Square near the Catholic Bishop's residence. During the Mass the Pope preached a homily which L'O.R. heads: "Only

by entering into a relationship of love with Christ can we fulfill the purpose for which we were created."

Iceland: June 3, 4:

Then, still on Saturday, June 3, the Holy Father left Tromsø and flew to Reykjavik (Iceland), where he was received by State and Church. During the ceremony of welcome the Pope gave an address to which L'O.R. gives the heading: "Remain faithful to the noble Christian values that have shaped your Christian history and your life as a people."

Following meetings with the President and Prime Minister of Iceland, the Holy Father went to the Catholic Cathedral of Christ the King in Reykjavik, where he addressed the priests, religious and laity in an address to which L'O.R. gives the heading: "I appeal to Catholics and to all Christians to cooperate in making the Gospel message the soul of your nation".

In the afternoon, the Holy Father travelled to Thingvellir, site of Iceland's medieval outdoor Assembly, where he participated in an ecumenical service and gave an address, to which L'O.R. gives this heading: "The world is facing new challenges, but the Gospel of Christ is our hope." His remarks started with the words "This National Shrine is forever linked to the Christian and civil history of Iceland, and I am well aware of the particular significance of holding this ecumenical service in this place." (Where the Althing or Assembly in 1000 chose Christianity as Iceland's religion).

On Sunday, June 4, the Holy Father celebrated the Mass of the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost in Reykjavik in front of the Catholic Cathedral. During the Mass, at which about forty people received their first Holy Communion, the Pope preached the homily to which is given the heading by L'O.R.: "To use the earth's resources wisely and responsibly is the challenge facing the human family today." And at the close of Mass the Holy Father gave a reflection before leading the faithful in the recitation of the Angelus.

On this same day, Sunday, June 4, the Holy Father flew from Iceland to Finland; a departure ceremony was held at Keflavik Airport, and the Pope addressed words of farewell to the people of Iceland.

Finland, June 4, 5, 6:

On Sunday evening, June 4, the Holy Father arrived at Helsinki's Vantaa Airport, where he was received by the Foreign Minister and the Chief of Protocol of Finland. Proceeding to the Presidential Palace in Helsinki, the Pope was received in an official ceremony by President Mauno Koivisto. During the



*With King Olav on the palace balcony,
usually only the Royal Family appears here*

ceremony the Pope gave an address to which L'O.R. gives the heading: "The Gospel can offer a sure guide to those who design a society characterized by justice and solidarity."

On the morning of Monday, June 5, the Holy Father flew from Helsinki to Turku, Finland, where he attended an ecumenical service in the Lutheran Cathedral, which is dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St. Henrik (the Apostle of Finland). During the service the Pope gave a discourse to which L'O.R. has given this heading: "Unconditional fidelity to the will of Christ is the ground of existence of all Christian communities." One notices certain passages: "I am deeply grateful to you, Archbishop Vikström for your kind invitation, and to all of you, my brothers and sisters in the Lord, for the warm welcome you have given me." And "Who am I? Like all of you, I am a Christian, and in Baptism I received the grace that unites me with Jesus Christ our Lord. Through Baptism I am your brother in Christ" and "Because ecumenism seeks unity in Christ through the Holy Spirit to the glory of the Father, it must also be founded upon prayer." And "You came to inaugurate a chapel in the Church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva for the use of the Finnish people of various Churches who live in Rome. That was a very tangible display of the value of ecumenical prayer in common." And he ends "Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: if we remain

faithful to the Lord's will, and abide in him, there is no division that his grace cannot heal, no obstacle that his love cannot overcome. May we always be guided by his Holy Spirit, that all who believe in him may be truly one, and that the Father will be glorified in our bearing much fruit. Amen."

Following a private meeting with the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Finland, the Holy Father went to the Ice Sports Hall, back in Helsinki, in the afternoon of Monday, June 5, where he celebrated Mass, during which he personally confirmed approximately twenty of the two hundred confirmands. L'O.R. gives this heading to the Pope's homily on this occasion: "As members of the one Body of Christ we must be stewards of the gifts of creation, redemption and unity".

On that Monday evening the Holy Father went to the Finlandia Hall in Helsinki, site of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe held in 1975. In the Concert Hall of this Convention-complex the Pope addressed the members of the Paasikivi Society, an association of representatives of politics, business, art and science. L'O.R. gives this talk the following heading: "Leaders of nations and people themselves have to come to realize that believers are a powerful factor in favour of the common good."

On the morning of Tuesday, June 6, the Holy Father went to St. Henrik's Catholic Cathedral in Helsinki, where he addressed approximately one hundred elderly and infirm people.

Denmark, June 6, 7

On the same Tuesday, June 6, following a brief visit to the President of Finland, the Holy Father flew from Helsinki to Copenhagen (Denmark) where he was welcomed by the Prime Minister, Mr. Paul Schluter. In response to the Prime Minister's greeting, the Pope gave a discourse to which L'O.R. gives this heading: "Mankind lies poised between a future of hope and promise, and a future of violence and poverty."

The Holy Father then paid a visit to Queen Margaret II. In the afternoon he celebrated Mass for the faithful of Copenhagen in the park of the Benedictine (2nd order) Convent north of the city, and preached a homily to which L'O.R. gives the heading: "In a world without love and without God the Church says

'yes' to love and to life." The homily was given in English, but the Pope in several paragraphs also used Danish, Polish or German. Present, too, were people from Greenland and the Faeroe Islands.

On the evening of that Tuesday, June 6, the Pope traveled 50 kilometers west of Copenhagen to the Lutheran Cathedral of Roskilde where he participated in a Lutheran prayer service. He then went to the residence of the local bishop, where he addressed the Lutheran bishops of Denmark, L'O.R. heads this talk as follows:



*Queen Margrethe and Pope John Paul II
(Photo: Mik Eshestak)*

"The goal of celebrating the Eucharist together transcends human power and possibilities."

The next morning, Wednesday, June 7, the Holy Father went to St. Ansgar's Catholic Cathedral in Copenhagen, where he addressed the Catholic priests, religious and laity of Denmark, L'O.R. gives it the following heading. "Do not be discouraged! Accept the Gospel of joy and love!"

On the same day the Holy Father participated in an ecumenical meeting at Moltkes Palace in Copenhagen. Following the greeting by the Lutheran Bishop of Alborg, Henrik Christiansen, the Pope gave a discourse which L'O.R. heads with these words: "Much remains to be done to make of Scripture that instrument of unity which the Lord wills for it."

The Holy Father then addressed the diplomatic corps accredited to Denmark in the Apostolic Nunciature north of Copenhagen. L'O.R. heads this talk as follows: "Between terrible tensions and offenses against life and freedom the world is living through a moment of extraordinary awaking."

On the afternoon of that Wednesday, June 7, the

Holy Father flew from Copenhagen to Æm on Denmark's Jutland peninsula. There, on the grounds of the Catholic Center for youth groups and diocesan gatherings, the Pope celebrated Mass for the faithful of Jutland and the Island of Fyn. L'O.R. heads the Pope's homily on that occasion as follows: "Christ reigns in our world with the hidden power of love."

Sweden, June 8, 9, 10

On the morning of Thursday, June 8, the Holy Father left Denmark to fly to Sweden, the last of the five Scandinavian countries visited. Upon his arrival at Arlanda Airport the Pope was received by Church and State dignitaries, including the Swedish Foreign Minister, Mr. Sten Andersson. Following the Minister's greeting, the Pope gave a discourse.

Upon his arrival the Pope was driven to Stockholm, to St. Eric's Catholic Cathedral, where, after a brief period of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament the Pope addressed a gathering of the priests, religious and laity of Sweden.

Then the Holy Father held private meetings with King Gustav of Sweden, the Prime Minister, and then with the members of the diplomatic corps. He then presided at the celebration of Mass in the Globe Stadium of Stockholm. During the Mass, the theme of which was, "the Church as a sign of unity among the nations", the Pope preached the homily, to which L'O.R. gives the heading: "Material goods are valuable only to the extent that they serve the true good of the human person."

The next morning, Friday, June 9, the Holy Father went to Uppsala, to the north, where he participated in an ecumenical prayer service in the Lutheran Cathedral. Following the greeting by the Lutheran Archbishop, the Pope gave an address, which L'O.R. heads: "We shall find unity only to the extent that we accept the full authentic heritage of faith given by Christ through his Apostles."

In the course of this talk the Pope said "It is also gratifying to see the extent of Christian cooperation in Sweden today. Special mention must be made of the Call to Ecumenical Dialogue which Archbishop Werkström issued in 1987 on behalf of the Bishops of the Swedish Lutheran Church to all Church leaders in Sweden. In addition to the important dialogues taking place between Lutherans and Catholics inter-

nationally, there have been theological discussions



Sweden's Royal Family meets the Pope

in a truly fraternal spirit between the Catholic Church and the Swedish Lutheran Church. These discussions have led to significant reports on Christian marriage and the family and on the office of bishop."

He continued "In Sweden we must gratefully acknowledge a new spirit of good will between Catholics, Lutherans and members of the Free Churches. In many places where Catholics are without a church building their Protestant neighbors have made available the facilities needed for worship. There is also the cordial relationship that exists between Catholics and their Orthodox brothers and sisters in Sweden. I am reminded of the words of St. Paul: 'All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.'"

During a visit to Uppsala University (founded in 1477), where he addressed an assembly of the Royal Family and representative of the administrators, academic faculties and students of the universities of Sweden, L'O.R. gives this talk the following heading: "Human dignity can be protected only if the person is considered inviolable from conception until natural death."

Also on this Friday the Pope went to the Catho-

lic Church of St. Lawrence in Uppsala where he addressed the major superiors of the eighteen religious orders of women present in Sweden and the members of the parish council with their families.

Later on the Friday, the Holy Father celebrated Mass north of the city for the families of Uppsala in the open air near the Lutheran Church of Old Uppsala, in a place which was the original center of Viking Sweden. L'O.R. heads his homily on this occasion: "The greatness of this nation can be measured by the greatness of its families."

That evening the Holy Father greeted the representatives of the "Bonifatiuswerk" and other German charitable groups in the Birgitta Sisters' Guest House in Djurs-holm, a suburb north of Stockholm.

The following morning, Saturday, June 10, the Holy Father went by helicopter to the Swedish city of Vadstena, where he visited the Blue Church which houses the relics of St. Birgitta. Then in the courtyard of Vadstena Castle the Pope celebrated Mass for approximately 2,500 young people from the Scandinavian countries he had visited. L'O.R. heads his homily on this occasion as follows: "Young people of the North: remember that the richest meaning of life lies in giving." After the Mass, the Holy Father planted a tree in memory of the occasion in the middle of the courtyard of the Castle.

That afternoon of Saturday, June 10 the Holy Father went from Vadstena to the nearby city of Linköping. At the airport the Pope gave a farewell discourse to those gathered for the departure ceremony, as the Pontiff began his return trip to Rome.

Excerpted by J. T. D.

(Postscriptum, the Editor: The seemingly erratic progression of Pope John Paul II from Norway west to Iceland, then east all the way to Finland, then south to Denmark, then north to Sweden, was due to the necessity of accommodating the itinerary to the dates of the interviews with heads of state, whom the Pope had to greet in his capacity of head of the Vatican State.)

2000

FRIAR JAKOB, THE FIRST DANE IN MEXICO

Rev. Jorsen Nybo Rasmussen

Friar Jakob's Royal Origins

Shortly after Hernando Cortés had conquered Mexico, he called missionaries from Europe to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the native Indian population. Practically all of these missionaries belonged to the so-called mendicant orders: Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians. In the last centuries of the middle ages they had worked all over Europe where they had deeply influenced church and culture. Being the most mobile part of the clergy of that time, they gladly took upon themselves the enormous new task posed by the discovery overseas of the New World.

Among these missionaries was a Franciscan called Friar Jacobo Daciano or Jakob the Dane, he lived and worked in the old Indian Kingdom Michoacan from c. 1542 until his death c. 1566. Together with many fellow friars, his life was described in the oldest Franciscan chronicles from the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries, by Diego Munoz, c. 1583, by Geronimo de Mendieta, c. 1596 and by Alonso de la Rea, 1639. Based upon these Mexican sources, his biography was also printed in works of the European Franciscans, first of all by the Grand Minister of the order, Franciscus Gonzaga in his *De Origine Seraphicae Religionis*, Rome 1587.

In these primary sources it is said about the origin of Friar Jakob that he came from Denmark and was born as a member of the Danish royal house, that he was very well educated, and also a learned theologian. He was elected a provincial Minister of the Franciscan Province of Dacia. When the Lutheran movement began to attack his order and the Catholic faith, he persevered in disputing against these adversaries. But at last he was forced to leave his fatherland and went to Spain. There, with the authorization of the Emperor, Charles V himself, he was attached to the mission in Mexico where he spent the rest of his life.

The problem is that this story does not seem to correspond with historical reality. Danish historical writers, and above all the genealogist of the Danish royal family, did not know him. Nothing was found in historical accounts about this person who belonged to the leading family of the country. He, at the very time that the Lutheran reformation with the strong support

even of the Kings of this same family won the upperhand and was established as the state religion in Denmark, chose the opposite religious position and remained not only a Catholic but also a faithful mendicant friar.

As a young student at the University of Copenhagen my curiosity was challenged by this apparently insoluble contradiction. I made it my purpose to find out if at all possible what the truth was. I sought all available historical material concerning the Franciscan Order and also everything about the Danish royal family of this period, that is for the establishment of the House of Oldenburg on the Danish throne in 1448 until about 1550. I published the results of these studies in a book, *Broder Jakob den Danske, Kong Christian II's yngre broder*, Odense 1986. The title itself contains my thesis, namely, that after all there is historical material which shows the existence of a Jakob as a member of the Oldenburg family in Den



Painting in the Apostolic Nuntiate to Scandinavia.
Blessed Jacob of Dacia

mark, born c. 1483, as the third son in the marriage between King Hans (+1513) and his Queen, Chris-

tine (+1521). These last Catholic rulers of Denmark were so deeply inspired by the revival of the Franciscan Order in their time, the so-called Observant Movement, that they chose their own burial place in the Franciscan (Gråbrødre) Church in Odense. So it is not strange that a younger son should choose to enter this order himself.

It is impossible for me to sketch the complicated argument for this reconstruction of the life of Friar Jakob with its prolonged discussion of the many sources and their historical value and significance. I can only present a very short summary of the most important points.

The essential documentation for the descent of Jakob as a prince of Denmark is found in the renaissance history of the county Oldenburg by Herman Hamelmann. In his *Chronicle*, printed in 1599, he quotes an older source as saying "King Hans with his Queen, Christine, had three sons: Johan, Carsten and Jakob". It can be shown that Johan died as a child, Carsten is nothing but the low German form of Christian, the later King Christian II of Denmark, and Jakob appears as the third son of this marriage born c. 1483 or 1484.

Jakob as a Franciscan Friar and an Apologist During the Reformation

No sources have been found as yet to document when and where Jakob entered the Franciscan Order. His later difficulties, caused by the Lutheran reformation, are documented in the so-called *Chronicle of Expulsion of the Danish Friar Minors*. This work consists of 15 chapters, each describing how the Franciscans in the last four years of the reign of King Frederick I were expelled from ever so many convents in the Danish towns. It was written c. 1533-1544.

This *Chronicle* appears without an official author. But in two of the chapters singular friars testify that they are responsible for that text, namely Friar Jakob Johansen (Jacobus Johannis) for the chapter about Viborg and Friar Rasmus Olsen (Erasmus Olai) for the chapter on Ystad. Friar Jakob also calls himself "Socius" (secretary) for the Provincial Minister, Rasmus Clausen Ulf. Thanks to an analysis of the language and style in these two chapters, characteristic differences in them can be established. As the same characteristics also appear in other chapters of the chronicle, the authorship of these can be established

as well. So it is seen that Friar Jakob Johansen was the author of the first two thirds of the *Chronicle of Expulsion* and of the preface and above all the longest of the chapters, treating the events in the convent at Malmö.

This can further be explained through Jakob's identity with the most outstanding figure in the defense of this convent and of the Catholic faith against the Lutheran party, the vice guardian Friar Jakob.

The last events in the *Chronicle of Expulsion* took place in December 1532. In April 1539 a Franciscan Friar in the North German Duchy of Mecklenburg wrote three official letters and a dedication in a book. In these texts he called himself "Friar Jakob of Gottorp" (Jacobus Gottorp-pios) and used the title "Provincial minister of Dacia of the Minorite (Franciscan) Order, in the second year of his exile", that is after the victory of the reformation in Denmark. The identity of this person with Jakob the Dane in Mexico, former Provincial Minister of Dacia, is undeniable. Without membership in the Danish royal house his surname "Gottorpius" also seems senseless. Gottorp Castle was the residence of the dukes of one part of Schleswig Holstein, traditionally inherited by the younger sons of the Danish royal family. The former socius and author of the greater part of the *Chronicle of Expulsion* must have been that ablest person whom his fellow friars in exile could elect to the difficult task of Provincial Minister. But soon after this, he left Northern Europe and sought a new life as a missionary in the Americas.

The Provincial of Dacia Crosses the Atlantic

In the sixteenth century, the famous "*Casa de Contratacion*" in Seville organized all commerce and communication between Spain and its Colonial Empire. Among these accounts, one dating from the year 1542 registered a payment for an Atlantic crossing by a group of Franciscans who were entitled to work for the Catholic faith in the New World. They were all mentioned by name except for one called "*El Provincial de Dacia*". On January 11, 1542, these eleven friars in Madrid received permission to go to America. On March 8 they received 60 Ducats for the cost of their voyage in the "*Casa de Contratacion*." From this sum they paid Captain Francisco Sanchez of the ship "*La Trinidad*" for the Atlantic crossing of themselves and their luggage consisting of books and clothes. On arriving at Vera Cruz, they also paid

the muleteer Pero Xcimenes for the continued overland trip to Mexico City.

Later Mexican historians state that before he left his homeland, Fray Jacobo Daciano was the provincial leader for the province of Dacia, which included all the Franciscan convents in Denmark. Therefore there is no doubt that he is the same person as the "Provincial of Dacia" in 1542. That he was also the very first Dane in Mexico is almost quite as certain. Ever since the time of Columbus, Spain had prohibited all foreigners from emigrating to their new colonial empire. Only in the years 1526-1538 had the Emperor Charles V relieved this prohibition slightly because he wanted good missionaries from other parts of his Empire to come to America, and also clever German merchants like the Fuggers to help trade relations. From 1538 the prohibition was once again reinforced. Only with express royal permission were foreigners allowed to enter Spanish possessions. About Fray Jacobo Daciano, the chronicle of Diego Munoz states that the Emperor gave him a special letter of recommendation to the vice-king of New Spain to guarantee his rights as a missionary in Mexico. No other person from Denmark or Scandinavia had gotten such permission before this. Therefore there are good grounds to regard Jakob as the first Dane in America.

Conquistadors and Missionaries

In 1992 the fifth centenary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus in 1492 was celebrated. From a celebration of one of the greatest steps forward in human history it developed into a hot worldwide debate about its real significance and ethical value. Was this really a triumph for European culture or was it the shameful destruction of the ancient culture of the Indians? For many, the declared intentions of the conquerors that they wanted to bring Christianity to these pagan and barbarous peoples was only a hypocritical pretext to cover their insatiable greed for power, wealth and gold.

An example of this ambiguous evaluation may be found in Michoacan, later to be the field of work for Fray Jacobo. Here lived the Purepeha people, later called the Tarascans, in an independent kingdom which the Aztecs had never been able to incorporate into their empire. Consequently, they regarded the Spanish conquest of the Aztecs with relief and their king, Calcontzin, freely recognized the overlordship

of Cortez. In 1525 he welcomed the Franciscan Friar Martin de la Coruma as preacher and shortly after, he himself with his sons and part of his people converted and were baptized. But then a disaster arrived in the person of one of the most brutal of the conquistadors, Nuño de Guzman. On his expedition to the northwest, he passed through Michoacan, plundering recklessly, making Calcontzin his prisoner, and when the king refused to reveal where his supposed treasure of gold was, he was cruelly tortured to death. In vain Fray Martin tried to stop these atrocities which terrified the Tarascans and for years impeded further progress of Christianity. Only the humanity of Bishop Vasco de Quiroga was able to restore confidence to the Christians and Fray Jacobo in this respect became one of his collaborators.

Practically all of the first missionaries were members of the mendicant orders: Franciscans, Dominicans and Augustinians. From the beginning they had not only the role of preaching the faith but also that of protecting the human rights of the Indians. Most famous among them was, of course, the great Dominican Friar, Bartholome de la Casas, who fearlessly reproached the Spaniards for their cruelty and oppression of the Indians. He also obtained from the emperor, Charles V, the promulgation of many good laws for their protection. The Franciscans were so convinced that the Indians should be part of the new society in Mexico that they, together with the vice-king Mendoza, founded the College of Tlatelolco in 1536. Indians were able to receive a European education at this school to enable them to take over the leading positions in civil society as well as in the church. Among the leaders of the College was Fray Bernardino de Sahagun, whose loyal Indian students made possible his great work, the famous and even today invaluable *History of the Aztecs*.

Friar Jakob 1542-1552, Founder of Convents and Towns

Friar Jakob and the other Franciscans, who in the autumn of 1542 arrived in Mexico City, must have been well received by their fellows in the convent "San Francesco el Grande" or in Tlatelolco where they must have been instructed about the new land. Fray Jacobo might have already learned the Aztec language. In the College of Tlatelolco he also adopted the firm pro-indigenist attitude which characterized all his future work.

Very early he was sent to his first missionary area, Michoacán. Foundations of convents and new Indian towns (Pueblos) are attributed to him already in his first years. In Coeneo, north of the beautiful Lake Patzcuaro, a memorial in the square states that Jacobo Daciano on 8 Dec. 1542 founded this town. *Annals* of Tarecuat, a very old historical source about the town where Friar Jakob ended his life, notes that he arrived there already in 1542 and built the church. In 1548 he founded the town, the convent and church of Zacapu. With his own hand he later confirmed that this early arrival in Michoacan is no legend. In 1559 he approved the Tarascan catechism of his old friend Maturino Gilberti, stating that he knew the language because he had been preaching it for 16 years, and that means since 1543.

This work as a founder of convent churches as well as of towns shows that Jakob in the first years cooperated with the famous bishop, Vasco de Quiroga, he had taken upon himself the difficult task of regaining the confidence of the Tarascans after the cruelty of Nuño de Guzman, not only by preaching the gospel but also by creating new and better living conditions for the whole population. Don Vasco was inspired in this work by the great English humanist Thomas More's *Utopia*. After this model he strove to reform Tarascan society. He not only built churches, schools, and a quite modern system of hospitals, he also renewed agriculture, handicrafts and town plans by adopting European methods and products and combining them with the old Indian traditions. It was in fact an early and very remarkable development scheme, which succeeded so well that many of its structures still exist in modern Michoacán.

Friar Jakob and the Ecclesiastical Equality of the Indians 1552-1555

All missionaries agreed that the human rights of the Indians should be defended and strove to protect them against injustice and violence from the colonists. They wanted to receive them into the Catholic Church if, after instruction, they wanted to be baptized. The influence of European humanism, shaped by Erasmus of Rotterdam and Thomas More, meant that the friars, at least in theory, stressed the significance of freedom as a condition for the acceptance of the faith.

The spread of Christianity among the Indians of Central Mexico was really an astonishing success.

In a few years there were millions of new converts. But among the missionaries, discord soon arose about how to treat the multitude of new Christians. Should they all have the same rights and duties as their European masters, or only diminished rights? Were they really equal members of the Church? This question became more heated in connection with the administration of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church.

In all the chronicles and in the text of his painting in the Apostolic Nunciature in Vedbaek, Fray Jacobo Daciano is praised as being the first missionary who allowed the Indians in Michoacán to receive Holy Communion during the mass. In fact, he only seems to have followed the example of the Augustinian friars. But for the other sacraments he went further than anyone else did. Jakob really wanted full equality between the old and new Christians. Above all, should those Indians who were sufficiently fitted and educated, also be allowed to receive Holy Orders and become priests in the Catholic Church? After the fateful racial decision of the first Latin American council in Lima in 1552, that "no descendant from Indians, mestizos and mulattos may receive the sacrament of priesthood", Friar Jakob wrote two now lost manuscripts, one in Spanish the other in Latin. In them he defended his position, which was that this ecclesiastical position was theologically unjust and essentially heretical. The disastrous lack of priests caused a quite insufficient distribution of some of the seven sacraments such as Holy Communion, Confirmation and Extreme Unction. This could only be improved if priests could also be recruited from the Indian majority of the new Church. To reject this position was to depart from the practice of the Catholic Church from antiquity until now, and therefore openly heretical.

This thesis of Fray Jakob roused a violent debate and awoke opposition inside his own Franciscan Order. A chapter of the Mexican Franciscan Province was summoned in the convent of Tarecuato in 1553 to judge Jacobo's position. His former friend from the college of Tlatelolco, Juan de Gaona, was appointed to be his opponent and he wrote a book, *Antidote*, against the positions of Fray Jakob. Gaona's arguments were not at all theological but pragmatic: Fray Jakob exaggerated. The Indians had shown themselves unable to take responsibility through their alcoholism and unreliability. The accusation of heresy was denied by the glorious development of the Mexican Church itself and could only rouse strife.

The chapter judged Friar Jakob to have lost the dispute and obliged him to sign a retraction of his theses. He was subjected to some sort of ecclesiastical discipline, his books were confiscated and he seems to have been forbidden to continue to propagate his ideas. He himself submitted to the decision, he may have thought that if he was unable to convince his own confrere, it was for the moment no use to continue the fight.

The Last Years of Friar Jakob 1555-1556

For many other men a defeat such as this would have caused severe personal reactions such as upheaval or despair. From the side of his brothers, he might have been despised or excluded. But the opposite was the case. Not only the Franciscan confrere but also the leader of the Mexican Church, Archbishop Montufar, in the following years showed their unshaken confidence and esteem for Friar Jakob. In 1554 he was chosen as *custos* which means local leader for the western part of the Mexican Franciscan province including the convents in Michoacan and Jalisco. He remained in this position for the normal period of three years until 1557. The following years the Archbishop, who did not share his ideas about Indians, nevertheless entrusted to him the censorship of two catechisms in the Tarascan language, written by his old friend, Friar Maturino Gilberti, in the years 1558 and 1559. This shows Jakob's reputation as an expert

in this Indian language until now mastered by few Europeans and also confirms the Archbishop's trust in Jakob's personal integrity and pastoral ability.

In 1558 Jakob was guardian (head) of the Convent of Tzintzuntan, the old capitol of the kings of Michoacan, the oldest and most important of the Franciscan convents in the area. Here, on 18 Sept. 1558, he celebrated a Requiem Mass for Emperor Charles V, announcing that this was the day of his departure. Months later, messages from Spain confirmed the correctness of the date. This story is told in all of the primary sources about Jakob.

He was still in the central part of Michoacan as guardian of the convent in Patzcuaro when he, circa 1562, for the last time found himself in conflict with an ecclesiastical authority. It was the famous Don Vasco de Quiroga himself who wanted to limit the, in his opinion, exaggerated liberties of the mendicant orders in favor of a more normal ecclesiastical system controlled by bishops and parish priests. One day some of the priests invaded the Franciscan Church in Patzcuaro destroyed the baptismal font and expelled the guardian, Fray Jakob. With this blow, the old man shed tears according to his friend, Maturino Gilberti.

Hereafter Jakob retired to the distant convent of Tarecuato, where he spent his last years assisting his dear Indians with all the worldly and spiritual aid he

was still able to provide, here he died according to the *Annales de Tarecuato* in 1566. From then on and until our days he has been honored and loved by the Indian population of this town as both its earthly founder and heavenly protector.



The Day of the Dead in Michoacán Photo: Walter Jiménez

2000

FRAIR JAKOB AND MALMÖ

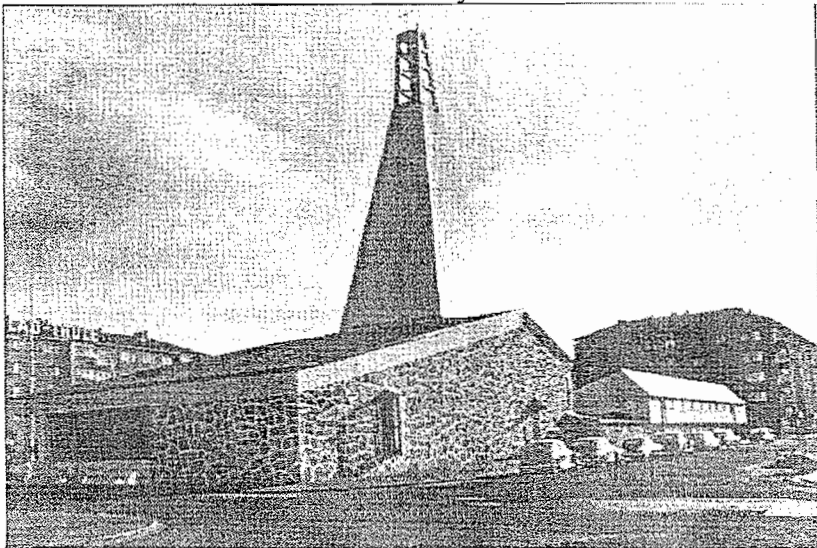
Rev. John E. Halborg, Editor

In the early sixteenth century Malmö belonged to Denmark and was in the Archdiocese of Lund. It was a harbor town with a number of churches and convents, meaning houses of men or women. Among them were a Dominican and a Franciscan house. The latter was favored with many gifts and had become moderately wealthy.

The reformation of the sixteenth century came to Malmö with some preachers from Denmark. One of these, Claus Mortensen Tønderbinder, was born in Malmö (Malmö in Danish) and had gone to the University in Copenhagen where he was converted to the Lutheran teachings. The Bishop of Copenhagen ordered him to leave that town and, now a priest, he began to preach in a disused church in Malmö. In contrast to the strong Catholic bishop in Copenhagen, the seat in Lund was held by a rather ineffective *electus*. At some point Claus married which caused one of the dramatic confrontations between him and Jakob. Claus followed Jakob to the convent door one day and asked him what it meant to do penance. Jakob was silent and at last Claus answered his question by citing Paul: As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." Jakob said, "What does this mean? This heretic has spent three days drinking with a whore, so now he ought to fast in penance for three days on bread and water." One day Claus came to the convent and into the chapel where he "yelped worse than any dog". One of the brothers then preached and the two of them spent the whole afternoon preaching at each other. At last the Franciscans were only allowed to hold services in the clothing chamber, the mayor

reminding them that they would "one day stand at the judgment seat of God because of their ungodly masses."

Then began a series of confrontations in which the city officials tried to make the brothers leave the con-



The Church of Our Savior in Malmö

vent. In the Easter weeks of 1530, the brothers experienced worse trouble. When they were singing Matins, seven large stones were thrown through a window and most of the brothers were driven from the chapel. A Lutheran school of theology was set up in the con-

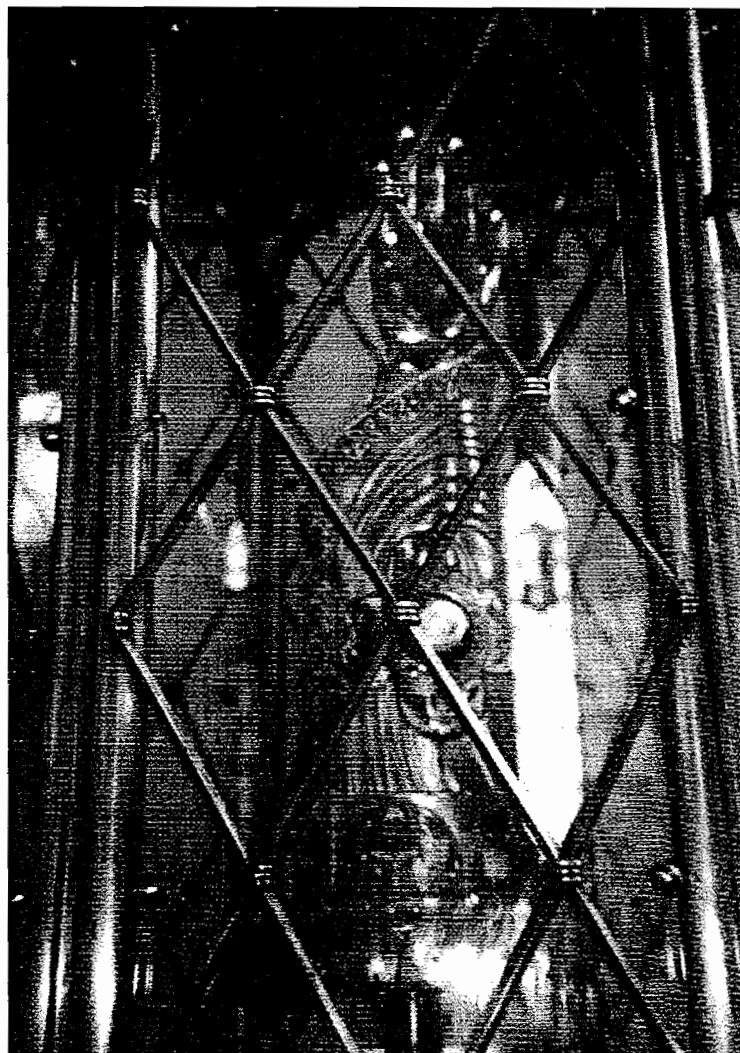
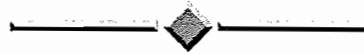
vent. One day the brothers were confronted with the demand that they should accept the new teaching. In May of that year, the brothers were confronted with the demand that they leave the convent or accept the new faith. That night the brothers were locked into the dining room while their adversaries held a night long party, drinking up the convent's supply of beer. Finally the brothers were driven from the convent with only their bed clothing and a mug from the cellar. The triumph of the reformation in Skane proceeded slowly and was not formally complete until 1537 when a Lutheran superintendent took the bishop's seat in Lund.

The history of Catholics in Scandinavia during the next years is sad. A number of young men enrolled in the Jesuit College at Braunsberg, some of them from strongly Lutheran families. Those who became openly Catholic were not allowed to return to Sweden. Various order priests made secret visits to the city. In 1624, Arnold Weissweiller was hanged and his servant girl beheaded, partly on charges of having entertained Catholics and holding that faith. In the Danish troops, there were Polish and German

soldiers who were Catholic and these were allowed to have their own priests. The same thing was true of the Swedish troops (Skåne became Swedish in 1679) that sometimes included Catholic recruits from other parts of Europe.

In 1781, Gustav III published a limited edict of toleration for Sweden. Aliens who were living in Sweden were allowed to practice the Catholic religion. In the area of Malmö there were 277 Catholics. It was only after new edicts were issued in 1860 and 1873 that any measure of religious freedom for Swedish Catholics was realized. In 1870 a Catholic parish was organized in Malmö and in 1872 the Heart of Jesus Church was dedicated on Gustav Adolf Square. This

church, now the Church of our Savior, is an active presence in the heart of the city. Its very competent pastor is Fr. Bernhard Koch. In 1998 it claimed 6,096 members, masses are also said at the home of the Elizabeth Sisters and in nearby Trelleborg. In 1986 a new parish was formed, Maria I Rosengård, which serves a largely immigrant population. A number of mission stages in the area have now become independent churches. While there are no communities of Franciscans in the neighborhood of Malmö, there are Dominican sisters and brothers in Lund. There are Benedictine sisters as well as Carmelite brothers and sisters. For a Franciscan community, one must travel to Jönköping.



RELIQUARY IN THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. OLAV, OSLO

2004

AN APPRECIATION OF JOHANNES JORGENSEN

Viggo Bech Ansgar Rambusch

Denmark's greatest Catholic writer was born in Svendborg on November 6, 1866. His Methodist mother was a strong influence on him as his father, a sailor, was away for long periods of time. With the aid of benefactors, he went away to Copenhagen for a high school education at the age of 16. He lived in rather poor accommodations. He was attracted by liberal, atheistic and socialist groups, marching in the Workers' Parade of 1886. As a result his supporters in Svendborg withdrew their support and he came to know real poverty. Eventually his enthusiasm for radical causes diminished and he became a journalist. His interest in language grew and in 1887 he published his first book of poetry. In 1891 he married Amalia Ewald with whom he had seven children, he became more and more preoccupied with writing poetry for which there was no financial remuneration. His poverty deepened and finally he had to leave Copenhagen and return to his family in Svendborg.

While in Copenhagen he met Mogens Ballin (1871-1914), a painter, silversmith and handicrafter who was born an Orthodox Jew and had been baptized as a Catholic in 1893. He contributed to Jorgensen's periodical, *Taarnet*, and became a close friend. Ballin helped to fund his trip to Berlin and Beaton in Germany and to Italy. During his traveling, he had a great longing for his family, but nevertheless he joined Ballin in Assisi. Here he had his first serious exposure to Catholicism. Returning to Denmark in 1894, Ballin's influence resulted in Jorgensen's reception into the Catholic Church in 1896. His conversion took place in an atmosphere hostile to Catholicism.

He became editor of *Katholiken* (The Catholic). In 1897 his wife became a Catholic. In 1899 they joined the Third Order of Saint Francis. Later they left for Assisi where they lived most comfortably. Jorgensen's friends attacked him both for deserting Denmark and because he became a Catholic. They considered him a turncoat.

The next 18 years, which were a kind of self-exile, were filled with turmoil for Jorgensen; financial difficulties, tensions with his wife, attacks on him for becoming a Catholic. But it was his inner struggles that

consumed him as he worked out his position. Should he pay more attention to what others had said, or to what he himself believed? Even during these times of turmoil he kept writing, sometimes as a newspaper correspondent, traveling through Europe and lecturing in the Louvain and in Paris.

Constantly writing, he gradually gained more respect as a poet and gifted author. A critical moment came in 1915 when Msgr. Baudrillart asked him to give a series of lectures in Paris. He met a young lady, Andrée Carof. In 1915 he obtained a civil divorce from his wife and returned, first to Siena and then to Assisi. Andrée also moved to Assisi. A devout Catholic, she helped him resolve his inner conflicts and turmoil. Later in life these struggles no longer troubled him. Her death in 1922 devastated Jorgensen. In 1937, he met an Austrian woman, Helena Mein, and married her. He knew happiness again. The principal work from this latter part of his life was *St. Birgitta of Sweden*, written mostly in Vadstena where he had fled to avoid the Fascists in Italy. After World War II he returned to Svendborg and on 29 May 1956 died there.

The Catholic Books

Our Lady of Denmark was one of his early novels. It is partly an autobiographical work. He contrasts the atheistic/socialistic condition of Denmark and medieval Europe. He created a commune of men called "Our Lady of Denmark" to resolve the societal conflict. They live a modified monastic way of life based on Cardinal Manning's principles and the social philosophy of Leo XIII. Literary critics found this novel artistically weak, based on his own troubles of this time. He was later to publish a masterpiece, his autobiography, *Mit Livs Legende*, published in seven volumes in 1916-1928.

Jorgensen's greatest works are two biographies of saints. St. Francis of Assisi appeared in Danish in 1907 and the next year in English. St. Catherine of Siena was published in 1915 in Danish and translated into English in 1938. These volumes brought to fruition his talents, experiences, travel insights and life tuned knowledge.

Jorgensen felt a strong affinity with St. Francis. He also loved the area around Assisi. Both men made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Jorgensen's love of nature and his lyrical and poetical descriptions of nature help to transfer his deep love of St. Francis to the reader. Often, in his writing, he is teaching the Catholic philosophy, justifying the position he and St. Francis took. To the founders of St. Ansgar's League in 1910 and to many Danes who converted around the beginning of the twentieth century, Jorgensen was their guide and inspiration. His *Life of St. Francis* was their favorite book. *St. Catherine of Siena* that was published in 1915 is another deep, penetrating retelling of the life of one of the great medieval saints of the Church. She was recently raised by Pope John Paul II to be a Doctor of the Church. Here, also, Jorgensen's constant concern with life's struggles is evident. St. Catherine had a vision of the choice between corn in the field that changes to dust when touched, *vis à vis* wonderful fruit high up in a tree that one must pass through a thick thorny hedge to get to and then reach up almost out of reach. Jorgensen's final book, *St. Birgitta of Sweden*, was published in Denmark in 1943. It appeared in English in 1955 at which time Fr. Richard M. Brackett S.J. reviewed it for the *St. Ansgar Bulletin*. He wrote, "The author's

purpose is to show that the North played a vital role in the social Christianity of the Middle Ages, when Europe was united: from Iceland to Sicily, from the Atlantic to the Danube, there was a common faith, a common Church, a common art... that our times have tried in vain to replace by a miserable substitute."

Jorgensen wrote prolifically in his native Danish on such subjects as travel, art, journalism and he also wrote poetry. Bishop Suhr wrote in the *Bulletin* for 1956 "His poems... possess all the lighthearted charm of the Danish islands, the ripe wisdom of experience and the simple deep tones of church bells."

St. Ansgar recognized Jorgensen's 80th birthday in the 1947 *Bulletin*. His last years were spent in his hometown of Svendborg where he continued to write poetry until he died, almost 90 years old, in 1956.

*Consulted in this study were Glyn Jones,
Johannes Jorgensen. London. 1969.
Also the St. Ansgar Bulletins for 1947, 1955, 1957.*



Preparations are under way to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Jorgensen's death. His home in Svendborg is now a museum. There is also a literary society founded in his memory. Those who wish to join should write to: Johannes Jorgensen Selskabet Kasserer Peder Bo, 5700 Svendborg, Denmark. E-mail may be sent to mail@bo-consult.dk

HOLY MEN AND WOMEN OF SCANDINAVIA

INTRODUCTION

This series of lives is designed to introduce to English-speaking Catholics the more widely recognized holy men and women of all the Scandinavian lands (which are treated in alphabetical order). It may open to many of us a completely new field of knowledge and inspiration.

Naturally, with so many lives to be covered in so few pages, only an outline can in most cases be given. Among the earlier subjects there may sometimes remain to our times only legend, with which to work. This, like a half-obliterated inscription, testifies to an age-long tradition of sanctity and its veneration, but sometimes preserves only a blurred or distorted picture of its saintly hero or heroine.

The presently-accepted Saints (and Blessed) of the Scandinavian countries are so named in the captions preceding each individual life. Those lives, however, whose headings lack the title "Saint (St.);" or "Blessed" treat of holy people who have as yet

received no canonization or its equivalent, but on whose behalf we can hope that one or more of them may some day perhaps receive such honors. Similarly, in the case of those Scandinavian Blessed whose Causes were interrupted by the Protestant Reformation, it may be hoped that these Causes may some day be reopened.

Without anticipating the judgment of Holy Mother Church, the possible future accomplishment of these hopes forms a legitimate object of prayer which should be dear to all the friends of the recent rebirth of the Catholic Faith in the Scandinavian lands, and should especially appeal to the members of *St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League*. On the other hand, may the powerful prayers of those whose names are already inscribed in the Calendar of Saints aid that rebirth and help the infant Church in these northern countries where their labors founded and nurtured it in the past!

John T. Dwight, Editor

Chapter One: The Beginnings, Missionaries From Hamburg



St. Ansgar

(Feb. 3)*

(According to *St. Anschaire, Missionnaire en Scandinave au IXe Siecle* by E. de Moreau, S.J.)

St. Ansgar the Apostle of the North, was born of Germanic parents in 801 in Flanders. When he was five the child lost his mother and was handed over by his father as an Oblate to the Benedictine Abbey of Corbie, near Amiens. Before his thirteenth birthday he received the monastic tonsure and began to follow the life of the Community. And when he was about fifteen Ansgar became one of the teachers of the Abbey School for lay children. Like the other monks, also, he must have busied himself with copying manuscripts, for the Corbie library had an extensive and growing collection.

In 822 Corbie Abbey founded a daughter house, Corvey, on the Weser River, to form a center of reli-

gious instruction for the newly converted Saxons of North Germany. Ansgar, now about 21, was one of the first group of monks sent to make this foundation, and was given the duty of school-teacher plus that of instructing the Saxon converts in the Faith—a providential preparation for missions further to the North.

For at this very time (826) an exiled Danish King, Harald II, had come to the Imperial court for aid, and there received Baptism. The Emperor then sought a devout priest to return with Harald to Denmark. But no one was willing to go and live among the much-feared Vikings. Ansgar, however, being told by a vision to "go and announce to the pagans the Word of God," declared his willingness to go with King Harald. Small success, however, attended this effort: Harald was again ousted from Denmark in 827, and Ansgar and his companion Audbertus had to leave also. They, moreover, had been preceded among the Danes by St. WILLIBROD, the great Apostle of the Frisians, and by the celebrated Archbishop Ebo of

* On Feb. 3 the Roman Martyrology commemorates the passing away "At Bremen, of S. Anschar, Bishop of Hamburg and also later of Bremen, who converted the Suevi and Danes to the faith of Christ, and was appointed Apostolic Legate of all the North by Pope Gregory IV."

Rheims. The former, in the preceding century, had had little success. The latter, however, appointed Papal Legate to the North and backed by the Emperor, had just made a short trip to Denmark in 823 and had baptized some Danes.

A new opportunity soon arose in 829, messengers came to the Emperor from Christian merchants in Sweden asking for missionaries. Ansgar was sent for and, together with the monk Witmar, was entrusted with the task of exploring the possibilities there. They journeyed to Schleswig and there sailed for Birka, a now vanished port west of present day Stockholm. En route, however, Viking pirates attacked the fleet and seized everything. Finally managing to get to shore, Ansgar persuaded his companions to undertake a month's arduous journey to Birka on foot. On the arrival of these, the first priests ever to visit Sweden, King Björn, after consulting his Council (for the Swedish Kings were not absolute monarchs), authorized the missionaries to preach and to convert all who wished it. Among these last was the Prefect of Birka and Councillor to the King, named Herigar, who built a church on his own estate and showed himself a champion of his new Faith even after Ansgar's departure. For, after a year and a half at Birka the missionaries returned to Germany to report to the Emperor.

Lewis the Pious received their news with joy, and in order to provide a center for evangelizing the North obtained the erection of a new archdiocese at Hamburg, and had Ansgar (at the age of 30)



Pilgrimage at Birka, St. Ansgar Memorial Cross

consecrated its first Archbishop. Ansgar then journeyed to Rome and received from Pope Gregory IV the Pallium and also nomination as Papal Legate to the Swedes, Danes and Slavs but without derogating from the similar mandate to Archbishop Ebo of Rheims. Ansgar and Ebo divided the territory. Ebo taking

Sweden and Ansgar Denmark. Ebo, therefore, had a relative, Gauzbert or Gautbert, consecrated bishop and sent him as his delegate to Sweden.

Little is known of Ansgar's activities as Archbishop of Hamburg except that he had first to consolidate his position there by converting the still-pagan inhabitants of northwest Germany. We know, too, that by 845 the new archdiocese possessed four parish churches, a cathedral, and a school, library and monastery. In order to support Ansgar's new responsibilities, Lewis the Pious had given the rich Abbey of Thourout in Flanders in fief to Ansgar. On the division of the Empire however, in the next reign Ansgar lost Thourout and with it most of his resources, so that his fellow-monks had to leave him and return to Corbie. But as to Ansgar, his biographer St. Rimbart tells us that "although reduced to poverty, he would never consent to relinquish the task which had been assigned him."

Greater trouble was to follow; in 845 six hundred hostile Viking ships from Denmark suddenly appeared in the Elbe River before Hamburg. The Archbishop, clergy and people fled with the Relics of SS. Sixtus and Sinnicius but with little else. Most of those who remained behind were killed by the invaders, who pillaged and burned down the city, including the cathedral, monastery and library. For some time Ansgar had to wander from place to place seeking refuge. He refused to complain, however, and would only repeat Job's words, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. As it hath pleased the Lord so is it done. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

Meanwhile, in Sweden, Gauzbert had been allowed to build another church (in Birka) and preach freely, and had gained not a few converts. In this same year 845, however, the inhabitants suddenly rose against Gauzbert, for reasons unknown, and expelled the missionaries from Sweden. For seven years no priest went to Sweden, and the Faith was kept alive there only by the efforts of the heroic layman Herigar and the devout housewife Frideborg (who was frequently asked to sacrifice to the gods, but "replied that it was useless to have recourse to idols and abominable to betray one's baptismal promises made to Christ").

After the disaster of 845 Lewis the German, wishing to provide Ansgar with a new residence and resources, had the vacant see of Bremen added to the Archdiocese of Hamburg. (In 864 Pope Nicholas I

was to ratify this in a Bull which again would call Ansgar "Legate to the Swedes, Danes and Slavs.")

St. Rimbart describes Ansgar's life as bishop: his gentleness with the lowly, the terror he inspired in obdurate sinners, his intrepid war against notorious crime. Among Ansgar's miracles Rimbart mentions that his administration of the Last Anointing had the reputation of restoring health. He ransomed captives from the Vikings, his alms-giving was generous, he founded a hospital for the poor, and he would see that the poor were fed before he himself would eat. "To the world an apostle, but within himself a monk," he wore sackcloth day and night, drank little wine, and fasted as much as his delicate health permitted. Besides the monastic Divine Office in choir, he attended three or four masses daily and then sang the High Mass himself. Finally, Rimbart tells us, "almost everything that happened to him he knew beforehand, either through a dream-vision, or by an interior revelation, or in an ecstasy . . . and what he saw in his sleep was so true that never, to my recollection, was the dream contradicted by the reality."

Meanwhile the northern missions had not prospered. Seven years after Gauzbert had been chased away, the anchorite Ardgarius went to Sweden at Ansgar's request and, with Herigar's help, was accepted. Ardgarius, however, could not stand the change from his former contemplative life and soon returned to his own country. In Denmark the fact that no church is recorded anywhere as having thus far been opened shows that little success had been obtained there. After the union of Bremen with Hamburg, however, Ansgar was able to resume his work in the North.

In 845 King Horic the Elder's Danish armies fell victims to an epidemic (interpreted by Horic as a chastisement from the Christian God for sacking a church). After this, peace prevailed for a time, and Ansgar was Lewis the German's usual emissary to the Danes. Here he became a favorite of the King and his court and was even taken into his Council. All his efforts to convert Horic failed, but he was allowed to build a church in the city of Schleswig and there station a priest. Christian merchants there were now joined by many pagans asking for Baptism. (Some of these, who were ill and could obtain no relief from their old gods, were cured on receiving this Sacrament.)

In 854, however, Horic perished in a dynastic feud. The Governor of Schleswig, a fanatical pagan, closed the church, prohibited Christianity and expelled the priest. After fervent prayer, Ansgar started for the Danish court, but was met en route by a courier from the new Danish King, Horic the Younger, announcing that the latter had expelled the Governor from Schleswig and now asked for the priest's return. Indeed, the new King consented not only to this revival of the parish at Schleswig but also to the founding of a new one at Ribe, further north, in Jutland. This Horic also remained favorable to the Christians, but never became one himself.

Meanwhile, after the death of Ebo of Rheims, Ansgar had revived the Swedish mission. He obtained a letter of recommendation from Lewis the German and a passport from Horic the Elder. On their arrival at Birka, however, the missionaries found an anti-Christian reaction in full swing. Ansgar, nevertheless, after prayer and reflection, invited King Olof to dinner at his inn. The King accepted, dined, heard the messages from Lewis the German and King Horic, received their presents, and was favorably impressed. He had, however, to obtain the consent of the Swedish gods and of the Assembly of the People. Ansgar set himself to prayer and penance, and soon it was announced that the casting of lots had shown the consent of the gods to the introduction of Christianity, while, at the Assembly, an old man gained a favorable vote by recalling the favors that had been gained from time to time by recourse to the Christian God. A priest was installed at Birka, and a second church was started in that city. His mission accomplished, Ansgar then returned to Hamburg; but from time to time he supplied a new priest to Birka, each of whom he charged to ask nothing from anyone but to live by the labor of his own hands like St. Paul.

On February 3, 865, after four months' illness, St. Ansgar died of dysentery, surrounded by his priests; and to the last "his greatest care and solicitude bore upon his legation to the pagans." And yet the net visible results of his labors in the North were few: two churches and priests in Danish territory, two or three churches and one priest in Sweden. But, as Ansgar wrote just before his death, "Already, by God's grace, the Church of Christ has been founded both among the Danes and among the Swedes, and priests freely perform their duties there" in the midst of

those terrible Vikings because of whom an extra petition was added to the Litany: "From the fury of the Northmen, O Lord, deliver us."

Unfortunately, the age was not a missionary one. The rest of the German hierarchy was not interested, and missionaries were few. The declining Holy Roman Empire could no longer lend impetus or assistance. And, unlike the Horics, Gorm the Elder, King of Denmark for many years, was to be for long a ferocious opponent of Christianity. Nevertheless, under the latter's son, Harold Bluetooth (who actually became a Christian), three Bishoprics were established in Denmark (at Schleswig, Ribe and Aårhus) less than a century after Ansgar's death. The development of the Church in Sweden, however, despite visits by Ansgar's successors, had to await the coming of missionaries from the British Isles.

Of much greater importance is the example of St. Ansgar's attractive personality, diffident but courageous, and that of his holy life, as well as his powerful intercession before his Master's Throne. He was buried in St. Peter's, Bremen, before the Altar of Our Lady, but at present his most important relic (part of the head) is preserved at the altar dedicated to him in his old Abbey of Corvey, east of Paderborn in Western Germany. An annual pilgrimage is made to the Island of Björkö (Birka), the scene of his Swedish labors.

St. Rimbart

(According to Morreau's St. Anschaire and Alzog)

One day St. Ansgar, while Archbishop of Hamburg, paid a visit to the school of apostles which he had

founded at the Abbey of Thourout in Flanders. There he noticed a child, more serious and pious than his little co-disciples. Ansgar sent for Rimbart's parents and with their consent conferred on him the tonsure and clerical habit.

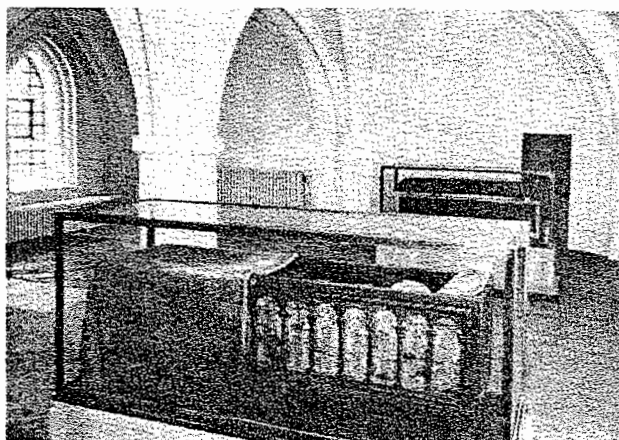
Rimbart, almost certainly a native of Flanders, became "the most intimate collaborator" of Ansgar, "his most faithful disciple," and he later told a friend that "for all that I do or omit, for all the things that will come to pass, I am going to search for a precedent in the visions of my master and predecessor, St. Ansgar." According to some, he accompanied Ansgar on his second mission to Sweden. After Ansgar's death Rimbart (in collaboration with another of Ansgar's disciples) wrote his Life, a composition distinguished by sincerity and essential accuracy.

Rimbart succeeded St. Ansgar as Archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen. In this position he took to heart his responsibilities as Legate to the North, saw to it that the Christian communities of Denmark and Sweden always had priests, and more than once visited them at the peril of his life.

St. Uno

(According to Alzog)

Uno was Archbishop of Hamburg from 918 on. He made a missionary tour to Denmark in 934 and with the assistance of the German Emperor Henry I managed to obtain from that fanatical pagan, King Gorm, some measure of toleration for himself and the preaching of the Gospel. A later missionary journey took him to Sweden, where he died, at Birka, around the year 940.



TOMB OF ST. CANUTE THE KING, ODENSE

Chapter Two: Early National Saints

Denmark

Rev. Paul X. D'Auchamp

St. Canute (Knud) the King

Martyr in 1086. Commemoration Jan. 19



St. Knud's character is not too easy to get at. He was a very just man, with high ideas of his duties, and these duties he had to carry out in a country which was as yet rather pagan. Therefore his way of life does not correspond with that of the standard type of saint, such as we find it described in so many "Lives of the Saints." Nevertheless, A. D. Joergensen, our greatest modern historian, writes of St. Knud: "No other Dane has a greater right than he to be called the Patron of Denmark, he who forced his countrymen to be either warm or cold, not merely

Christians in name."

He took over (in 1076) a country which was divided and confused. His father, Svend Estridsön, was himself the son of a Viking. In spite of his practical Christianity and in spite of doing much for the Church, Svend had never managed to live a fully Christian life: thus none of his fifteen sons were legitimate and all these half-brothers gave Knud quite a bit of trouble in later life.

Knud had inherited his forefathers' love of war and their hot temperament. He is reported, however, to have fought with himself harder than with anyone else, and he put his temper at the service of justice as he saw it. His enemies thought him too harsh; but nobody seemed to question his motives or his personal life. His aims were the upholding of the two powers in which he believed: that of the kingdom and that of the Church. The greater part of his troubles came from his fight for the right of the Church to levy tithe (a Church Tax).

Together with his father, Knud had tried to liberate England from William the Conqueror in vain, as you may guess. This claim on the islands was felt to be legitimate, as it was based on former Danish rule over England under Canute the Great and his imme-

diat successors. Actually many Englishmen would now have considered a representative from the former conquering nation a liberator from the new, Norman Conquest.

For this purpose Knud gathered a large fleet in Northern Jutland. He himself, however, was detained south in Holstein by frontier troubles, and the inactive leaders of the fleet became impatient the more so as Olav, one of Knud's half-brothers, stirred them up against the King. When Knud finally reached the fleet, only the Norwegian ships were there; the Danish chieftains had retired in a huff.

The war against England was therefore given up, but since he was already in North Jutland anyway. Knud made use of this opportunity to admonish its inhabitants on the payment of tithes. Now the population of this territory of Vendsyssel had never considered themselves to be under the direct royal rule. The royal law by which the rest of Jutland was ruled had never been intended to touch them (as you may know, for example, by the Danish saying "Norden for Lov og Ret"). Therefore the inhabitants of Vendsyssel resented the royal interference very much. They put the King to flight and actually chased after him until they killed him in the church of St. Alban in Odense on the tenth of July, 1086. A. D. Joergensen makes a point, however, of the circumstance that Knud fell because of the personal hatred of some influential chieftains, who had their own way since the nation as such was confused by royal contenders for the throne. His death was not the result of a popular revolt which, by the way, would probably have put such a flaw in his reputation as to stop his canonization.

Quite a few interesting details reveal Knud's character. For example, he was exacting with himself; thus he regularly had his servants whip him. With his subjects he was just as demanding, but he invariably, as far as we know, pardoned them when there were signs of repentance. Thus the governor of Bornholm, Erik the Bloody, a clever administrator but a cruel pirate, was pardoned several times when he promised to stop the less admirable part of his activities and go to confession. This went on for some time and in a way Erik the Bloody was an honest man, since he

never pretended that he had kept his promise to go to confession. Finally Knud went down to Bornholm, found incriminating traces of a wreck at Christiansö, caught the governor and hung him.

In Skaane (nowadays in Sweden) Knud had no absolute right to impose his pet tax, the tithe, since the ecclesiastical set-up there was somewhat different from that which prevailed in the other parts of the country. When the peasants flatly refused to pay, he politely answered that he admired their courage and determination. However, since they did not choose to please him, he would stand on HIS rights and refuse them the right to let their hogs gather acorns in his forests. They soon gave in. This story is told by his contemporaries to illustrate his unusual sense of justice. Nowadays we might call it a good bargain, but in those days it would seem that kings did not always take the trouble to bargain with peasants.

Knud was the first great builder of stone churches in this country, although we are rarely able to tell who actually built this or that individual church. He certainly gave the Church itself a high place in the state, placing the bishops over the royal officials. He thus secured the throne against the growing power of the nobility, but he also acted thus from a sense of justice for although his was the temporal rule, theirs (the bishops') was the spiritual one.

His personal life was as Christian as can be: His married life was a model one, a rare thing then, it would seem. His fasting and penances were severe but not ostentatious, his death saintly: You will remember how he was driven into St. Alban's church in Odense, where he found death; he received the Sacraments, fought nobly, retiring every now and then to pray.

The miracles started when his queen from Flanders wanted to take his body to her native land. When she came by night to the church to fetch the body, the place was flooded with light. She took this as a sign that she ought not remove him, and so went alone with her son, Blessed Charles, to Flanders.

Very soon the people at large were venerating him as a saint. His tomb was opened and his bones four times submitted to fire without suffering any damage. He gained great renown, not only in Denmark but also, and even more so, in Northern Europe (his fame proceeding mainly, it would seem, from the pious Flemings), and many churches were built in his

honor all over the north of Europe. It would seem that he has gained the greatest international fame of all our Danish Saints. His relics were badly treated during the Reformation, but are now honorably preserved in the Cathedral at Odense, which succeeded the church where he became a martyr.

He was canonized a few years after his death. He is commemorated in the Roman Martyrology and in the Roman Missal and Breviary on January 19, and his picture is exposed for public veneration at Santa Maria in Transpontina in Rome. The description of his life by an English monk in 1122 is the oldest historical manuscript from Scandinavia.

St. Canute (Knud) Lavard, the Duke

(of Sleswig)

Died Jan. 7, 1131

Knud, with the surname Lavard ("Mylord"), was the son of Erik Ejegod and his Queen Bodil. His parents died while on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and Knud was reared by one of Denmark's most famous families, Skjalm Hvide's, and inherited the best traditions of the country. He was named after his uncle, St. Knud the King.

When he was a young man, Queen Margrethe Fredkulla advanced his studies. Her son Magnus was to become king, but she had more confidence in Knud and did her utmost to reconcile Magnus with his far more brilliant and noble relative. After her death Knud pursued his studies further at the German King Lothar's court.

After Margrethe's death her husband Niels continued to rule with Magnus as his advisor. Magnus, however, had to appoint Knud as Duke in Slesvig because of difficulties at the frontier. Knud accepted this appointment, which several other noblemen had declined because of the dangers involved. He acted with great courage and justice. When a band of bandits were caught and sentenced to death, one of them asked to be pardoned and implied that he was related to Knud. The Duke honored him by hanging him on a higher mast than the others. By cunning he managed to subdue the Wends without shedding much blood, and he effectively set about having them converted. During his rule in Slesvig he continually had to deal with bigger and better-armed forces than his own; but he always had his way with these enemies, treating them with a mixture of cunning

and chivalric daring. Thus he managed to become the intimate friend of the much dreaded Wend, Duke Henry, and it would seem that Henry appointed him the guardian of his two sons before dying.

By his marriage with Ingeborg, of Russian origin and related to Margrethe, his protectrice, Knud had one son, the famous Valdemar the Great.

Knud was extravagantly generous toward the poor and toward his friends. Thus he excited quite a stir at Lothar's court by sending him a horse shod with pure gold. He became exceedingly popular. Already in his lifetime he was considered a model knight: courageous, chaste, generous and almost invariably fortunate. This reputation at last became too much for Magnus. He invited Knud to a Christmas party. Well informed friends warned him against accepting the invitation, but Knud could not believe that his relative had bad intentions. Magnus, however, killed him personally on January 7, 1131, at Haraldsted near Ringsted.

His death occasioned political troubles. The Hvide family claimed that Knud should be buried in the Cathedral at Roskilde, together with the majority of Denmark's kings. This could not be permitted, so Knud was buried in St. Bendt's (Benet's or Benedict's) Abbey Church at Ringsted where his shrine still exists. Naturally the country was not appeased so easily, and fighting went on among the highest families in the land until 1157, when Knud's son Valdemar became king and Denmark's greatest period began.

Knud's reputation as a Saint was endorsed from on high. A healing source sprang up at the place where he had been killed, and innumerable miraculous cures took place. His name never faded from the consciousness of his fellow countrymen. Still in our day he stands as an ideal for our youth. Naturally the Catholic Scouts have chosen him for their patron, but many non-catholic groups of young people, also, have honored him by taking his name for their associations. He was officially canonized in 1169, after a careful scrutiny into his life and the reported cures.

Blessed Charles (Karl) the Good *Count of Flanders, Martyr in 1127*

St. Knud the King left at his death a two-year-old son. Charles, who was brought by his mother back to her native land, Flanders. He, too, stands out as a

model knight, a man in whom the Viking blood has been christianized through and through.

He was brought up by the Counts of Flanders. When about twenty years old he followed his elders' example and took part in a crusade. He returned covered with "scars and honor." During the rule of the world-famous Count Baldwin, Charles was his vice-regent whenever Baldwin was away in the Holy Land. And when Baldwin finally was killed, Charles occupied his throne as Count of Flanders. This made Baldwin's widow (whose three sons had all died) his enemy.

As a ruler he was beloved not only on account of his strict justice but also for his personal kindness and helpfulness. He invariably started the day "with the piety of a good monk," praying at Mass and distributing alms to the poor. He regularly fed thirteen poor people at his table, and every evening Holy Scripture was read to him. He took good care of the Church's affairs too. But plaintiffs had to have everything ready for a close examination when they approached him. An abbot once came to him to complain about some land which a neighboring knight claimed as his property. "And who sang High Mass for you today?" was Charles' answer. The Abbot had not been able to find a good voice among his hundred and some monks. "Then you ought to go home and sing Mass, and send me a servant with whom I can discuss the smaller problems."

His fame was great. Thus he once declined the honor of becoming King of Jerusalem and at another time the Imperial Throne in Germany. On both occasions he maintained that his first duty was his first calling.

Besides the Queen Dowager, a large family, the Erembaldins, were Charles' enemies. Their ancestry was not what it should have been, as they were descendants of a serf and a countess, the count having been done away with. Besides, they practiced simple robbery as a source of extra income. For both reasons they were subject to punishment according to some of Charles' very just laws. In 1126 a general famine ravaged the north of Europe, and in his measures to protect the suffering through personal generosity and legal decrees his enemies, who were rich people, found further reasons for dissatisfaction. By a coincidence Charles had to go to southern France by order of the French King at the worst possible mo-

ment (in July, before the new harvest was ready), and during his absence his enemies gathered their forces. Shortly after his return to Bruges he was cut down by one of the traitors, while he was praying in church a fate which he had foreseen but was ready to meet in the name of justice and truth. Thus he died under circumstances very much like his father's death. The very church in which he was cut down was used as a stronghold by his murderers. It was 53 days after his death before they were overcome and Charles' body found "fresh and fragrant."

During his lifetime and especially during the hardships of 1126. Charles' self-sacrificing way of life won him the reputation of being a saint. His readiness to die for the sake of justice gave him in addition the name of martyr. When his body was found, a well-known crippled boy gained the use of his limbs on approaching the place where Charles was lying. No wonder that Charles continued to be remembered as one of Europe's most popular and saintly regents. It was not, however, until the pontificate of Leo XIII that he was recognized as "Blessed," the right of honoring him publicly being extended to Belgium and Denmark.

St. Thøger of Vestervig, Priest

Died circa 1050. Commemoration June 24

St. Thøger was born in Thuringia of a noble family. He left this family, however, for reasons of piety and went to England and Norway. Here he was ordained, and King St. Olav Haraldsson made him his personal chaplain because of his great piety. After the king's death at Stiklestad Thøger proceeded to Denmark, where his objective was the conversion of the pagans who were still to be found in the more distant parts of the country. He ended his wanderings at Vestervig, Thy (in N. W. Jutland), where he built a small church of branches and the like unorthodox materials, and lived a very long time. His personal piety gained him the reputation of saintliness.

The history of his parish then becomes quite traceable. His immediate successor at Vestervig was another good priest by the name of Ulfrik. One night he discovered an inexplicable light over Thøger's grave. Thøger's case was brought to Rome, and Alexander II declared him a Saint. For some reason, and not a very good one, Svend Estridson and the bishop of the diocese were much irritated at this development.

The king refused to have anything done "except if God in His Mercy would deign to give a sign." The sign seems to have been granted. At the beginning of the 12th century the Augustinians built a monastery at Vestervig. The Saint's relics were deposited there, and when Vendsyssel together with Thy was made an independent diocese its first bishop chose that monastery church as his cathedral out of respect for St. Thøger. (Later bishops chose Børglum.)

St. Keld, Dean of Viborg

Died 1150. Commemoration Sept. 27

A holy "Jyde" (Jutlander)! The son of ordinary people, it was only because of his intelligence and piety that Keld obtained the patronage necessary for his education and ordination. The pious Bishop Eskil of Viborg had gathered his priests round himself in a sort of religious life. Keld was soon called by the Bishop to live in his house; and probably equally early he was ordained a priest.

In due time the Canons chose him for their Dean. As such, he is reported to have stopped a fire in Viborg through his prayers. In spite of his relatively humble position, he acted as peace-maker between royal brothers at Lund and received handsome gifts from the fighting parties. These he distributed to the poor during his long journey back to Viborg, much to the annoyance of his Canons. This generosity of his got on their nerves, in spite of the fact that he received very large sums just because of the reputation he had of this Christian way of using them.

The irritation against him grew stronger, and consequently he asked to be relieved from his office, that he might no more sin against his brothers through disobedience. His request was easily granted, and he went to Rome to obtain permission from the Pope to go as a missionary to the Vends and perhaps die a martyr. Eugene III granted his desire on the condition that his countrymen be first given the opportunity to repudiate their former behavior. On his return to Viborg everybody beseeched him to stay, and so he actually accepted his former office for a short time. A few months later, however, he died, after speaking most beautifully to his flock about the Last Sacraments. Bishop Absalon obtained his canonization, which was granted by Clemens III in 1189.

Finland

Birgit Klockars



St. Henry, Patron Saint of Finland

According to tradition St. Henry, who became Bishop of Upsala a few years after 1150, was a native of England. He is said to have come to Sweden in the company of Cardinal Nicholas Breakspeare (later as pope called Hadrian IV) who was also a native of Britain. This Cardinal was sent to the Northern countries of Europe by the Cistercian Pope Eugene III. The first Cistercian monasteries had been founded in Scandinavia about ten years earlier. We may suppose that

St. Henry had also been influenced by this strong revival movement within the Church. St. Bernard and his followers were zealous crusaders, and it is no wonder that, about two years after becoming bishop of Upsala, St. Henry, together with St. Eric, King of Sweden, decided on a crusade to Finland.

At that time Finland was not wholly pagan. Recent archeological researches have shown that, especially in the Southwestern parts, there was a strong Christian influence and many individual Christians long before this time. The Crusade was probably intended to extend and strengthen this influence and to organize the Church in these parts. There may also have been political motives. Anyhow, it was not a very big enterprise from a military point of view. The conversion of Finland was mainly brought about with peaceful means, then and later. Bishop Henry himself stayed as a missionary in Finland, after St. Eric and his fleet had returned to Sweden. Only a year later the zealous

Bishop's life was crowned with martyrdom. The legend tells us he was murdered by the rich farmer Lalli, who was angry with the Bishop, probably because of a penance put on him for some crime. According to tradition this happened on a little island in the lake of Kjølo (Köyliö),* and the Bishop was interred in the Church of Nousis (Nousiainen).

Soon miracles began to happen at his grave, and the martyr-Bishop began to be venerated as the Patron saint of Finland. Toward the end of the 13th century his relics were transferred from Nousis to the new Cathedral of Abo (Turku), and of about the same time are the first preserved copies of his written legend. He became very popular not only in Finland but also in the whole of Sweden. The Cathedral of Abo was dedicated to our Lady and to St. Henry. His grave was furnished with a shrine. In the church of Nousis a famous metal cenotaph with pictures from his legend is still intact. On the island where he was murdered a little chapel, now destroyed, was built during the late Middle Ages. In recent years memorial services have been held on the island, and the Catholics of Finland have undertaken pilgrimages there. Some of the relics found hidden in a wall of the now Lutheran Cathedral of Abo and placed in the relic shrine of Blessed Hemming are believed by experts to be part of the earthly remnants of St. Henry. In medieval Finland his feast day was on the 20th of January (in Sweden on the 19th) and his Translation day was celebrated on the 18th of June. The main feast is still commemorated by our present day Catholics, and the Cathedral Church of the Bishop of Helsingfors (Helsinki) is dedicated to St. Henry.

* We use the Swedish form of the place names, the form used in medieval documents. Within brackets the Finnish names.

Iceland

According to Rev. Lambert Erkens and Mme. Sigrid Undset (ST. ANSGAR'S BULLETIN, 1941)

St. Jon Ogmundsson

St. Jon Ogmundsson, 1st Bishop of Holar in northern Iceland (from 1106 to 1121), had studied

in Denmark, Germany, Paris and Rome, whence he returned, a priest, to Iceland. Later, he again journeyed to Rome to obtain confirmation of his election as Bishop from Pope Pascal II, after which he was consecrated at Lund (in Danish territory in south Sweden), which was at that time the Archiepiscopal

See for all Scandinavia. Back again in Holar, he uprooted the remains of paganism, organized the new diocese, started the Cathedral school, and founded the great library of that See. He was a lovable and holy man, and after his death he was venerated as a Saint, and no disapproval of this was ever voiced by the Holy See.

St. Thorlak Thorhallsson

St. Thorlak Thorhallsson was the 6th Bishop of Skalholt in southern Iceland (from 1178 to 1193). He had studied in Paris and Lincoln (England), and became an Augustinian monk and then Prior and later Abbot of Thykkvibaer Abbey in Iceland. He was consecrated Bishop at Nidaros (Trondheim), which by that time had become the Archiepiscopal

See for Norway and Iceland. According to a disreputable practice of that place and age, his relatives told him that he must gain the alliance of a powerful Icelandic family by wooing a wealthy young widow! However, by persuasion he won this lady's lasting support for his projects without such a "marriage"! Thus fortified, he waged an energetic campaign to free the Church from interference by the lay powers. His priestly life was an example to all, his gaiety was celebrated, and his will was so perfectly subjected to the Will of God that he was never heard to complain about the harsh and fickle Icelandic weather! His miracles were many, and soon after his death he was proclaimed worthy of cult by the Icelandic Althing or Parliament. No disapproval of this was ever voiced by the Holy See, and his cult spread through Scandinavia and to Scotland, England and Holland.

Norway

Rev. Hugh K. Wolf

Saint Olaf

King, Martyr and national patron of Norway.

(He is the only Norwegian saint entered in the Roman Martyrology, which records, on July 29, the passing away "In Norway, of St. Olaf, King and Martyr.")



Although St. Ansgar is called the Apostle of the North, he had nothing to do, directly or indirectly, with the Christianizing of Norway. Christianity was introduced into Norway from England by the great Kings, Olaf Tryggvason and Olaf Haraldsson, the Saint, with the aid

of English bishops and missionaries, one explanation, without a doubt, of why Norway has always been closely associated with England.

King Olaf Tryggvason did not progress too rapidly in the spreading of the gospel because of his rough and often scandalous methods. St. Olaf Haraldsson was more discreet, and determined to be just to the influential as well as to the poor. He was baptized at Rouen by Archbishop Robert, probably in 1010, and later brought to Norway English priests and monks to help him in his aim to subject his realm to Christ. One

of the priests was chosen bishop of Nidaros, Bishop Grimkel. Later, Norway's churches came under the jurisdiction of the See of Bremen, the see founded by St. Ansgar, and remained so until 1102 when Lund in Sweden was raised to metropolitan authority and embraced Norway.

In the year 1152 (the year referred to in saga and legend "in which Nicholas the Cardinal came to Norway") Cardinal Breakspeare (later Pope Adrian IV), sent as a papal legate to Norway, established the metropolitan see of Trondheim (Nidaros). He conferred the pallium on Archbishop Jon Birgarson, Norseman in name and in soul, and, as the saga puts it, "settled that the archbishop's seat should be in Nidaros, in Christ's Church, where King Olaf the Saint reposes."

St. Olaf, so rightly called the "Eternal King of Norway," prepared the way for a code of laws in which fundamental Christian principles should replace the old pagan tenets, and which served as a reminder to each individual that he is a Christian man and that his land is now a Christian land. While difficult to judge just what laws ascribed to him date back to him, tradition calls this code of laws "The Law as given by Olaf the Saint." Revolutionary clauses were given pertaining to the rights of the Church, the rights of children to live because life is received from God, the

obligation to keep the Lord's day, the Church's laws concerning marriage, all the clauses emphasizing the dawn of a new era in Norwegian history.

St. Olaf in his zeal made many enemies. To these enemies he was merciless, and this, added to the disapproval by many of some of his legislation and political objectives, brought open combat. With the assistance of Canute the Great, King of England and Denmark, his enemies arose in revolt and defeated and expelled him. Returning from exile with a few Swedish troops to recover his kingdom, he was killed by rebellious and pagan subjects in a battle fought at Stiklestad on July 29, 1030. Tradition tells that the site of his death is the place on which the old church of Stiklestad still stands, now in Lutheran hands. Higher up, overlooking the valley, is a small Catholic chapel where Mass is again offered in honor of St. Olaf.

The body of St. Olaf was later buried in a sandbank by the river Nid in Nidaros. Here a spring gushed out whose waters became credited with healing power. In the following year Bishop Grimkel ordered that he be venerated as a martyr, and that a chapel be built over the place, probably on the site of the present great Cathedral of Trondheim. Miracles were reported, and when St. Olaf's son, Magnus, returned to power the veneration had become widespread. The body was enshrined over the high altar in St. Clement's Church at Nidaros, and when the little chapel was replaced by a bishop's church dedicated to Christ and St. Olaf, which in time became the metropolitan cathedral of Nidaros (Trondheim), the body of Norway's saintly King Olaf was enshrined there, to remain until the so-called Reformation, when it disappeared. But Bishop John R  th, the present Vicar Apostolic of Trondheim, is convinced that the relics of this great saint are buried somewhere beneath the ancient cathedral of Christ and St. Olaf. Who knows but what God will some day lead us to these precious relics? As Sigrid Undset so clearly writes: "But we who believe that the Church Militant on Earth is one with the Church Triumphant in Heaven, know that St. Olaf still prays with us."

Snorre Sturlason writes that St. Olaf's battle cry was "Forward, forward, Christ's men, King's men, Men of the Cross!" Well might it be revived today in our modern conflict against the neo-heathanism of communism. Snorri also shows how submissive

this erstwhile Viking had become to rule and discipline, for he relates that one day while in exile in Russia Olaf was whittling a stick in deep thought, when his page said "Tomorrow is Monday, my lord." being thus reminded that it was Sunday, St. Olaf gathered the shavings and burned them all up in the hollow of his hand.

The late Bishop Olav Offerdahl, Norway's only native Catholic Bishop in over 400 years, issued this statement on the 900th anniversary of the death of St. Olaf: "The faith which was proclaimed by St. Olaf himself and by the priests who accompanied him on his baptizing journeys through Norway's valleys and settlements was the Catholic faith; the churches he had built were Catholic churches, the Masses which were said in the churches were celebrated according to the rites of the Catholic Church. This faith is also our faith . . . Olaf Haraldsson was a Catholic saint!" His feast is on July 29.

Saint Sunniva

Patron of Bergen—the only Norwegian female saint

The story of St. Sunniva is called a popular Norse legend, even though it is historically certain that King Olaf Tryggva-son built a church in 995 in the place where the intact and incorrupt body of St. Sunniva was found on the island of Selje, off the coast of Norway. In 1170 these relics were transferred to the Cathedral of Bergen and later to Christ Cathedral in Trondheim. Today in Molde and Harstad Norwegian Catholics honor this saint in churches dedicated to her.

This Norse legend relates how Sunniva, the daughter of one of the ruling families of Ireland, had resolved to have no other bridegroom than Our Lord Jesus Christ. At the death of her father she was left to rule over his kingdom at an early age. Either to avoid a marriage or to fly before an invader she and many of her followers put to sea in boats without rudder, sail or oars. After drifting for some time her ships landed on the island of Selje, where she and her followers lived for many years. The farmers nearby on the mainland discovered these strange people on this island and reported the fact to Haakon Jarl, who set sail at once to punish and put to death these strangers. The legend tells that, after prayer and resignation to God's will, Sunniva and her followers, who had gone into the caves of the island, were sealed therein

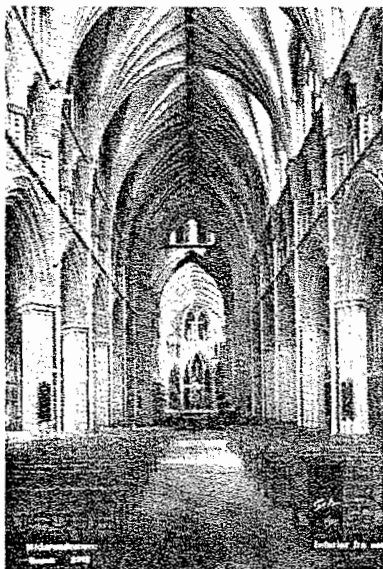
by an avalanche induced by the pagan natives, so that the Vikings found not a single soul.

Sometime later strange lights were noticed by passing boatmen, lights coming from the cave where the strangers had died. Word of this reached King Olaf Tryggvason who was engaged in spreading Christianity in his country. Accompanied by Bishop St. Sigurd he set out for Selje, had the cave opened, and found many bones; but the body of St. Sunniva was intact and incorrupt. There in 995 he had a church built to shelter the body.

When the first division of Norway into bishoprics took place under the reign of Olaf Kyrre, Selje in 1068 became the residence of the Bishop of the Gulathing district, Bishop Bernard the Saxon, called from Iceland to administer the See.

In 1156 Bishop Paul of Bergen began the construction of a great cathedral, which would not be completed until 1190. By 1170 the work had progressed so far that part of the structure could be put to use. It was then that the body of St. Sunniva was taken and enshrined with great solemnity in the Bergen Cathedral (but was later taken to Trondheim Cathedral). During the Reformation her silver reliquary, together with that of St. Olaf's, was melted down and sold, and the relics disappeared.

Even though the term legendary is used of the story of St. Sunniva, there is little doubt as to its historicity. Why did the great King Olaf Tryggvason trouble



Trondheim Cathedral

to enshrine the body and build a church for the relics? And today the Catholics of Norway give testimony of

their devotion to St. Sunniva, the only female Norwegian saint, about whom Sigrid Undset writes: "There is evidence that the Mass of Selje-men, on the feast of St. Sunniva and her followers, has been celebrated ever since a calendar of feast days has been in existence in Norway." St. Sunniva's feast is on July 8.

Saint Hallvard

Centuries ago St. Hallvard, Martyr, was held in great honor in Norway and especially in Oslo. Today he is the patron of Oslo, Norway's capital, and as one approaches the beautiful new city hall of this city his statue stands out to the right of the main entrance, guarding, as it were, this beautiful city. Historical facts about St. Hallvard are few, but tradition gives us some information. When Oslo first became a diocese, centuries ago, St. Hallvard was given an office and a feast day, May 15 and designated as the patron saint of the diocese. His image has been incorporated in the arms of the city ever since.

Hallvard is said to have been engaged in trading with various Baltic islands. Sigrid Undset relates how one time Hallvard's ship lay off the coast of Gothland. A rich young man, Botvid by name, came along and noticed Hallvard, who seemed to stand out among the other sea-folk. Botvid told Hallvard, "I am certain that you are destined to do great things in your time." This young nobleman of Gothland, it is said, was the same who thirty years later met a martyr's death, The Apostle of Södermanland, St. Botvid.

Legendary tradition tells us that not many months after this event, Hallvard left home, intending to cross the Drammenfjord to transact some business, when he was accosted by a woman, who begged him to take her in his boat and save her from her enemies. He took her on board but just as they started their little journey, three men came running down to the shore demanding the woman and accusing her of theft. She denied the charge and Hallvard, believing the woman, refused to surrender her to the men. In their anger they set upon Hallvard. Hallvard and the woman were killed. (This scene is depicted in a beautiful mural inside the entrance of Oslo's city hall.) Then Hallvard's body, weighted with a heavy stone, was thrown into the sea. But it did not sink, despite the weight, and he was henceforth venerated as a martyr. He was not a martyr in the strict sense

of today, but certainly he lost his life fighting for a fundamental Christian principle, as did the great St. Olaf and God has given proof of the holiness of both by many miracles and answers to prayers offered by the sick and unhappy ones who visited their graves.

St. Hallvard's relics were later taken to Oslo where a stone church was built early in the twelfth century to enshrine them. Whatever one thinks of the legend, there is no doubt that the church of St. Hallvard at Oslo was held in great honor. Today the Franciscan Fathers in Oslo have a small but beautiful church where St. Hallvard continues to receive the honor due him. His feast is on May 15.

Saint Eystein Erlendson

Second Archbishop of Trondheim

Five years after Cardinal Breakspeare, later Pope Adrian IV, had erected the metropolitan see of Nidaros (now Trondheim) with ten bishoprics, St. Eystein, chaplain to King Inge, was appointed as the see's second archbishop. He had been previously a royal secretary and treasurer, with a brilliant intellect, strong will and deep piety. Such a man was needed at that time to defend and maintain the Church's right of conducting its affairs without interference. He was consecrated Bishop, and received his pallium from Pope Alexander III.

It was St. Eystein who laid the plans for making the former, Romanesque Cathedral of Nidaros (the resting place of the relics of St. Olaf) into one of the finest and mightiest Gothic Cathedrals in northern Europe. Today this great cathedral, now a state Lutheran church, stands as a monument to the deep seated Catholic faith and love for St. Olaf, the hero king and saint of Norway.

St. Eystein, because of his close relationship with the father of the young King Magnus, was able to get accepted a code of laws, certain of which brought discipline and good order to the church. His life seemed directed toward the free action of the spiritual power among a unified people.

St. Eystein died on January 26, 1188 and was declared holy in 1229 by a synod at Nidaros, though the decree was never confirmed by Rome. As early as the 13th century it was written that he was a man whose holiness was proven by great and authentic miracles. He worked to break the hold of a half-barbarous nobility on the church in Norway and to enable the latter to work peacefully for its children. His own life was one of devoted conflict, fighting for the freedom of the Church among his fellow Tronders. His body was enshrined in Christ Cathedral at Nidaros where it remained until the Reformation, but then disappeared in the fanaticism of the period. His feast is on January 26.

Sweden

Foreword

Rev. Dominic Drumm, C.P.

Disputes still continue as to the sanctity of some of the early Swedish saints, canonized by "vox populi." Non-Catholic writers will not readily accept the latter verdict as having any historical value, whereas the Catholic historian, whilst not swallowing wholesale the many legends which have grown with time, must try to reconstruct, as far as sources will



allow, a picture of the saint in all his humanity and holiness. It is not easy to keep the balance between

outright skepticism and a too-ready belief in legends. After nearly a thousand years the mists have not entirely cleared around these early saintly figures, and one must be content with scanty accounts until expert research succeeds in dispersing the mists.

Herigar or Hergeir

(Died circa 582)

(According to Morreau's St. Anscheire)

During St. Ansgar's first mission to Sweden (in 830-31), his biographer Rimbert tells us that "several demanded with devotion the grace of Baptism. Among them was Herigar, prefect of the capital city of Birka, and the King's much-appreciated Councillor. He was baptized and showed himself very firm in the profession of the Catholic Faith. A little while later this man built on his own property a church and he gave

himself with great fervor to the service of God.”

When, in 845, the mission of Gauzbert was ejected from Sweden and there was no priest in that land for seven years, Herigar continued to uphold the Faith, despite the reproaches of his fellow Swedes. He even dared to preach it to others, and his efforts were occasionally reinforced by miracles. On one occasion, after appealing to their respective deities, Herigar was preserved completely dry in a storm while the pagan disputants, a few feet away, were soaked with rain. Another time, while on a sickbed and enduring the reproaches of his friends against his religion as the cause of his malady, he had himself carried into the church, prayed to Christ for health, and was immediately cured.

Still again, when an exiled Swedish king returned with Danish allies and surprised Birka, and its pillage appeared imminent, its inhabitants had been vainly appealing to their pagan gods for aid. Herigar took this opportunity of persuading them to try the aid of the Christian God instead. They therefore vowed a fast and almsgiving, and when the Danish soothsayers were asked by the invaders whether it was propitious to pillage Birka. They replied that the God of the Christians opposed it and it would not be safe to attempt it. The Danes thereupon sailed off to pillage another city indicated as being safer for them. Having saved their city, Herigar's appeals to his fellow-citizens to discover who was the True God became more weighty and more eloquent.

He lived to see the arrival of a new priest in Sweden (c. 852), the anchorite Ardgarius, and to get permission from King and Council for the latter to preach and celebrate divine service publicly, after which Herigar fell ill and passed to his eternal reward, fortified by the Last Rites.

St. Sigfrid

(February 15)

Rev. Dominic Drumm, C.P.

The pagan religion continued to hold sway in Sweden and the heathen priests jealously guarded their hold on the people, especially in the province of Uppland, which had Uppsala for its capital. It was not until 1006 that King Olof Skötkonung begged King Ethelred in England to send Christian missionaries. The choice fell on Sigfrid who, according to leg-

end, was then Archbishop of York. He, with his three nephews, began his apostolic work in the south of Sweden, using Växjö as headquarters. There he built a wooden church, on the site of which the present Lutheran Cathedral stands.

We have only legend to rely on for what happened later. The preaching seems to have been well received in the beginning, then tragedy stepped in. In the absence of Sigfrid, who had gone north to baptize King Olof, the three nephews were assassinated by trusted parishioners for the sake of the church plate, their heads being thrown into the nearby lake. After this set-back Sigfrid had to labor alone, and for a period he made no impression on the people.

It was during an evening of unusual depression and despondency that he was granted a vision and a message from the departed nephews. “By this sign the servant of God gained new strength to serve Him, so that no toil was too great for him, but he went about in Sweden preaching, baptizing, and building churches, and ordaining priests. After having brought many souls to the Lord, Saint Sigfrid came back to Växjö and lived there a long time until he had reached the fullness of his years, and of a surety entered into the joys of heaven. And in Växjö he lies buried.” So says the legend. Some deny the latter statement about his burial place, others think his remains lie under the pulpit of the present, Lutheran Cathedral. St. Sigfrid's well is still shown as the place where Sigfrid baptized his converts. His feast is kept Feb. 15th.

St. David

(July 15)

Rev. Dominic Drumm, C.P.

Two other missionaries from England carried on the work of Sigfrid: David, a Benedictine monk, and Bishop Eskil. They seem to have arrived to take the place of Sigfrid's murdered nephews, but exact dates of their arrival are not available. David was sent to Västmanland, where he labored much and lived to a great age. One of the amusing miracles told about him is that he absentmindedly hung his gloves on a sunbeam, thinking it to be a pole. The gloves were still on the sunbeam when he sent his servant for them! St. David has his feast day July 15.

St. Eskil
(June 10)

Rev. Dominic Drumm, C.P.

Bishop Eskil, the English monk who evangelized the provinces of Södermanland and Närke, is regarded as Sweden's first martyr. His story brings into prominence the bitter struggle between the old Pagan worship and the new Christian learning during the eleventh century. The people of Uppland were especially attached to their heathen gods and to their temple in Uppsala. The Christian King Inge had already been banished by the people for his attempt to close down the temple. Strängnäs, in Södermanland, on Lake Mälaren, was also another stronghold of theirs, and it was here that Eskil began his preaching against idolatry after he had labored further south. In fact he interrupted one of their heathen sacrifices with a courageous sermon on Christ. He was immediately stoned for his courage and earned a martyr's crown. He was buried in a place around which the town of Eskilstuna has arisen, not far from Strängnäs. He was martyred in 1080, and his feast is celebrated June 10.

St. Staffan or Stephen

John T. Dwight

The memory of St. Staffan (or Stephen), a native of Germany and the Apostle of Norrland, is especially strong in the Province of Hälsingland where he preached and was martyred (at Tönnebro). Traditionally his burial place is the church of Norrala (rebuilt a century ago), north of Söderhamn on the Gulf of Bothnia.

St. Botvid
(July 28)

Rev. Dominic Drumm, C.P.

St. Botvid's feast is kept on July 28. As a young man he went to England on a trading expedition and there came in contact with a holy priest who explained to him the Christian truths. He responded quickly to the gift of faith, and returned to Sweden a zealous lay apostle. By his holy life, his exhortations and gift of miracles he converted many to the faith. He was treacherously murdered by a trusted servant about 1130. One of his known miracles was a miraculous draft of fishes. Early images and pictures show

him holding a fish. His relics were taken to a place in Södermanland, now known as Botkyrka.

St. Elin (Helen) of Skovde
(July 30)

(From Jørgensen's St. Bridget of Sweden)

It was related in the legend that St. Elin's parents came of great families, and that from her childhood she was trained in the law of the Lord. But when she had reached the age of marriage she was, according to the custom of the land, betrothed to a man whom she consented to wed, as Sara consented to wed Tobias. And God bestowed upon her the faithfulness of Leah and the grace and beauty of Rachel, so that even her body was a picture of her soul. Like Esther she found favor in the eyes of all men, and by her pure life she did honor to her noble birth.

But later, when her husband was dead and both her age and the state of her fortunes led her to think of a new marriage, she was drawn to a union with God in a marriage of the spirit, rather than submit herself to carnal pleasure, which always begins with joy but ends in sorrow. She resolved to enter upon the heavy path of widowhood and to follow in the steps of Judith, serving God by prayer and fasting, and like holy Job her door was ever open to the wayfarer, and the poor received warmth from the wool of her sheep. She loved the glory of the house of God, and out of her own purse she paid for the building of a large part of the church in Skovde, where her holy body now rests.

It is further related that a persecution arose among the still heathen population (Elin of Skövde lived about the year 1150) against the pious widow (*Editor:* on the unfounded charge that she had caused the death of her son-in-law, who had ill-treated her daughter). To escape from this she went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, like her great patron, Saint Helen, the mother of Constantine the Great, "to see the tomb of the Lord, and the places where He had suffered." But when she came back to Skövde the hatred against her flared up afresh, and one day when she was on her way to the church in the neighboring Götene, which was to be consecrated on that very day, "some of her blood-thirsty enemies threw themselves upon her and dyed their swords in the blood of the just one." This happened on August 1. Her body was found by a boy who was guide to a blind man. The boy saw what

seemed to him to be a light in a bush by the wayside and found that the light came from one of the fingers of the saint, which the murderers had cut off and on which she wore the ring that she had brought home from the Holy Land. The sight of the blind man was restored when he touched his eyes with the ring, and when the body was brought to Skövde, and they who carried it stopped to rest on the way, a spring gushed forth at the place. Many other wonderful things happened later, so that Pope Alexander III, at the entreaty of Bishop Stefan of Uppsala, wrote her name in the golden holy book of the saints. (*Editor:* Her shrine at Skövde remained a popular pilgrimage center till after the Reformation, and, indeed, "St. Helen's Fair" was still being held there as late as the 19th Century.)

St. Erik IX, King and Martyr

Patron of Sweden (May 18)

Rev. Paul X. d'Auchamp

This Erik was the ninth to bear that name. He was the scion of an illustrious Swedish family, and had a good education. He was placed upon the throne, by the election of the Swedish states, purely on account of his virtues and qualifications.

All during his reign he practiced the Christian virtues to a heroic degree: fasting and watching much, in person relieving the poor with alms, in short living the kind of saintly life that one might expect in a canonized king of early medieval times. Content with his own patrimony, he levied no taxes, and built churches. By wholesome laws he restrained the still rather brutish lives of some of his subjects.

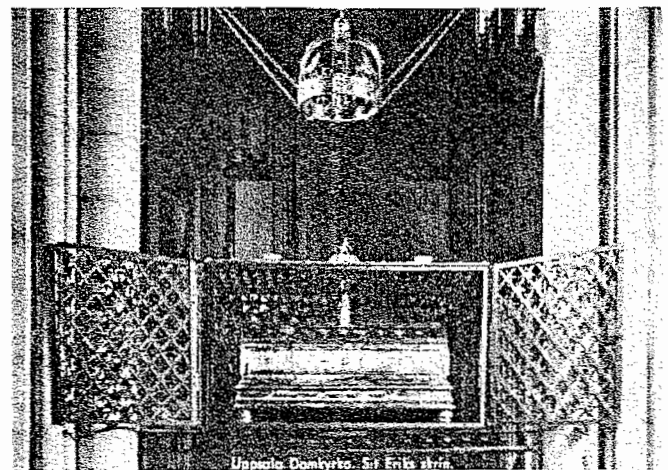
The frequent inroads of the pagan Finlanders upon his territories obliged him to take the field against them. After his victory he cried bitterly at the sight of so many enemies, dead without having received baptism, and soon sent a bishop to preach the Gospel in their country. (*Editor:* Some say that this bishop, St. Henry, was accompanied to Finland and upheld at the beginning of his labors there by St. Erik, on a short Crusade.)

However, certain malcontents, mostly pagans, among his Swedish subjects despised the King on account of his "unmanly" piety (*Editor:* and probably also because St. Erik had apparently put an end to the final remnants of pagan worship in the province of Uppsala, its last

stronghold). They made an alliance with King Magnus of Denmark who was desirous of the Swedish throne, and decided to kill him. One day, when the King was hearing Mass in a church not far from present day Uppsala, the conspirators surrounded the church; the king had been informed of what was happening, but calmly answered: "Let us at least finish the sacrifice; the remainder of the festival I shall keep elsewhere." In order to save the citizens of the town, he declined to accept their help and marched alone, in front of his guard, to meet the enemy. He was immediately killed and subjected to many indignities in derision of his religion. Traditionally his death is reported to have taken place on May 18, 1160. God honored his tomb with many miracles. It remains to this day at Uppsala, undefaced.

King Erik is the chief patron of Sweden. As such he was fervently invoked formerly, and the general respect which surrounds his name on account of his excellent laws, his personal piety and his self-sacrificing attitude in the face of death still make him dear to the Swedish people.

(*Editor:* The Roman Martyrology commemorates "St. Eric, King and Martyr" on May 18, and in his *St. Bridget of Sweden*, v. I, p. 13, Jörgensen says: "Like so many saints of the Middle Ages, Saint Erik was never officially canonized. But in a papal letter, dated Anagni, October 23, 1256, Alexander IV promises an indulgence of forty days to those who devoutly visit the blessed martyr's tomb in Uppsala; in it the expression *beatus* is used of him. Likewise in a papal letter from Clement IV, ten years later.")



ST. ERIC'S SHRINE, UPPSALA CATHEDRAL

Chapter Three: Later Saintly Figures

Denmark

St. William (Vilhelm), Abbot,

Died 1203 Commemoration April 6

Rev. Paul X. D'Auchamp

All during the 12th century reciprocal relations between Denmark and France were in full swing, although tending almost exclusively to the advantage of the smaller and less developed of the two countries. As also Bishop Absalon, the majority of Denmark's great men went to Paris to study. As yet, this (at that time) modern thing, a university, had not reached Denmark, but the University of the Sorbonne already attracted Danes to Paris. William was one of the minority who traveled from France to Denmark and stayed there.

William was forty years old when he came to Denmark. From very early in life he had been a cleric. Through his relatives he was connected not only with the authorities in Paris but also with the reform movement stemming from St. Victor's famous monastery. He had been permanently attached to the church of St. Genevieve in the Latin Quarter, but was not popular among his fellow-canons, who considered him the worst of rigorists. In fact he was, to say the least, very zealous when he followed his pronounced love of justice. Perhaps Absalon saved him from becoming a dissatisfied man of no consequence when in 1165 he prevailed on him to go to Denmark in order to reform a small Augustinian monastery on Eskilsö in Roskilde Fjord.

William arrived at Roskilde Fjord with three companions who, by the way, all went home, disheartened by the roughness of life. The six Danish monks were more or less forced by Absalon to choose William as their Abbot. They soon found, however, that he was stricter than they liked. At the same time famine set in and they felt that their Abbot was too generous toward others. And so one night some hay around his bed took fire, without, however, the bed itself catching fire. This did not satisfy his charges. They tried to drown him in a sack, to kill him with an axe, to sell him to the Vends. Indeed, they did what they could to prove the old saying: "Corruptio optimi pessima (The corruption of the best turns out to be the worst)."

If the monks did not like William, the people who came to listen to his sermons, to ask his advice, to receive his alms, did. And even when the monks got into trouble, they would hasten to have recourse to the resourceful Abbot who was always willing to forgive.

William did much to restore order in the monastery both spiritually and materially. However, he could not prevent periodic inundations of the island, and so had the monastery removed to Aebelholt in Nordsjaelland (North Zealand), where he, with the help of Absalon, built a fine stone church. We may still see the ruins of this monastery and church and occasionally we make pilgrimages there. We also find traces of a wonderful garden, planted by William, by means of which he introduced all kinds of precious trees and medicinal herbs to Denmark.

What we know of William's later years shows that his former righteous pride had become converted into genuine zeal for the love of God. And he even became beloved by his Danish Monks. His Christian fighting spirit showed up only occasionally, when it was really needed, as when an Italian Cardinal drove through Denmark levying taxes without any right and for his personal use.

Even during his lifetime William worked some genuine miracles. After his death, they used to dip one of his relics into water which was then given to the sick to drink. A very large number of cures took place and in 1224 Honorius III canonized him. After the Reformation, however, his monastery (which had developed considerably after his canonization) was dismantled and used as a stone quarry for the construction of Fredericksborg Castle near Hilleröd.

St. William is commemorated in the Roman Martyrology on April 6.

St. Villehad, Monk,

One of 19 Martyrs of Gorkum, Died July 9, 1572

Rev. Paul X. D'Auchamp

St. Villehad may be Denmark's only martyr from the Reformation. He was born in 1482. During the events that succeeded the Danish Reformation of 1536 he fled from Holstein to England, thence to Scotland and finally to a Franciscan monastery at

Gorkum, Holland. There he became well-known as a confessor, since people had great confidence in him because of his holy way of life. When the Reformers threw him into prison together with other priests and monks, he stood the hardships inflicted upon him with superhuman strength. The most that his warders could get out of him were the words "Deo gratias (Thanks be to God)" and promises of prayers for their conversion. Finally, he and his companions were hanged.

The Roman Martyrology commemorates these Holy Martyrs of Gorkum on July 9.

Niels Stensen (Nicholaus Steno) 1638-1686

(According to Gustav Schertz: Nicholaus Steno's Life and Work)

Niels Stensen, scientist, convert, and missionary Bishop, was born in Copenhagen of a well-to-do Lutheran family, and attended school there and the University, where he became interested in scientific studies, including anatomy and medicine. As a post-graduate student in Holland, he discovered the parotid salivary gland (still called after him—Ductus Stenonianus) and made other pioneering anatomical investigations of glands, heart and muscles. Later, in Paris, he pointed out the direction of future studies of the brain and in Florence, contributed to the study of embryology. While in Italy, also, he became a founder of the sciences of geology and mineralogy.

Meanwhile he had become dissatisfied both with Lutheranism and with the philosophies of Descartes and Spinoza. He became progressively drawn to the Catholic Church, into which he was received at Florence in 1667. He was soon engaged, on the Catholic side, in theological controversies with his former co-religionists, which he conducted with scientific thoroughness but with Christian charity. In 1675 he was ordained to the priesthood in Florence and became a tutor of the heir of Cosimo III de' Medici. The latter was to remain his devoted patron. The contemporary Archbishop of Florence wrote that Steno "now prescribed himself a very strict rule of life and so faithfully observed this that he in a short time had reached a very, high degree of Christian perfection."

Soon called to higher duties, he was consecrated Bishop in 1677 and was entrusted with jurisdiction



over the Catholics of eight almost entirely Protestant states and districts of North Germany, plus Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark and Norway, an agglomeration which recalls the responsibilities of St. Ansgar himself. As Bishop, Stensen, while living in austere poverty, worked indefatigably for better pastoral care of his scattered flock and the preservation of their faith, as also to obtain worthier candidates for the priesthood and to prevent simony and pluralities of office in ecclesiastical elections. Through his winning personality and cogent arguments he led many back to the Catholic Faith, while through his tact and diplomacy he ensured a modus vivendi for the Church (e.g. Denmark in his day possessed four Catholic chapels). Worn out by his labors, Stensen died in 1686. His Cause for Beatification has recently been introduced.

Finland

Birgit Klockars

Blessed Hemming, Bishop of Abo (Turku)

Bishop Hemming of Abo (Turku) was born at Bälinge near Upsala in Sweden about 1290. We know very little about his family and about his early years. He studied at the Cathedral school of Upsala, seat of the Archbishop of Sweden and Finland. He

also spent some time studying in Paris. A little before 1330 we find him as a canon at the Cathedral of Abo (Turku) in Finland. There in 1338 the chapter unanimously chose him Bishop, a fact that testifies to his outstanding qualities. As Bishop of Finland he seems to have ruled with wisdom and authority. Statutes and regulations from his time are preserved. We also know that he founded the dignity of Provost at the Cathedral and donated many precious books and ornaments to his Cathedral Church.

We get some glimpses of the character and the spiritual life of Bishop Hemming through the Revelations of St. Birgitta of Sweden, who was a friend of Hemming and apparently esteemed him very highly. She presents him to us as a man of great courage "he fears nothing, not even death." He practiced a great deal of self-denial, so much so that once St. Birgitta rebuked him for being too ascetic, a rebuke which he accepted humbly and graciously. He was a man of much prayer and had a great devotion to Our Lady.

Because of Hemming's courage and sanctity St. Birgitta chose him, together with another friend, as her messenger to take some of her revelations to the Pope and to the Kings of France and England, to try to mediate peace. This journey probably took place some time between 1346 and 1349. It did not succeed very well, and in a dream Birgitta had to console her discouraged messenger.

Many disasters hit Finland during Bishop Hemming's time: the Black Death, famine years, an unsuccessful crusade against the Russians, civil war. There were conflicts between the Pope and the King (of Sweden and Finland), resulting in an interdict of several years. Some sources even tell us that Bishop Hemming was imprisoned by King Magnus. Before the troubles had ended, Hemming died in 1366. He was found dead in an attitude of prayer. A document written shortly after his death says: "Of his great zeal for the King and of his great piety toward God and austerity toward himself, all his praiseworthy deeds bear witness."

The beatification of Bishop Hemming did not take place until the end of the Catholic period in Finland. The permission of the Pope was received in 1499, but not until 1514 did the solemn translation of his relics take place at Abo. The relics were placed in a sculptured wooden shrine which is still preserved together with at least part of the relics in the now

Protestant Cathedral of Abo (Turku). Because of the Lutheran "Reformation" the planned canonization never took place and the feast day of Blessed Hemming, on the 21st or the 22nd of May, has been almost wholly forgotten.

Magnus Tavast, Bishop of Abo (Turku)

Bishop Magnus Tavast is not canonized. But he no doubt was a very remarkable, saintly person and an outstanding leader of the Church in Finland. There are indications that not long after his death people already thought of him as one who might be counted among the saints. But, if there were any plans to get him officially recognized as such, the revolution within the Church soon put an end to them.

In a chronicle about the Bishops of Abo a lengthy panegyric life of Magnus Tavast says: "After the blessed Bishop Henry there has not been anybody within the Church of Abo who could be compared to the blessed Hemming and to him (Magnus) who during their life time performed so many and so great praiseworthy deeds."

If the tradition that Magnus Tavast reached the venerable age of 95 is true, he was born already during Bishop Hemming's life time, about 1357. His father was a Finnish nobleman from a parish quite near to the cathedral town of Abo (Turku). Magnus had many brothers and sisters. About his youth we know hardly anything. He had probably already been a priest for some time when in 1398 he received his degree as a Master of Arts at the University of Prague. For some years he was Archdeacon at the Cathedral of Abo and Chancellor at the court of the young king of Sweden, Eric of Pomerania. In 1412, he was chosen Bishop of Finland. On his return from Rome, where he had been consecrated bishop, he spent some time studying at the Parisian university.

During his long episcopate the Catholic Church of Finland reached its culminating point in more than one respect. The Cathedral of Abo (Turku) was enlarged and embellished, new side chapels and altars were built and dedicated, the number of canons, prebendaries and other priests attached to the Cathedral was increased. The bishop himself donated many precious books and ornaments to the church. He also founded and financed one of the new side chapels with the altar of the Body of Christ. It was furnished with a precious monstrance for the Holy Sacrament and had

its own prebendary who said daily Mass there.

Magnus is said to have had a special devotion to the Passion of Christ and among the things he procured for his Cathedral was a big jewelled Cross, probably containing a relic of the Holy Cross. He also in various ways tried to promote the veneration of Saint Henry, patron saint of Finland.

Of great importance for the ecclesiastical and cultural life of Finland was the Brigittine monastery at Nådendal (Naantali) founded during Magnus' episcopate and with his moral and financial assistance.

Magnus Tavast often acted as a Counsellor of the King and was sent by him on many important commissions. It may have been in the King's company that he traveled to the Holy Land as the chronicler tells us "with great dangers and expenses." When the rebellion against King Eric broke out, Magnus remained loyal and, as long as possible, tried to save his crown. He seems to have enjoyed the confidence of both sides during this struggle. Even in his old age, during the reigns of the following kings, Magnus Tavast was highly esteemed as a counsellor. According to the chronicle, his fame went as far as Russia and other foreign parts. Everybody thought of him as "magnus et re et nomine" great in name and in fact.

It was not only in increasing the outward prestige of the Church and as an actor in political life that Bishop Magnus was great. He was pious and faithful in fulfilling his religious duties taking part in the canonical hours, praying earnestly and with devotion. He loved and helped the poor and the weak, the blind and the lame. We quote the chronicle: "He was good not only to his friends and relatives but to everybody. He led an honest, chaste and very temperate life. It is impossible to describe the deep affection that everybody felt for him. Many prelates of the Church, and others also, thought him worthy of the highest dignity of the Church."

Magnus was a candidate for the Archbishopric at Uppsala in 1425, but another was nominated. This certainly was for the good of the Church of Finland, whose bishop he thus remained for almost forty years. For example, he was successful as a peacemaker within his own diocese when a rebellion broke out among the peasants of Satakunta in 1438.

Two years before his death the old bishop resigned, and spent his last days near to the Brigittine monastery

of Nadendal (Naantali), for he seems to have felt a close spiritual relationship to its monks and nuns. When he died in 1452 he was buried in the chapel of the Body of Christ that he had founded in the Cathedral of Abo (Turku). It is today still called the Tavast Chapel.



ABO (TURKU) CATHEDRAL (NOW LUTHERAN) WHERE ST. HENRY, BLESSED HEMMING AND MAGNUS TAVAST LIE BURIED

Iceland

Gudmund Arason

According to Rev. Lambert Erkens and Mme. Sigrid Undset (St. Ansgar's "Bulletin," 1941)

Gudmund Arason (Bishop of Holar in the early 1200s) was converted by a friend's death from a self-willed, wild youngster into a fervent young priest who was patient with sinners, generous and tactful with the poor and unfortunate, who loved children and orphans. He was elected Bishop because of his devotion, chastity and charity, but when he accepted the office he warned that he would defend the laws

of God and the rights of the Church. This involved him in the feuds of that day. He was eventually driven from his See and forced to flee for support to the Archbishop of Nidaros (Trondheim) in Norway. Gudmund was a champion of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. He died, old and blind, on a bare floor which was strewn with ashes at his own desire. His canonization was interrupted (like Swedish St. Ingrid's) by the Reformation, but Iceland has always considered him a saint and calls him "Gwendur the Good."

Jon Halldorsson, O.P.

by Rev. P. N. Zammit, O.P.

Jon Halldorsson (Freygerdsson), Bishop of Skalholt (1321-1339), was born at the end of the 13th century, when most of the famous Icelandic Sagas were being composed. Iceland was then tributary to Norway and well-to-do Icelandic families sent their children to be educated there. Jon, when still very young, was sent to Bergen, where he soon joined the Dominican Order. His superiors quickly discovered his marked intellectual gifts and sent him to continue his studies at the Universities of Bologna and Paris. In both places Jon was very popular and was highly esteemed both by professors and by fellow-students, some of whom later became cardinals, but kept up their correspondence with him.

After finishing his studies he returned to Bergen. The high regard in which he was held is expressed in "The Bishops' Saga": "Jon was known as the wisest priest who ever came to Norway." We are told that he was of a gay character, very sociable and inexhaustible in his jokes and story-telling. In 1321 the Chapter of Nidaros (Trondheim) in Norway elected John bishop of Skalholt, because Iceland then belonged to its ecclesiastical province. As bishop he retained his cheerful character and his sermons were full of beautiful anecdotes, which were so popular that they were gathered in various collections. One of his early pastoral solicitudes was to introduce in his diocese the feast of Corpus Christi.

In the summer of 1338, before his last visit to Norway, he dreamt that Archbishop Eiliv and King Magnus Hakonarsson, both of whom were dead, took him by the hand upward toward Heaven. Around Christmas Jon fell seriously ill in that same Dominican convent in Bergen where he had received the Do-

minican Habit. On the eve of the Purification, 1339, he got worse and asked for the last rites, which were administered by Bishop Haakon Erlingsson of Bergen. Next morning he asked the convent's Prior to celebrate Mass in his sickroom and during it he had a vision of Our Lady. Soon after he died peacefully in the odor of sanctity and was buried with great honor and veneration in that same Dominican convent. It is related that many miracles took place at his grave and that he was always venerated as a saint.

Ogmund Palsson

According to Father Erkens and Mme.

Undset

Ogmund Palsson, the last Catholic Bishop of Skalholt (from 1520 to 1542) had studied in France and Belgium. He was also Abbot of Videy and administered for a time the See of Holar. His integrity and purity of life secured his election as Bishop, his zeal for the good of the Church was everywhere manifested and he established many foundations for the poor. With preaching and writing he tried to oppose the Danish introduction of Lutheranism into Iceland, but was betrayed by a trusted priestly protege, who secretly spread Luther's doctrines while enjoying the old Bishop's hospitality. Finally, while on a pilgrimage to the Holy Cross on Kaldadarnes, after a solemn assurance of his safety by the Danish commander, he and his aged sister were dragged from their beds by the Lutheran garrison. She was forced to hand over all her valuables as a ransom for her brother, after which they nevertheless took the Bishop away and sent him prisoner to Denmark. On the way he died of the effects of maltreatment and exposure at the age of 81.

Jon Arason

According to Father Erkens and

Mme. Undset

Jon Arason, the last pre-Reformation Bishop of Holar (from 1530 to 1550), was born in 1484. He was a talented man. The last great poet of Iceland's Catholic era, whose poems have greatness of vision and passionate sincerity. He introduced the first printing press in Iceland. Unfortunately, like some other priests of his day, he had disregarded the rules of celibacy of Western Christendom and had raised a family. Bishop Ogmund Palsson of Skalholt opposed

his election in 1520 to the See of Holar, which, however, took place later in 1530.

Here he made up for his earlier sins by his devotion and courage as the Church's last champion in Iceland. He had replied, when warned against overdoing, "I wish I might die the death of my Patron Saint (John the Baptist) and not that of an old woman," and he got his wish. He fiercely opposed the forcible introduction into Iceland of Lutheranism for Danish political ends and a Papal Breve of March 8, 1548 commends his perseverance. He marched against the Lutheran Bishop, took him prisoner, regained the south of Iceland for the Church, restored the Cathedral at Skalholt and reopened the Monastery of Videy. Only his personal enemies upheld the Protestant cause and joined forces with the Danish troops.

Treason, however, eventually led him into an enemy trap, together with his two sons. They were locked up in the Lutheran Bishop's house and there summarily condemned to death, against the laws of Iceland. So, early in the morning of November 7, 1550, Jon Arason said his last Mass in the Cathedral of Skalholt and gave Communion to his two sons. Then one by one, starting with the youngest, they went out and were beheaded on a window frame used as a makeshift headman's block. Despite the irregularity of his earlier life, Jon Arason, because of his heroic martyrdom, has always been considered a Saint in Iceland, even by the Protestants.

Norway

Rev. Hugh K. Wolf

Field Secretary of St. Ansgar's League

St. Thorfinn (Torfinn)

St. Thorfinn or Torfinn was Bishop of the diocese of Hamar, Norway, from 1278 to 1285. This diocese was erected in 1152, when it was cut off from the diocese of Oslo and made a suffragan See of Trondheim. It was at this time that Cardinal Nicholas Breakspear, later Pope Adrian IV, came to Norway as a papal legate and established an independent archiepiscopal See for Norway in Trondheim. Bishop Arnold (from Gardar, Greenland), the first bishop of Hamar, started the building of the great, but now ruined, Cathedral of Christ Church, which was completed about a cen-

tury later.

St. Thorfinn was a Trondheim man and maybe a canon of Nidaros (now Trondheim) cathedral, since there was such a one named Thorfinn among those who witnessed the Agreement of Tönsberg in 1277. King Magnus VI and the Archbishop of Nidaros, in this agreement, confirmed certain matters of episcopal elections and privileges of the clergy. Some years later King Eric repudiated this agreement and in the fierce dispute which arose, the king outlawed the Archbishop and his two chief supporters, Bishop Anders of Oslo and Bishop Thorfinn of Hamar. Bishop Thorfinn then made his way to the Cistercian abbey of Ter Doest in Flanders, enduring many hardships, including shipwreck, on the way. It seems that, solely because of this visit and his later return visit there, it has been said that he was a Cistercian monk. In the French martyrology it is mentioned that he was a student at Ter Doest. Few in Norway at that time gave even a little thought to this exiled bishop. He died in Ter Doest on January 8, 1285, and was buried in the monastery church.

Sixty years after the death of our saint the Abbot of Doest, wishing to make his grave in the church level with the floor, had to open the grave. From it a sweet odor came forth and filled the whole church. Then through an old monk of the abbey, Walter de Muda, who remembered Bishop Thorfinn from his visits, a short history of our Saint was written: St. Thorfinn was a mild and gentle man who had shown himself to be absolutely adamant when it was a question of opposing wrong; a patient man during his illness; hospitable and friendly, generous with the little he had and stern toward himself. The monks who had taken care of him in his sickness spoke of his wisdom and holiness.

After many centuries the picturesque ruins of the medieval cathedral of Hamar bear silent witness today to the vanquished splendor of the Catholic life and culture of ancient Norway. But within a short walking distance of the ruins the tower of a modern Catholic church, St. Thorfinn's Church, points to God in heaven who is again pouring the grace of faith into this land of the Vikings. His Excellency, the Most Reverend James Mangers, Bishop of Oslo, in which diocese Hamar is again located, dedicated this

church only a few years ago. Next to the church is a large medical dispensary for eye, ear, nose and throat ailments operated by the Sisters, with a thriving two-room kindergarten.

St. Thorfinn, once the exiled Bishop of Hamar, now its patron, is continuing his work for his beloved Hamar by interceding before the throne of God for its present Bishop, Bishop Mangers, for the growing Catholic population and for the separated brethren of this beautiful city. His feast is January 8th.

St. Magnus, Earl of the Orkney Islands

Patron of those ancient Norwegian, now English Isles.

The Vikings, about the year 800, arrived on the Orkney Islands, which derive their name of Orcades (Orkney Islands) from the hardy Marseillais sailor Pytheas, who visited them on his voyage to the Ultimate Thule in the fourth century B.C.

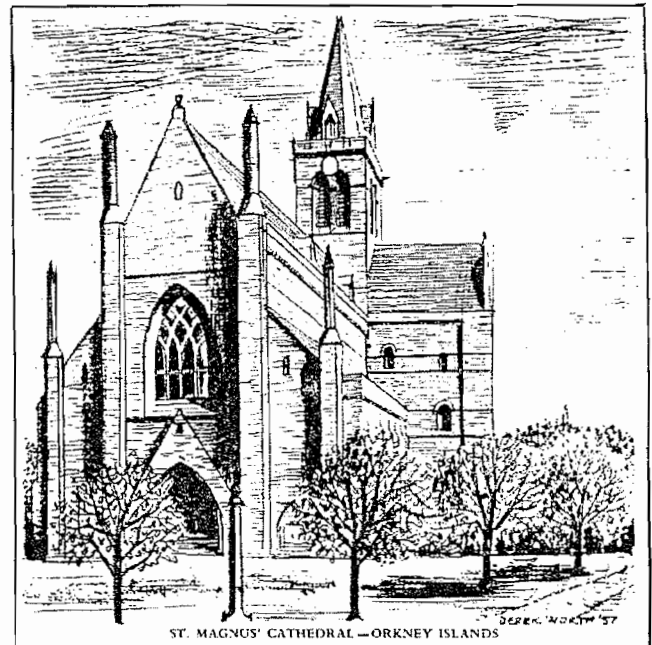
Christianity came early to these islands, brought by St. Columba's monks from Iona. During the sixth century Celtic missionaries spread throughout this group of islands, the first to come being St. Cormac the Sailor. The memory of these monks lives today in the name by which the Vikings knew them, "papae," in the islands of Papa Westray and Papa Stronsay, and other local names like Papedale, the valley at whose seaward end Kirkwall stands.

Another link with the Celtic church is the ancient round-towered chapel on Egilsay, "Church Island." Visible for miles from its position on a hill, it was in this church that St. Magnus spent the night before his death in prayer, and where, the next afternoon, his murdered body was first laid.

During the reign of King Magnus Barefoot of Norway (1093-1103) the Orkney Islands were subdued by this king. Our saintly Magnus was forced to accompany the fleet on a piratical cruise. St. Magnus refused to fight and finally escaped by leaping overboard and swimming to land. He found his way to the court of King Malcom III of Scotland, where he was kindly received, and where he lived for some time, repenting the excesses of his youth, and entering upon a course of penitence and prayer, which he continued to his death. Later he regained his rightful share of the Orkneys.

These islands under the Vikings were ruled by Jarls or Earls, subject to the king of Norway. At the begin-

ning of the twelfth century the Earldom was shared by our saintly Magnus and his cousin, the ambitious, war-like and covetous Haakon. Magnus ruled his



half of the islands with justice and kindness, while Haakon ruled by force and violence. The esteem and respect that Magnus received from his subjects aroused the jealousy of Haakon to a piece of treachery in which Magnus was murdered by his cousin. Haakon invited Magnus to a meeting at Egilsay; each of them to bring two ships and a certain number of men, and there to solemnly ratify their covenant of peace. Magnus, trusting his cousin fully, readily agreed and set out for Egilsay. He and his men arrived first on Holy Thursday of 1116, and later saw in the distance Haakon sailing toward the island with eight ships and not the two agreed on. Then Magnus went to the church, spending the whole night in prayer.

Haakon and his men landed, surrounded the church, and then Magnus stepped out among his enemies. Haakon ordered his standard-bearer to kill his cousin, but he angrily refused to do so. Then one of the servants who was ordered to kill him began to weep, but was quieted by Magnus who told him not to weep, "for he who forces you is more to blame than you are." Magnus knelt on the ground, signed himself with the cross and was killed with one blow. He was buried where he fell and later was carried to Christ Church in Birgsey. In the year 1136 his bones were taken to Kirkwall, where one year later the building of St. Magnus' Cathedral was started by his nephew, Earl Ragnvald (St. Ronald). In 1192 St. Magnus was

formally canonized and his relics were placed in a pillar of this cathedral erected in his honor at Kirkwall. (The cathedral, an unspoiled gem of Norman Architecture, stands today, a sublime fulfillment of St. Ronald's vow eight hundred years ago of a minster without equal in the land.)

During the first World War Father J. E. Rockliff, a chaplain to the Grand Fleet of the British Navy, which had been based for a time at Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands, told of his experience on several visits to St. Magnus Cathedral at Kirkwall in 1919. While watching some interior restoration work in progress, on one of his visits, he saw a part of a skull and some bones on a workman's coat on one of the seats. He learned that these bones had been found in a cavity, evidently made for them in one of the pillars. Photographs were made of them and a Professor Reid, a distinguished anthropologist, seems to have made as clear a case as possible for their identification as the bones of St. Magnus and his nephew St. Ronald. Where the bones are today seems to be a secret of the non-Catholic authorities of Kirkwall Cathedral. Some of St. Magnus' relics are supposedly at Aix-la-Chapelle and in the Church of St. Vitus at Prague.

In the missals of Norway today we find a proper Mass for the feast of St. Magnus, April 16th. The feast is still observed in the diocese of Aberdeen, Scotland, which embraces Kirkwall today.

St. Magnus Pray for us!

St. Ronald (St. Ragnvald)

It is strange how many people today consider Ronald a Scotch name. Yet St. Ronald (Ragnvald), who died on August 20, 1158, was a Jarl (earl) or chieftain of Orkney, then a Norwegian possession. He was the second Orkney Jarl of that name. The Orkney Islands remained a Norwegian dependency until 1471, when the last Orkney Jarl, William Sinclair, ceded the islands to James III of Scotland. Even to the present time the people of the Orkneys have retained their Norse character and are proud of their Norse descent, refusing to be called Scotch.

St. Ronald was the son of Gunhild, a sister of St. Magnus, and Kol Kalisson who lived on his estates at Agdir in Norway, where St. Ronald grew to manhood. It was in 1129 that King Sigurd of Norway

gave Kali, the son of Kol Kalisson, the name of Ragnvald (Ronald) and the title of Earl (Jarl) of Orkney.

The town of Kirkwall (Kirkjuvagr or Church Bay), the capital of the Orkneys, was founded by the first Jarl Ragnvald, who erected the first church there and dedicated it to St. Olaf Haraldsson who had been his close friend. Today the landward part of the parish is still called St. Ola. The Orkneys became a bishopric in 1050 and became a suffragan diocese of Trondheim in 1152.

In 1115 St. Magnus, an uncle of St. Ronald, was treacherously killed by his cousin Haakon. St. Ronald, in his efforts to recover the islands from Paul, Haakon's son, vowed, if he were successful, to build a stone church at Kirkwall in honor of St. Magnus, whose holiness was attested to by miracles very shortly after his death. And the greatest monumental and architectural work in all the Orkneys is St. Magnus' Cathedral in Kirkwall, which St. Ronald started in 1137. As Gjerset's History of the Norwegian People tells: "It is the mightiest monument left by the Norsemen in the West, indeed, next to the Trondheim Cathedral, the oldest monument of the whole ancient Norway. Here, too, is a confirmation of what may generally be said of Viking expeditions; namely, that altogether in themselves wild and barbaric, they always contained the germ of a new, rich cultural development, that stirred as soon as the warlike spirit sank to rest, and left room for the play of the intellectual strength and civilizing power that also dwelt in the Vikings. St. Magnus' Cathedral is the living expression of this thought."

In 1152 St. Ronald, by invitation, visited King Ingi at Bergen where he met with a returned crusader. He became possessed by a strong desire to visit the Holy Land. The summer of that year was far advanced before he sailed, but he had a prosperous voyage which lasted three years.

In 1158 St. Ronald was murdered at Calder in Caithness, a Norse settlement in Scotland, by Thorbiorn, foster-father of Earl Harald, who had been made an outlaw by our saint, Earl Ragnvald, for a murder committed in Kirkwall. "He died five nights after the summer Marymas. Earl Harald brought the body with a splendid following to the Orkneys, and it was buried at the St. Magnus Church; and there it rested until God manifested Ronald's merits by many and great miracles. Then Bishop Bjarni had his holy re-

mains exhumed with the permission of the Pope." He was canonized in 1192. His feast is August 20th, five days after the summer Marymas (i.e., after the Assumption).

Very few ever think of St. Ronald as the builder of the Cathedral of St. Magnus at Kirkwall and too few think of this second Jarl Ragnvald of the Orkneys as a Norwegian saint and martyr, which he is.

St. Ronald, pray for us!

Sweden

Blessed Ingrid of Skanninge

(According to Rev. Frederick Hinnebusch, O.P.)

Blessed Ingrid Elovsdotter, who first brought the Second Order of St. Dominic to Sweden, was born early in the thirteenth century of a noble family at Skanninge in Östergötland and was a connection of St. Bridget of Sweden, who seems in many ways to have followed in her foot steps.

In childhood Ingrid was quiet, gentle, reserved and modest with a special devotion to the Blessed Mother and also to St. Dominic, for her family was friendly with the Friars Preachers, who had first founded a priory at Skanninge in 1233. She grew up to be not only virtuous but beautiful and, although she had hoped to become a nun, she had to bow to her parents' wishes and marry their choice, a young nobleman of good character and estate. She devoted herself, nevertheless, to piety and mortification, good works and almsgiving.

Her husband died young, and Ingrid, rejecting further offers of marriage, began to wear the Dominican habit. She and her sister Christine and other companions put themselves under the spiritual direction of the famed Friar Petrus de Dacia, who became lector at Skanninge in 1271. Petrus sang Ingrid's praises in a letter of 1278 singling out her austerities, her contemplation, her charity to the poor, and mentioning also that she received many revelations from God sometimes the Stigmata. Impelled by devotion to Our Lord's Passion, she now set out with her companions on the arduous and perilous pilgrimage to the Holy Land. On their return they visited Rome and the shrine of St. James at Compostella in Spain.

Meanwhile, Ingrid was hoping to lay aside her possessions and found a convent of Dominican Nuns, the

first in Sweden. In a vision she was told to found it near the Church of St. Martin in Skanninge. She obtained the permission of the King, of the Bishop and of the Dominican Provincial. Her brothers donated the necessary land, while Ingrid contributed her fortune. She also desired to obtain Papal approval, but had to make several long trips to Rome before she obtained this in 1281. The convent had meanwhile been built near the Church of St. Martin. Four nuns were now sent from the Convent at Roskilde in Denmark, and the ceremony of foundation was carried out on the Feast of the Assumption 1281, by Bishop Henry of Linköping in the presence of King Magnus Ladislas. On the same day Ingrid pronounced her vows and was installed as Prioress.

She ruled, however, for only a year, for she died on September 2, 1282. Her convent, however, became a center of mysticism, asceticism and the dissemination of Dominican thought, and Ingrid's intercession performed miracles—e.g., safety at sea, recovery of sight and the raising of a drowned boy from the dead. The Cause of Ingrid's Canonization progressed to the point where the Pope (in 1499) ordered the Translation of her relics and directed that she be honored with piety, reverence and solemnity. This Translation took place in 1507. Due to the Reformation, however, her relics have disappeared, her canonization process has been interrupted, and only remnants of her convent remain visible in Skanninge.

Blessed Brynolf Algotsson

August 16

Rev. Domicic Drumm, C.P.

Brynolf Algotsson was Bishop of Skara 1278-1317. He was one of Sweden's great writers of the Middle Ages. He wrote a beautiful Office for the feast of the Crown of Thorns, for one of these Thorns was preserved in his cathedral at Skara. His family were more than once embroiled in the then frequent feuds between the nobles. On one of these occasions he had to take refuge with the Cistercians near Lake Vatter and it was here that he composed the Office of St. Helen of Skbvde. [*Editor: Jorgensen tells us in addition that he had studied in Paris and that he also wrote Offices in honor of the Blessed Virgin and of St. Eskil. His Cause was started with those of Blessed Ingrid, etc. and like the others reached the*

point where the Pope in 1499 ordered the Translation of his relics and that he be honored with piety, reverence and solemnity, but the Reformation then intervened.]

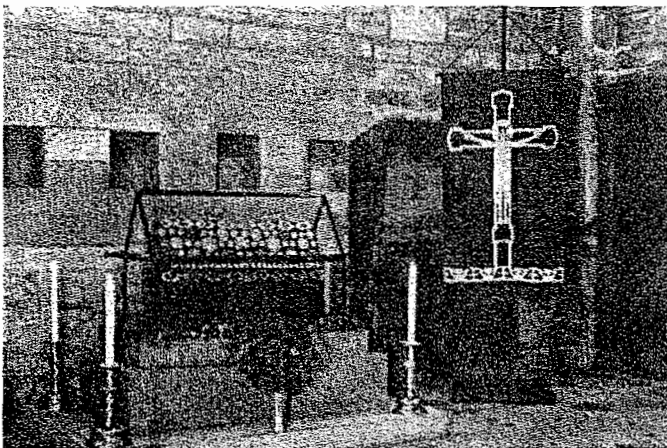
**St. Bridget (or Birgitta) of Sweden, 1303-1373
(Oct. 8)**

Rev. Dominic Drumm, C.P.

Four years after St. Erik's death, Sweden was declared an ecclesiastical province by Pope Alexander III with Uppsala as Archiepiscopal See. From now on the Church flourished in the land, churches and monasteries increased in number. Progress, with relative peace, characterized the following three centuries.

During this period of growth and expansion arises the figure of St. Bridget, revered by us as a great mystic, and by all the Swedes as the greatest personality Sweden has produced. Finsta was her birthplace and she was of royal blood. Her young life was closely associated with the religious orders, of which there were many in the district. She is said to have been all her life of a jolly disposition, but there was a strain of strictness and austerity, early seen in her character, which would show to advantage in her later life.

After many years of married life, during which eight children were born to her, she received a greater vocation from God to found a strict, contemplative order. For this purpose she made the journey to Rome to ask permission of the Pope, little knowing that she would never see her homeland again. The Vicar of Christ was at that time living in Avignon in France. For about twenty years Bridget made every effort of threat, persuasion and cajolery to have the successive Popes return to Rome, their



Shrine of SS. Bridget and Catherine, Convent Church, Vadstena

rightful residence. (She was a contemporary of Saint Catherine of Sienna who, as all know, did even more to bring the Pope back to Rome.)

For many years St. Bridget received almost daily revelations from Our Lord and Our Lady, mostly dealing with the Passion, but containing also many prophecies. Papal approbation to found her order she received after a long wait, but death intervened to prevent her returning to Sweden. This occurred in 1373, after her return from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Her remains were taken to Sweden by her daughter St. Catherine. Her shrine of relics can be seen in the Blue Church (which was the chapel of the motherhouse of her Brigittine Order) at Vadstena. She was formally canonized by the Pope in 1391.

(Feast: Roman Missal and Breviary: Oct. 8. The Roman Martyrology commemorates her on that day, as also on July 23 and Oct. 7.)

[*Ed.*: See Johannes Jörgensen's *St. Bridget of Sweden*, 2 vol., Longman's, 1954.]

**St. Catherine (or Karin) of Vadstena
(Mar. 22)**

Rev. Dominic Drumm, C.P.

To St. Catherine, daughter of St. Bridget, was entrusted the establishment of the Order of Brigittines. Born in 1331, she received an excellent upbringing by her parents and married early. After her widowed mother's departure to Rome, however, Catherine missed her so much that her health was in danger, so her husband persuaded her to make the journey to Rome. Her husband died shortly afterwards quite unexpectedly. [*Editor*: It is said that St. Catherine had persuaded her husband that they live together like brother and sister; and the Roman Martyrology on Mar. 24 calls her "St. Catherine the Virgin, daughter of St. Bridget."]

Catherine was a woman of remarkable beauty, and on one occasion attempted to disfigure her face in order to discourage the many suitors who now sought her hand in marriage. She became her mother's constant companion and helper during those long years of waiting in Rome, thereby receiving an excellent spiritual training from the saint.

Catherine became the first Abbess of the Brigittines in Vadstena, the cradle of the order. This monastery was built according to plans revealed by Our Lord

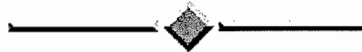
to St. Bridget, by a Jovan Petersson who had visited the saint shortly before her death. During her reign as Abbess, Catherine saw the order well launched and did much to forward the canonization of her mother. She died in 1381, and her feast is kept March 22.

**Blessed Nils Hermansson (Nicholas Hermanni)
1326-1391**

(According to Jorgensen's St. Bridget of Sweden)

Blessed Nils Hermansson (Nicholas Hermanni), poet and ascetic, was born in 1326. While studying at Skänninge in Östergötland, he was chosen by St. Bridget to become resident tutor for her sons and herself at her manor of Ulfasa not far away. Later, he studied in France and there took Doctor's Degrees in

both Civil and Canon Law. He returned to Sweden, became a Canon of Uppsala Cathedral, then Archdeacon of Linköping and finally Bishop of Linköping. Here he received the body of St. Bridget on its return from Rome and was advised by her daughter, St. Catherine, to remain with his diocese rather than resign in order to lead a life of contemplation. He wrote the Hymn to St. Bridget sung in all Brigittine convents, *Rosa, rorans bonitatem*. He died on May 2, 1391 and his tomb is preserved in the north apsidal chapel of Linköping Cathedral. [*Editor: His Cause was introduced with those of Blessed Ingrid, etc. and progressed in the same way to the point where the Pope, in 1499, ordered his Translation and that he be honored with piety, reverence and solemnity; but the Reformation then intervened.*]



**Feast Days of
Scandinavian Patron Saints**

- St. Henry (Finland) January 19
- St. Ansgar (Scandinavia) February 3
- St. Erik (Sweden) May 18
- St. Canute (Denmark) July 10
- St. Thorlak (Iceland) July 20
- St. Birgitta (Europe) July 23
- St. Olav (Norway), July 29

Chapter four: Saints of Iceland

Gunnar F. Gudmundsson

ÖGMUNDARSON



Biography

Jón Ögmundarson was born 1052 at Breidabólstaður in Fljótshlíð in Southern Iceland. He went to school at Skálholt and became a disciple of the first Bishop in Iceland, Isleifur Gissurarson. When Jón had received his ordination as a subdeacon, he went abroad to add to his knowledge and pilgrimaged all the way to Rome. On his way home he found Sæmundur the Learned, who had for many years studied in the "Black School" (presumably Sorbonne).

Shortly after the year 1100 the leaders of the people in Northern Iceland asked the Bishop of Skálholt, Gissur Isleifsson (the son of the first Bishop), to establish a new Diocese in the North. They pointed to the fact that it was a long way for them to travel to Skálholt and it was not just that the most populated part of Iceland was without a Bishop seat. Bishop Gissur was sympathetic to their petition, not the least because this arrangement would prevent the country from ever being without a Bishop. Jón Ögmundarson was elected as the first Bishop in Northern Iceland. Gissur Isleifsson is thought to have used his influence in favor of Jón. They had been good friends ever since they were schoolmates in Skálholt and Gissur may also have wanted a man with educated background from the South to lay the foundation of

the new Diocese.

Jón Ögmundarson had one serious defect as a future Bishop: He had twice been married (but had no children). For this reason the Archbishop in Lund (then belonging to the Danish King) refused to ordain Jón and sent him to the Holy Father. The Pope, Paschal II, gave his approval. Jón returned back to Lund and received his ordination there on the 29th of April 1106.

As a Bishop Jón Ögmundarson is mainly remembered for having strengthened the morality in his Diocese and having depleted many of the remains of heathendom. He ordered people to attend Mass and Divine Offices, especially on feast-days. Everyone was obligated to begin the day by crossing himself and singing "Credo in deum". In addition to that he demanded that everyone know "Pater Noster" and "Ave Maria", cross themselves before meals and praise the Lord seven times a day. He tried to forbid obscene songs at dancing, but this had only limited result. However, he had greater success when he gave the prescription that the weekdays should be called by their order "as did the Fathers in the Bible" instead of calling them after the names of the pagan gods.

The greatest achievement of Jón Ögmundarson was undoubtedly the foundation of a cathedral school at Hólar and of a Benedictine Monastery at Thingeyri. In the beginning the monks lived in a small community with a Prior but the place became a real Monastery in 1133 after Jón's death. This Monastery was one of the foremost cultural seats in Iceland in the Middle Ages.

The school at Hólar marked a new epoch in the history of Christianity in Iceland. This was the first cathedral School in the country, all schools until then being private ones. Jón Ögmundarson cared very much about his school. He even got teachers from abroad. Two are known by names: One, the headmaster, coming from Gotland (Southern Sweden), the other presumably a Frenchman. The subjects must have been the typical "septem artes liberales" but the learning of Latin and chants was especially emphasized. The Bishop himself was a good musician, playing a lyre and had an exceptionally beau-

tiful singing voice. Hólar became a culture seat. A steady stream of people came to Hólar to study or to experience the sublimity of the religious life at the Bishop seat.

The Christian life flourished in the diocese of Hólar in the first part of the 12th century, the Bishop leading by giving examples of asceticism and devotion. According to the story, Jón Ögmundarson was strict to the sinners but mild to those who regretted their mischiefs and he took special care of the poor and widows.

Veneration

Already in his life Jón Ögmundarson was famous for the power of his prayers and his visionary abilities. But he does not seem to have been venerated as a holy man until about 80 years after his death. There may be reason for this. At the time of Jón Ögmundarson's death the Church in Iceland was still not fully mature. The last remains of paganism had just recently been uprooted, perhaps mostly by the initiative of Jón Ögmundarson. No Monastery was in the country except for a small one at Thingeyri, which was not fully established until after Jón's death. The idea of an Icelandic Saint seemed therefore to be premature. After all the Icelanders already had their patron, Saint Olaf, the Norwegian King. It could be considered presumptuous if the Icelanders put forth their own national saint thus diminishing the importance of Saint Olaf. These speculations are not without grounds in the light of the fact that the Archbishop in Trondheim was reluctant to accept the cult of Saint Thorlak and of Jón Ögmundarson some decades later.

In December 1198 the Bishop Brandur Sæmundarson at Hólar authorized that the bones of Jón Ögmundarson be exhumed from earth and washed. At the same time the grave of another Bishop at Hólar, Björn Gilsson (1147-1160), was opened and the bones of both of them were placed in new coffins and their graves remained open. The reason for this may have been the exhumation of the mortal remains of Saint Thorlak a few months earlier.

The winter of 1199-1200 was unusually hard in Northern Iceland. A votive was then made to Jón Ögmundarson at the instigation of a woman who had, in a dream, received this advice from Jón himself.

Soon after the weather changed for the better. This same winter the superiority of Jón Ögmundarson compared with Björn Gilsson was confirmed when, at Jón's grave, Bishop Brandur was healed from a disease. This was considered a miracle. On the 3rd of March 1200, the relics of Jón Ögmundarson were ceremonially exhumed from earth and entered in the Cathedral at Hólar. At Althing that summer it was decided that the death date of Jón Ögmundarson, the 23rd of April, should be commemorated with a special mass ("summum festum", according to sources from the 15th century). Shortly after this event Gunnlaugur Leifsson began to write the history of Jón Ögmundarson in Latin, mostly at the initiative of Gudmundur Arason, who later became a Bishop at Hólar. Many stories of miracles were also compiled. In the year 1315 the day of translation (the 3rd of March) was made a special feast day ("duplex festum") by the Norwegian Bishop at Hólar, Audunn Thorbergsson.

Sources from 14th and 15th centuries, e.g., votive letters, prove that Jón Ögmundarson was venerated as a holy man. His shrine was placed above the high altar of the Cathedral at Hólar and in that church there was also a golden statue of him, made after a successful votive appeal during the hard winter 1320/21.

The center of the veneration was the Cathedral at Hólar. In the beginning it was dedicated to the Virgin Mary but around 1300 when a new Cathedral was built, Jón Ögmundarson also became its patron. It is difficult to say in how many churches Jón Ögmundarson was held in special reverence because he sometimes was mixed up with John the Evangelist or John the Baptist, all of them bearing the same (or similar) name in Icelandic. With certainty nine churches had pictures of Jón Ögmundarson. Two of these churches were in the diocese of Skálholt.

It is a fact that Jón Ögmundarson has always been in the shadow of the other national saint, Thorlak Thorhallsson, and has never been so popular as Bishop Gudmundur Arason (1160-1237). One reason might be that the life of Jón Ögmundarson was not so dramatic as that of the two others. Some critics have said that Jón was made a saint to countervail the influence of Saint Thorlak, the patron of Skálholt. Anyway, the opinions of scholars in recent years are favorable even more so than of Saint Thorlak and Gudmundur. Jón Ögmundarson is respected for the

renaissance of culture and religious life during his office as Bishop at Hólar.

Sources

At the beginning of the 13th century a Benedictine monk at the monastery of Thingeyri, Gunnlaugur Leifsson, wrote the history of Jón Ögmundarson in Latin. This had obviously the purpose of introducing Jón to the Church authority so that he might be canonized. This legend is now only preserved in an Icelandic translation. The legend of Jón Ögmundarson is a very tendentious work and must be taken with precaution when looking for historical facts.

Jón Ögmundarson is mentioned in Icelandic chronicles also his name occasionally appears in documents which have been published in *Diplomatarium Islandicum*. Professor Magnús Már Lárusson has made a thorough account of Jón Ögmundarson in an article in *Kultur-historisk Leksikon for Nordisk Middelalder 7*. (Copenhagen 1981, sec. ed. 608-612). Last it should be mentioned that Jón Ögmundarson lives in the tales of the nation as a companion of the famous Priest at Oddi, Sæmundur the Learned.



Gudmundur Arason was born in 1161 at the farm Grjótá in Hörgárdal in North Iceland, an illegitimate child of a noble parentage. At an early age he was sent to his uncle, who was a Priest, to study for the

Priesthood. According to the story Gudmundur made great progress, received his first ordination when only 12 years old, became Deacon two years later and was ordained a Priest at the age of 24.

Gudmundur was a quarrelsome and a restless child but two events had a deep effect on him and seem to have changed him permanently. The one was the consequence of a shipwreck when he was going to Norway together with his tutor. He broke his leg when a huge wave fell over the ship and it took him many months to recover after much suffering. The other blow came shortly after Gudmundur's Ordination when one of his closest friends, the son of the Bishop at Hólar, died from a disease. Gudmundur now became very enthusiastic in his devotion and mortification so much that some people thought he was losing his mind. He was restless, moved from one parish to another and occasionally gave instructions to young disciples. The power of his prayers and his blessings, especially of water-springs, made him well-known all over the country.

In the year 1201 Brandur Sæmundarson, the Bishop at Hólar, died. It was a custom that a new Bishop was chosen at Althing (the national assembly) at Thingvellir. This time the election took place at a meeting in the Diocese of Hólar in order to escape the influence of the chiefs in the Bishopric of Skálholt. The majority of the people at the meeting wanted to have Gudmundur Arason as the next Bishop at Hólar. Gudmundur hesitated but accepted at last. Undoubtedly his devotional life and piety was in favor of him and also that the other nominee was from the Diocese of Skálholt, which was not well seen in North Iceland. It was also rumored that by the election of Gudmundur the leader of the chiefs in North Iceland would in fact rule over the Church in the Diocese of Hólar because Gudmundur was closely related to his wife. But this proved to be wrong.

Gudmundur Arason was a sincere supporter of the ideal, followed and proclaimed in these years by the mendicant orders, that the Church should not live in wealth but give her earnings to the poor. "The heritage of Jesus the crucified is for the poor", Gudmundur is said to have announced. The generosity of the new Bishop to the poor made the chiefs worried because they were, to some extent at least, responsible for the economy of the Bishopric. More serious was the disagreement which arose when the Bishop began

to claim the rights of the Church. His predecessor in this matter was Saint Thorlak, the Bishop at Skálholt, who forty years earlier had tried to force the chiefs to acknowledge the authority of the Bishop over the private churches. The Althing was both legislative assembly and the highest court in Iceland. Gudmundur Arason was the first to maintain that the Church authority alone should judge in spiritual matters. This view had been confirmed in 1196 by Pope Celestine III in a letter to the Archbishop in Trondheim. The chiefs in North Iceland were not ready to accept this and for almost 30 years Bishop Gudmundur was constantly fighting with them. No wonder that his contemporaries saw much resemblance between him and Saint Thomas Becket. Gudmundur on the other hand was a great admirer of Saint Ambrose, the Bishop of Milan. An attempt was made to solve the problem by appealing to the Archbishop in Trondheim and even the King of Norway became involved but apparently with limited results. At a later stage Gudmundur is said to have appealed to the Pope, himself. The Holy Father was seemingly not very pleased with Gudmundur's behavior, judging from a quote in his letter in one of the stories of Gudmundur Arason: "Si vult cedere, cedat."

Most of his time as a Bishop, Gudmundur Arason was in exile, in Norway but mainly wandering about the country with a flock of poor people after him. Some of his followers behaved themselves mischievously, stealing from farmers and even killing people. In the year 1232 the Archbishop in Trondheim at last managed to make a compromise between Gudmundur Arason and his opponents. After that the Bishop could live at Hólar in peace. He died there in 1237 at 76 years of age. Gudmundur left the church divided and out of control, but people continued to admire and love him for his benevolence and charity.

Veneration

Already in his life Gudmundur Arason was thought to be able to work miracles. After his death the stories about him and his miracles continued to increase. But a formal veneration was initiated by the Norwegian Bishop at Hólar, Audunn Thorbergsson, who in the year 1315 exhumed the mortal remains of Gudmundur and brought them into the Cathedral.

In the middle of the 13th century the Abbot Arngrímur Brandsson wrote the history of Gudmundur

Arason in Latin. This was the first step to have Gudmundur canonized by the Pope. In 1365 a votive was made to the Virgin Mary and Gudmundur Arason. It was promised to collect money which should either be sent to the Pope to bring about the canonization of Gudmundur or given to the poor. In 1376 this was repeated when learned and laymen promised to give 1/120 of their properties "so that Gudmundur could enter the community of the holy people," as the chronicles say. In 1403 it was decided to make a shrine for the relics of Gudmundur.

There are some indications that these efforts of the Icelanders resulted in the beatification of Gudmundur. The English bishop at Hólar, Jón Vilhjálmsón Craxton, uses the word "beatus" of Gudmundur in a letter from 1430. After this Gudmundur is invariably called "beatus" or even "sanctus" in sources from 15th and 16th centuries. No later than in 1477 the death date of Gudmundur (the 16th of March) was commemorated by a special Mass. In a votive letter from that year it is decided that the day before Gudmundur's Mass there should be "dry-fasting".

In the 16th century the Bishops Jón Arason at Hólar and Ögmundur Pálsson at Skálholt were in the lead of having Gudmundur canonized. In a letter from the 6th of August 1524 the delegate of the Archbishop in Trondheim tells him that the Pope preferred to follow the examples of his predecessors, Leo X and Adrian VI, not to canonize Gudmundur. Later in the letter it is indicated that a canonization during the reign of Pope Adrian VI was impossible because of the large sum of money that was required ("Nam veram canonizationem non deberet expedire cum tribus milibus ducatis, sicut fieri vidi sub Adriano papa . . ."). But the delegate adds that some kind of canonization was possible ("... alium modum quasi similem canonizatione obtinere . . .") and for that purpose information about the beatified Bishop ("beato episcopo") was necessary. It could be good to send 300 ducats to expedite the case.

Two years later the Bishop Jón Arason declares that he had sent money to the Archbishop who had promised to let Gudmundur be canonized if it was God's will. But this came to nothing in the turmoil of the Reformation.

No Icelander has been so much venerated as Gudmundur Arason, even after the Reformation in some places in Iceland. One reason may be that he trav-

elled more about the country than any other person during his time, everywhere caring for people and blessing water-springs which were said to have healing effects. At least 70 water-springs in Iceland are named after him (the watersupply of Reykjavik, the capital of Iceland, comes from one of these "Gvendarbrunnur". Gvendur is a nick-name from Gudmundur). The people of Iceland have showed their esteem and love for their Bishop by always calling him Gudmundur (or Gvendur) the Good.

Epilogue

There have been different opinions about Gudmundur Arason among scholars. Some have criticized him for fanaticism and accused him of always appealing to foreign authorities, i.e., the Archbishop and even the King of Norway himself. Thus he had started



*The present church and bell tower,
a memorial to Jón Arason and Hólan*

a process that reached its highest point 1262/1264 when the Icelanders lost their independence. Others have stressed the complexity of the personality and maintain no less the sincere devotion and charity of Gudmundur Arason.

Sources

Rich material is available about the life of Gudmundur Arason, both independent stories and interpolations in the so-called Sturlunga saga, which describes some great events in Iceland in the 13th century. In addition, chronicles and Diplomatarium Islandicum are important sources. It should also be mentioned that the name of Gudmundur Arason is connected with more places in Iceland than the name of any other person.

Gudmundur Arason

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THORLAK
+1193



I. Growing up and first years of education

Thorlak was born in the year 1133 at Hlidarendi in Fljotshlid in Southern Iceland. His father Thorhallur was a sefarer before commencing farming. His mother Halla was said to be intelligent and beneficial. Even in his early years Thorlak was eager to learn "but did not indulge in play or irrational behaviour" as told in his legend. His mother realized

what potential the lad had and moved with her son to Oddi, which at that time was one of the wealthiest church estates in the land and a great educational seat. At Oddi, Thorlak studied Christian doctrine under the guidance of Priest Eyjolfur, who was the son of Saemundur Frodi (the wise). Thorlak studied well because he is said to have been ordained a deacon at the young age of fifteen.

In the year 1148 Bishop Magnus Einarsson passed away and Skalholt was without a Bishop for the next four years. As a result there were not many clerics about and therefore it was thought wise to ask Bishop Bjorn Gilsson at Holar to become the ordainer at Althing. He conceded to the people's wishes and ordained novices, among them Thorlak Thorhallsson. Thorlak was then not yet twenty and it was highly unusual that such a young man would be ordained to the priesthood. In Thorlak's legend it is said that during the first seasons he had taken on to serve small but prosperous parishes and he obtained wealth and popularity with ease.

When Thorlak had served as a Priest in Iceland for two or three years, he sailed abroad for education. First the road took him to Paris which was then the principal city for education on the Continent, but thereafter Thorlak went to Lincoln in England and was a total of six years abroad.¹

II. Education abroad

The twelfth century was a changing era in the history of the Catholic Church. During that time the Church was in the process of a renewal and she grew increasingly strong as a religious institution and a political power on the Continent. The famous monastery at Cluny in Burgundy, France, was founded shortly after the year 900. There was at that time within the Church a large reform movement which continued almost without a halt until the thirteenth century and perhaps reached its peak with the life and works of St. Francis of Assisi. The core of the reformers' message was the demand of poverty in the spirit of the Apostles and the old Catholic Church and imitation of Christ.

One of the best known reformers of the twelfth century was Bernard of Clairvaux who died in 1153, during which time Thorlak sailed abroad to study at the centre of reform in France. Bernard was a vigorous pioneer of the Cistercian Order which was a renewed

branch on the tree of the deeply rooted Benedictine observance. A monastery of the Benedictine Order had indeed been founded at Thingeyri in Northern Iceland about the time Thorlak was born. During this time the administrators of the Church had disputes with temporal powers regarding the legal rights of the Church.

In the year 1073 one of the monks at the reformed monastery of Cluny, Hildebrand, became Pope and took the name Gregory VII. Two years later he issued a bull (dictatus papae) in which he declared that the Pope was the Supreme Ruler of Christendom and therefore it was his right alone to appoint to the highest positions of the Church. Following this the Church's administrators could not tolerate that churches and abbeys were owned by secular princes or other laymen as was the custom, for example, in Iceland at that time. To pursue these ideals it was vital to strengthen the solidarity within the Church and mark the priesthood's uniqueness within society.

Some time before Gregory VII became Pope, he had presided over a council in Rome, where it was demanded that Priests at cathedrals and other similar institutions, obey certain rules and live in poverty. After the council, it was emphasized that poverty, celibacy and obedience were virtues which all priests should adjust to, even though they were outside monastic orders.

Many priests were in Orders associated with St. Augustine. There was an attempt to get all secular Priests in ecclesiastical institutions to follow his rule of religious life. The Augustinian Order was divided into a few communities and one of them was connected with the monastery of St. Victor in Paris.² This monastery was to play a great role in the history of Iceland, because it is believed that Thorlak had studied in the monastery's school. After returning to Iceland, Thorlak became a monk of the Augustinian Order and it is known that the Archbishops in Trondheim during the days of Thorlak were under great influence from the monastery of St. Victor.³

It is clear by what was mentioned before that the unity of the Church was growing in the twelfth century and the Pope's Church was on the advance. Intellectual life was flourishing and a golden era of scholarship begun. About the year 1140, there was published a great body of ecclesiastical law, which the monk Gratian, a university teacher in Bologna,

Italy, had compiled. Until that time single law and legal stipulations had been scattered about to the great inconvenience of the rulers of the Church. The publication of the body of canon law, associated with the monk Gratian, was to strengthen the Church as an institution and make her image clearly perceptible. This is mentioned here, because in all probability Thorlak went to Lincoln in England to study the new discipline, canon law as working there were known specialists in that field.

III. The Abbot

When Thorlak returned to Iceland, he stayed a few winters with his uncles. In Thorlak's legend it is said that his uncles had encouraged him to marry. It is especially mentioned in his legend that superiors were not bothered if priests married widows, it is interesting that Thorlak gave in to the uncles' provocation, as priests were forbidden to marry according to the Lateran Council's decree of 1139.

He went with his uncles to visit a wealthy widow with the objective to ask for her hand in marriage. He was somewhat tormented by his conscience, because the night before he planned to propose, a man came to him in his dreams, dignified in appearance and distinguished in style.

He is to have said to Thorlak: "I know, you intend to ask for this woman's hand in marriage, but you shall not let that matter speak, as so it will not be and another bride much superior is intended for you, and you shall acquire no other". Here it is signified that the Church was the bride that Thorlak was to unite with. It is not mentioned that he had gone on other proposal tours.

After this event Thorlak became priest at Kirkjubaer in Sida and remained there for six years. Then it so happened that a rich man named Thorkell, who was getting old, wanted to donate to Christ and saints a part of his belongings. He came to Thorlak and asked him to found in Thykkvibaer a canon house: monasteries of St. Augustine's Order were so named. That was easily done as Thorlak himself had considered to enter an order.

The monastery was founded in 1168 and Thorlak became administrator, first as a Prior and later as Abbot. Thorlak's administration of the monastery was highly spoken of and it is said that men had arrived at

Thorlak's canon house from different monastic lives, both from within the country and from abroad, to see and learn good manners. The monastery at Thykkvibaer was a great cultural seat and the influence from there was to enrich Icelandic literature. Already during Thorlak's monastery years it was claimed that he could turn matters for the better with his benediction and religious chant.

IV. The Bishop

In the year 1174, at the request of Skalhofs Bishop Klaengur Thorsteinsson, there was to be elected a Bishop at Althing, as he was becoming old and said to be unfit for official duties. Althing was not unanimous about a candidate for Bishop and the matter was then referred to Klaengur, and he selected Thorlak as his successor. One of the deciding factors was that Thorlak was considered to be a great fund raiser, because the financial balance of the Diocese was very poor. Also Thorlak's education and beautiful lifestyle, which he was well known for, had been to his advantage. Finally it is believed that Jon Loftsson in Oddi, who was one of the greatest among chiefs in Iceland, had supported Thorlak, Jon was the first cousin of Eyjolfur, Thorlak's master.

Iceland had been under the Archdiocese in Trondheim, Norway for 12 years during this time. When the Archdiocese was established shortly after the middle of the twelfth century, the Church in Norway had approved many demands that she had lodged, which were in the spirit of the reform occurring in the Church at that time, as mentioned previously.

During this time the archiepiscopal chair was occupied by Eysteinn Erlendsson, a man of Icelandic ancestry, who had received his education in the same area as Thorlak. Thorlak is to have received instructions during his journey for ordination, to pioneer the ideals of the Universal Church just as it had been done to some extent on the Continent. This was reiterated in the Archbishop's letters to Thorlak and especially emphasized that the Bishop take control over the churches which were then in the hands of the chiefs and that he try to reform the morality of the people.

The episcopate was somewhat difficult for Thorlak. One of the reasons was that chiefs led by Jon Loftsson would not hand over to the Bishop the con-

trol of their churches as so stated by canon law. They argued that they or their parents had established the churches and had handed over to the churches a great deal of belongings on the condition that they or their children would regulate them for the unforeseeable future. These conditions or contracts had been confirmed by prior Bishops and the legislative council of Althing and the chiefs maintained that canon law and the Archbishop's orders could change nothing in that respect. At that the Bishop could not interfere.

Thorlak was more troubled by people's bad morals. In the days of Thorlak it was common that chiefs and other men kept mistresses and had children with them. It is even mentioned that Thorlak's predecessor in the diocese, Klaengur Thorsteinsson, had a concubine and with her a child. The Archbishop in

tion in moral affairs, was to impose a penitential. The penitential was a list of punishable misdeeds and it prescribed what penance men had to take on to get absolution. This penitential was among the strictest then known in Europe.⁵ It was both to be a directive for teachers in moral affairs and increase the Church's influence in the country, by allowing her interference into people's daily life. The Bishop had no other way of imposing the law except his power to excommunicate, in case his message was not obeyed. As far as is known, Thorlak was first among Bishops to use this power to some extent, but no other Bishop before him had, as forcefully as he, seen to it that the teaching of the Church was adhered to.

Thorlak had always been in poor health, but he often exhausted himself with fasting and other austerities. During one of his visitations in the South he caught a disease and died after three months in bed. He was sixty years of age.

SKALHOLTSBISKUPAR	
ISLEIFUR BISKUPARSON	1082-1102
GISELEI BISKUPARSON	1082-1102
ÞORLAKUR ÞORSTEINSSON	1102-1198
WALDEMAR BISKUPARSON	1102-1198
CLANGUR ÞORSTEINSSON	1102-1198
ÞORLAKUR ÞORSTEINSSON	1198-1237
PALL BISKUPARSON	1198-1237
WALDEMAR BISKUPARSON	1237-1263
GEORGIUS BISKUPARSON	1263-1289
ISLAFFUR BISKUPARSON	1289-1309
BRANDUR BISKUPARSON	1309-1327
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1327
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1327-1343
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1343-1374
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1374-1390
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1390-1402
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1402-1428
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1428-1454
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1454-1480
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1480-1506
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1506-1532
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1532-1558
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1558-1584
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1584-1610
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1610-1636
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1636-1662
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1662-1688
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1688-1714
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1714-1740
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1740-1766
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1766-1792
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1792-1818
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1818-1844
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1844-1870
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1870-1896
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1896-1922
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1922-1948
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1948-1974
ÞORLAKUR BISKUPARSON	1974-2000

The Series Episcoporum in the Skalholt Church

travelled south to the Apostolic See and is thought to have been the main reason that Bishop Klaengur resigned from office.⁴ Thorlak's principal opponent in this case was as before Jon Loftsson. He had an affair with Thorlak's sister, Ragnheidur, and had two sons with her. One was Pall, who was to succeed Thorlak as a Bishop, after his death. The Bishop threatened excommunication if Jón did not cease his cohabitation with Ragnheidur, but Jón had his way. He later decided to separate from Ragnheidur and confessed to the Bishop. It should be noted that during this time it was wise for Thorlak to move with caution in his dealing with the Country's dignitaries, since he could no longer expect the Archbishop's support, because he was under attack in his conflict with the royal power in Norway.

The main plan in Thorlak's attempt to edify the country and to get approved the Church's jurisdic-

V. The Saint

Four years after Thorlak's death, he appeared in a dream to a Priest in the North and so instructed that his body should be removed from earth, and after petitioning him whether there would be any signs indicating his sanctity, the Priest told Bishop Brandur at Holar of his dream. The result was that in the following summer, Bishop Brandur sent his representative with letters to Bishop Pall and other dignitaries at Althing. In these letters it was told how many in the North had received cure, comfort in sorrow and support in opposition by votive offerings to Bishop Thorlak. Men convened in Althing about these matters and it was decided that Bishop Pall declare in the legislative council that all men should be allowed a votive appeal to the "beatified Bishop Thorlak". On July 20th, 1198, five years after Thorlak's death, his mortal remains were exhumed from ground and entered in the Cathedral at Skalholt. In the year 1237 it was decided to commemorate this day to Bishop Thorlak with a special mass, the feast of Thorlak. During the summer of 1199 another feast of Thorlak was made legal at Althing and it was to be celebrated on Thorlak's death date, December 23rd.

In a short time there was collected at Skalholt a great amount of money that men had given to Saint Thorlak. Bishop Pall had a shrine made, big and beautiful for Thorlak's relic. This shrine is said to

have cost the same as 480 cows and stood above the high altar in Skalholt until the Protestant Reformation, but was then taken from the church and stripped of all its decorations. It is long since lost.

Source material indicates that a shrine of St. Thorlak was in Skalholt almost until 1800. It is not known if it was the ancient main shrine or another shrine containing Thorlak's mortal remains. Small simple reliquaries with Bishop Thorlak's relics have without doubt existed in many places, especially in those churches that bore his name. In 1823 Steingrímur Jonsson, then pastor in Oddi but later Bishop, sent a reliquary from the church at Keldur to His Majesty's Council of Archaeology in Copenhagen. It is now in the possession of the Danish National Museum. In his letter dated August 15th, 1823, to Finnur Magnússon, professor at the University of Copenhagen, Steingrímur conjectures that this is the shrine of St. Thorlak.⁶

Bishop Thorlak's mortal remains are also to be found in the Church of Magnus at Kirkjubæur in the Faroe Islands. In the sanctuary's end wall a lead box containing seven relics has been placed and one of them is said to be from the grave of Thorlak, Bishop of Skalholt. This place in the wall is called the Golden Locker. It is covered with a stone plaque and sculptured with the Crucifixion and inscription in Latin of what the wall contains.⁷ It is not known if other churches abroad had such memorabilia of Bishop Thorlak. It is thought that 56 churches in Iceland were dedicated to Thorlak. No saint had such a popularity with the exception of the Virgin Mary, Peter the Apostle and Saint Olaf.⁸

Thorlak was also well known in other countries, namely Norway, Denmark, Sweden, the Faroe Islands and on the British Isles. Thorlak's fame even carried south to Constantinople with Norsemen, who had joined the emperor's mercenary troops. In one book of miracles it is said that a church had been erected for Thorlak in Constantinople in gratitude for having given the Norsemen in the service of the emperor victory over pagans.

There are also source materials about Thorlak's altar in the Church of the Cross in Bergen, and in Germany Thorlak was held in esteem as he was one of the patron saints of the brotherhood of Iceland Merchants, which was founded in Hamburg, April 4th, 1500.⁹ Even now though there is a new custom in

force in those countries where Thorlak's sainthood was the most honored, his name has not been fully forgotten and he has even been shown respect. One of the recent examples of this is from the beginning of this century. In the year 1907 a new window was placed in the chapel of the theological seminary at Lincoln where Thorlak had studied and it shows Bishop Thorlak in full vestment.¹⁰ It should also be mentioned that Icelandic students in Copenhagen have for a long time celebrated so-called "Thorlak's Festival" in the memory of the saint during the feast of Thorlak, held on December 23rd.

Until the year 1200 it was the approved way, that Bishop or Bishops' convention declare a man's sainthood. That is how it was done with most or all Norse saints antedating Thorlak. However, this went against the efforts in the twelfth century to combine ecclesiastic laws and strengthen the Church's central power. Therefore, Pope Alexander III issued the instruction during the period 1171 to 1180 that from then on it was only the Pope's divine right to canonize men. This decision did not become common rule until after the year 1234, during Pope Gregory IX's pontificate.¹¹

It seems that men in Iceland were not certain if Bishop Thorlak should be considered a saint by canonical standards. However in the early thirteenth century efforts were notably made to have Thorlak canonized by the Apostolic See. This is witnessed to by fragments from Bishop Thorlak's legend in Latin dated about the year 1200.¹² It is not known how forcefully this matter was pursued but the results were unsuccessful. Thorlak is, however, mentioned in the great Boilandist Collection about the saints of the Catholic Church and his name is in the Liturgical Calendar for the Bishopric of Copenhagen, the Faroe Islands and Greenland, which The Sacred Congregation of Sacraments and Divine Worship approved in the year 1979.

Dr. Hinrik Frehen, Bishop of Reykjavik from December 8th, 1968 until his death October 31st, 1986, did his utmost to have this matter concluded and sent in a letter and necessary documents about Bishop Thorlak to The Sacred Congregation for the Causes of Saints. It was therefore a well-earned pleasure when Bishop Hinrik received a letter from Pope John Paul II, stating that Bishop Thorlak was a holy man and confirmed that "the holy Bishop Thorlak is

the patron saint of the Icelandic people before God". This letter was written January 14th, 1984.¹³

What was it that made Thorlak a saint? At first sight he did not seem to be a strong character. He is so described as being of medium height, hair reddish brown and straight, long faced, eyes kind and pale, fair limp handshake and white hands, gracious, courteous and honest, slender with small physical stature and bent shoulders. He was no orator, but poor at speech. Thorlak could be merry with the cheerful. It is said that he had enjoyed stories, poems, instrumental music and wise men's speeches and dreams. But his lifestyle and daily schedule was the living proof that he was an unusual man. Thorlak kept the habits all his life that he had submitted to in the monastery at Thykkvibaer. He celebrated daily canonical hours, and woke at nights to pray and consumed so little food that men thought he would pass on. Before the major feasts, Thorlak had poor men called together, twelve or nine or seven. He went to them in secret to wash their feet and then dry them with his hair in the spirit of his Master. Thorlak is an example of a man who did his best to live in conformity with the teachings of Christ and went far in that effort.

More reasons for Thorlak's sainthood can without doubt be found. He was for the Cathedral at Skalholt and other churches dedicated to him a considerable source of finances. The reason for this was that Thorlak was considered a powerful intercessor and that is why people gave votive gifts.

On the other hand and not least, the Church that venerates her own patron is in better condition than without one. Bishops Pall and Brandur realized that a national saint would increase the public's communion and strengthen religious beliefs, the Church of the land nourishes on both.

In the end it should be mentioned that on the death of Archbishop Eysteinn Erlendsson, who has been mentioned before, his mortal remains were placed in a shrine and positioned in the Cathedral of Trondheim, as was proper for a holy man. Such a dignity was as justified for Thorlak if the archbishop was quoted correctly when asked his opinion of Thorlak. The archbishop is to have said: "I can tell you how wise his actions have seemed to me and that I would choose such a life in heaven for myself as I have seen exemplified by his life".

NOTES

1. The foremost narrative source on the life of Thorlak is *porláks saga* in scientific edition of Jón Helgason (Byskupa sögur. Editiones Arnarnæan, Series a, vol. 13.2. København 1978).

2. General survey is in: R.W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (Hutchinson, London 1975), 126-162; August Franzen, *Kleine Kirchengeschichte* (Herder, Freiburg im Breisgau 1970), 188-194.

3. At least one of the Augustinian's monasteries in Iceland, at Helgafell close to Stykkisholmur, was connected with St. Victor according to sources from the 15th century. This monastery had originally been founded in Flatey, 1172, probably under the direction of Thorlak who was then abbot at Thykkvibaer, see below (Jarl Gallén, "Augustinkorherrar") *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder 1* (Rosenkilde og Bagger, København 1980), 281-282.

4. Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, "Um borlák biskup bórhallsson". *Almanak Félags kabólskra leikmanna* (Reykjavik 1986), 4-6.

5. Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, "borláksskriftir og hjn-skapur á 12. og 13. öld". *Saga* (Reykjavik 1982), 114; same, "Penitential of St. borlákur". *Bulletin of Medieval Canon Law*, new series, vol. 15 (Berkeley, Calif. 1985), 19-30.

6. Sveinbjörn Rafnsson, "Enn um borláksskrin". *Arbók Hins islenska fornleifafélags* (Reykjavik 1976), 164.

7. Hannes Pétursson, *Eyjarnar átján, Dagbók úr Fereyjarferö 1965* (Reykjavik 1967), 55.

8. Jakob Benediktsson, "borlák helgi bórhallsson". *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder 20* (Rosenkilde og Bagger, København 1982), 387-388.

9. *Diplomatarium Islandicum XVI*, 457.

10. Kolbeinn borleifksson, "Lincoln og Island á 12. öld" (second part). *Lesbók Morgunbladsins* September 4th, 1982.

11. *Brockhaus Enzyklopadie 9* (1970), 713 (Kanonisation). According to David Hugh Farmer in *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* (1987, p. xx) recent studies indicate that the cult of new saints was put on to a legal basis by Pope Innocent III (1199-1216).

12. Jón Helgason, "borláks saga helga". *Kulturhis-*

torisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder 20, 389.

13. *Merki Krossins* II 1981, 12 (periodical of the Catholic Church in Iceland), same, 1 1985, 16-17 and 30.



Jón Arason was born in 1484, a grandson of the Prior at Möðruvellir (Augustian order) and a nephew of the Abbot of the monastery at Cvera (MunkaPverá” of the Benedictine Order). He most probably studied at Munkapverá and at the same time worked to support his mother after the father’s death. The first year after his Ordination (24 years old) he was a Priest at Helgastabir in Reykjadalur (Northern Iceland) which was a rather poor parish and lived there with a concubine (a life style which was not very uncustomary at least of low-rank Priests in Iceland). During the next years his promotion was remarkably quick. He became a Dean, acted as a sheriff (sýslumadur) in one of the Counties in Northern Iceland, received from the Archbishop in Norway the custody of the wealthiest benefice in the Country and was appointed a Director (rádsmaður) of the Bishops seat at Hólar. Without any doubt, good abilities explain to some extent this rapid success, but the plague at the end of the 15th century and the consequent shortage of Priests may also have paved the way for Jón Arason.

When the Bishop at Hólar, Gottskálk Nikulás-son, died, Jón Arason was appointed *Officialis*. Two

years later (1522) he was elected Bishop “by all of the Priests in the North except one”. Later this year the Bishop of Skálholt, Ögmundur Pálsson, came to Iceland from his Ordination in Norway. There the supervision of the Diocese of Hólar had been entrusted to him following the death of Bishop Gottskálk. At once Ögmundur Pálsson set himself against the election of Bishop Jón Arason for the reason that it had taken place without his agreement. The clergy in the Diocese of Hólar resisted his orders and Jón Arason managed to leave the Country in spite of Ögmundur’s great efforts to arrest him. Bishop Ögmundur excommunicated Jón Arason and sent a letter to the Archbishop in Norway, and to the King, complaining about “the Priest who had stolen gold, silver, butter” and other properties of the Cathedral of Hólar. He even wrote a letter to the Pope asking for his sanction to make Jón Arason obey. Ögmundur reminded the Holy Father of the historical fact that the Diocese of Hólar was an offspring of Skálholt and “it seems to us fair and sensible that daughter should not rise up against her mother . . .”. The Pope gave Ögmundur permission to make all necessary arrangements within the limits of Church Law. But this came to nothing. Jón Arason won the favor of the Danish King, Frederick I, who needed Jón’s support in the Norwegian Council to be fully accepted as a King of Norway. By recommendation of the King, Jón Arason went to the Archbishop in Norway (Olafur Engilbertsson) and was ordained Bishop in the late summer of 1524 (the letter of Ordination is from the 7th of September). Before that a clerical court in Bergen had judged him innocent of all accusations and his honor was completely restored.

During the next years there was a great hostility between the two Bishops, Jón Arason and Ögmundur Pálsson. In the summer 1527, the two Bishops came to Althing, each of them with many hundred followers. It was an extraordinary event in the history of Iceland that the Bishops were prepared to fight. But friends of both sides and Abbots intervened and managed to make a permanent peace between the two Church leaders.

When Jón Arason became a Bishop he sent his concubine away, providing her with a farm to live on. She gave it to the Cathedral of Hólar and lived there for the rest of her life, making vestments and embroideries for the Church. They had nine children, three of whom became Priests and the fourth a Law-



Memorial and grave of Bp. Arason in the Hólar bell tower

Jón Arason enjoyed great respect in his Diocese. A historian who made a special research on this period of the history of Iceland describes the work and deeds of the Bishop in this way: "Bishop Jón seems on the whole to have been a mild and merciful man, not trying to find fault with the laymen, neither as a Bishop, a sheriff, nor as a governor for Northern Iceland during an interregnum 1534-1537. He tried to settle judicial affairs and law-breaking in a peaceful manner and without fuss. People in the North were generally fond of him and those lawbreakers who came under his jurisdiction did not want to make quarrels with him, but willingly accepted their penalties according to laws". However, Jón Arason could go to the extremes when he thought that the rights of the Church were violated. In such events he sometimes used force, not always without the suffering of innocent people, but there is no evidence that he himself used weapons.

Jón Arason was without any doubt the foremost poet during his time. Some of his verses, sometimes self-ironic, are still well-known. But more important are his religious poems. They bear witness to sincere faith and strong conviction of God's mercy through

the sufferings of Jesus Christ and the prayers of his Mother, Mary, and John the Apostle.

When the Danish King, Frederick I, died in 1533, a civil war broke out. It ended 1536 with the victory of the candidate of the Lutheran party, Christian III. The next year the Lutheran Church was officially established in Denmark.

In the summer 1541, the regulations of the Lutheran Church were accepted at Althing in the presence of Danish soldiers. The year before, a Lutheran man, Gissur Einarsson, became "Superintendent" at Skálholt and the old Catholic Bishop, Ogmundur Pálsson, was by then in jail. These regulations were just valid in the diocese of Skálholt because Bishop Jón Arason stood firmly against them. He wanted to be loyal to the King "and live and die under the protection of Kristjan Fridriksson (the Icelandic name of the King)", as he states in one of his letters, but in his opinion the new regulations were against Icelandic laws and violating the right of the Nation. By this Jón Arason meant that the Icelandic Church law accepted by the national assembly of Althing stipulated that there should only be one Church in the Country. And there was no doubt about what Church that should be: the Church that was under the leadership of the Pope. ("Every Christian is obligated to be obedient to the Pope in Rome", as it says in the laws). If the King was going to force him and some of his sons to believe something that was wrong according to their conviction they asked for permission to move to other countries with their belongings.

The next years there was an informal "armistice" between the Catholics in the North and the Lutherans in the South. The strategy of the King and his Bishop at Skálholt was presumably to wait until Jón Arason gave up because of old age or passed on. But this changed very rapidly in 1548 when the Lutheran Bishop, Gissur Einarsson, died, not 40 years old. Jón Arason saw it as his duty to take control of the diocese as long as it was without a Bishop. Encouraged by him, the Catholic Priests in the Diocese elected one from their group to become the next Bishop at Skálholt as did the Lutherans. In spite of the risk Jón Arason sent his candidate, Sigvardur Halldórsson, to the Danish King to get his confirmation as was the custom in those days, thus showing the King loyalty and confidence. Sigvardur did not come back to Iceland but was made to learn the Catechism of

Luther, but the Lutheran candidate, Marteinn Einarsson, returned as a Bishop of Skálholt. This may have convinced Jón Arason that the Danish King was not the protector of the Church but her persecutor. He now made his last and boldest attempt to restore the Catholic Church in Iceland.

In the summer of 1548, Jón Arason wrote a letter to the Holy Father in Rome. This letter is lost but from the answer of Pope Paul III, one can come close to its content. It was about the Peter's Pence, which no longer could be brought to the right destination and obviously Jón Arason was also seeking advice and encouragement. When he received the letter from the Pope he handled it with such respect that he did not want to open it until all the Priests in the Diocese were present in the Cathedral and while it was recited he stood in full vestments before the main altar with his hands raised to Heaven. There are also some slight indications that Jón Arason wrote to the Emperor Charles V, whose vassal in Schleswig and Holstein was the Danish king.

By now the authorities considered Jón Arason to be a revolutionary, refusing to obey orders and meet the King. One of the King's officials in Iceland, Dadi Gudmundsson, got the order to arrest Jón Arason. But Jón made a counterattack, accusing this man for grave sins, i.e., adultery. Jón fortified the residence at Hólar and prepared himself for the last fight.

In the autumn of 1549 Jón Arason went to Skálholt together with his men, arrested the Lutheran Bishop, Marteinn Einarsson and put him in jail at Hólar. The next summer he made his way to Vietey (an island close to Reykjavik) where he restored the Augustinian monastery and expelled the Danes who had settled there. After this deed he made a verse boasting of "the old man who dispersed the Danes into the sea with a lot of noise". In another verse he says that "the world would deceive him badly if he was to be sentenced by a Danish family and die for the power of the King". Later that summer he had an appointment with Dadi Gudmundsson, the King's official, in order to bring suit against him. But Dadi came well prepared, defeated Jón Arason and his men in a battle and brought him and two of his sons as captives to Skálholt. The idea was to keep them in jail to the next summer when a new assembly at Althing came together and let them be judged there. But none had the courage to keep them out of fear for

revenge. So the conclusion was "that the axe and the earth keep them best". It is said that Jón Arason was offered freedom after his sons, the lawman Ari and the Priest Björn, had been beheaded but he wanted to pay for their faithfulness and follow them into the death. They were executed at Skálholt the 7th of November 1550.

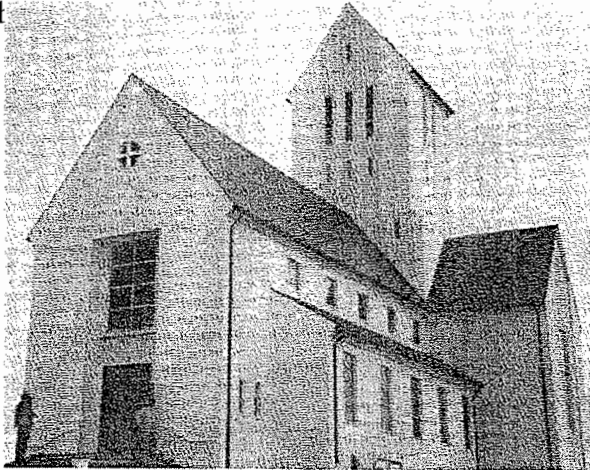
The following year fishermen from the North made a cruel revenge, killing 14 men according to some sources. The Priest Sigurður, son of Jón Arason, together with 30 others, brought the bodies back to Hólar where they were received with great reverence. In one story it says that a bell in the Cathedral suddenly began to toll and with such intensity that it finally exploded for grief.

Conclusion

Jón Arason's next generations admired him for his heroic conduct, trying to forget the fact that he was a Catholic Bishop. The first real criticism of him is to be found in *Historia Ecclesiastica Islandiae*, especially in volume II (Copenhagen 1774, p. 644-645), written by the Lutheran Bishop Finnur Jónsson who dedicated this work to the Danish King. Finnur Jónsson blamed Jón Arason for having been obstinate, ambitious and revolutionary in his actions. This is exactly what later came to be Jón Arason's credit. As a fighter against the Danish authorities Jón Arason has been remembered and honored by the Icelandic people ever since the last century. Jón Arason and his sons were the "last Icelanders" and "there has never been a person who was more Icelandic or Nordic in mind or more unpopal in reality than Jón Arason". By this he is stressing Jón Arason's independence in mind and actions and his fight for the cause of the nation. Some modern historians tend to describe Jón Arason as a "renaissance lord", meaning that he could as well handle a sword as a crozier. A more balanced judgment is required. Jón Arason was first and foremost a Catholic Bishop, loyal to the Danish King as long as he did his duty to protect the Church. In these days the Church and State were so intertwined, the sacred and the secular, that it was not easily separated. The cause of the Church was at the same time the cause of the Nation. The reputation of Jón Arason may also benefit from the fact that he is the ancestor of most, if not all, Icelanders today.

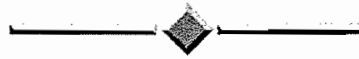
Sources

Many primary sources have been preserved about Jón Arason, Bishop at Hólar. Most of them are published to



ries, tales and poems about Jón Arason (and by him) are collected in the 3rd volume of *Byskupa Sógur* (Histories of Bishops) published by Hid Islenska Bókmenntafélag (The Icelandic Literary Society). Jón Arason has been a popular theme of study for scholars ever since the early days of the national movement in Iceland in the middle of the last century. The most important research works are *Menn og menntir I* (Reykjavik 1919) by Dr. Páll Eggert Olason and *Herra Jón Arason* (Reykjavik 1950) by Dr. Guóbrandur Jónsson. In addition to this the dramatic life of Jón Arason has inspired renowned Icelandic authors to write historical novels and theatrical plays about the last Catholic Bishop in Iceland and in all Nordic Countries.

Illustrations R.E. Rambusch



**THE SKARA MISSAL.
THE ENDING OF THE CANON.**

2009 NEWS

Rev. John E. Halborg

NEWS FROM THE BRIGITTINE PRIORY

Perpetual Vows were made on 23 June by Brother Bernard at the priory in Amity, Oregon. Archbishop John G. Vlasny gave the solemn blessing and the monastic tonsure. The Brothers have also received a new Postulant, Brother Joseph Lamigo.

The Bridgettine Convent in Puebla, Mexico is 100 years old. It is the largest Bridgettine Convent in the world with 30 nuns. There is also a Convent in Mexico City.

NEWS FROM DENMARK

Evangelism is the big word in Denmark. Pilot projects in Taastup and Birkerød have formed discussion groups about the experience of faith. The groups are not seminars, but open to the community. This positive note is sounded against a plan to merge some of the churches in Copenhagen and a general decline in religious communities.

St. Knud's Church in Ringsted celebrated its Centennial in 2007. A local shoe maker, his family and friends were the first members. They were soon joined by Polish immigrant workers. A school was established which today has 230 students, only 19 of them Catholic.

St. Kjeld's Church in Viborg has a new home. Viborg means Holy Mountain. Hans Tavsén introduced the reformation here in 1525. The last medieval bishop was driven out in 1529. Today the church has c.600 members from 30 different countries. St. Kjeld is the patron saint of Viborg. He lived in the twelfth century. The new church received a copy of a medieval statue of Kjeld.

Frank Jobst OMI died 6 November 2007. He was born in Germany, but his family immigrated to America and he was ordained as an oblate father in Minneapolis in 1972.

Fr. Sten Haarløv has written a doctoral thesis on Poul Helgesen. He was a representative of reform Catholicism in the sixteenth century, a humanist like Erasmus but not an unqualified admirer. He emphasized the importance of tradition against the teaching of Luther. Gustav Vasa proposed a series of questions on Catholic teaching. Olauus Petri presented the Lutheran position on these theses, but Helgesen answered them from the safety of Denmark.

The Tridentine Mass will be said on the first and third Sunday of the month at Sacred Heart

Church at 6:00 P.M. In Copenhagen, forty Catholics petitioned for a weekly celebration of the Mass and this is a partial response. Sixty persons took part in the first celebration.

The New Apostolic Nuntio to Scandinavia is Archbishop Emil Paul Tcherrig from Switzerland. He was responsible for the travel arrangements of Pope John Paul II and accompanied him on his trip to Scandinavia in 1989.

A Catholic Immigrant protested Danish laws that made him register his daughter's birth with the State Church and also pay the Church tax to support it. The case was decided against him in court and will be appealed.

St. Andreas' Church in Ordrup was reopened on 2 March. It had been heavily changed after Vatican II by Dominicans. Now has gained back its original gothic revival color scheme and Marian altar. Some of the original furnishings were returned and a Way of The Cross came from a German donor.

A Fairtrade lunch sponsored by Caritas brought 1,100 guests to Bredgade. This organization is concerned with fair compensation for native workers, e.g. coffee bean pickers.

Brian Patrick McGuire has written a new book on the Christening of Denmark *Da Himmelen Kom Naermere*. A historian has recently claimed that Denmark was first Christianized by the Irish, but McGuire sees no evidence for this. He was dumfounded when he read Rimbert's life of Ansgar, a man who embraced the Christian message with love. Haraald Bluetooth was baptized in 965. This followed the crowning of Otto the Great in 962 and was probably influenced by his power in Northern Europe. He divides the history of the Church in Denmark into two parts 1100 to 1215 when the faith

mainly reached the aristocracy and the latter year when the Fourth Lateran Council sought to make the Church pastoral, involving the whole parish community.

Holy Cross Chapel became a Church on 4 May when its new home was dedicated. It will hold 120 worshippers and is served by the Priest from Esbjerg.

Less happy news involves several convents. The Benedictines at Åsebakken has only four remaining

sisters. The community of St. Joseph sisters will be closed for lack of sisters. After the death of Fr. Jobst, two other Oblate priests will leave the order. Several parishes will be combined, St. John will be used by the Chaldeans and the future of St. Anthony is unclear.

Erling Tiedeman has announced two large projects for the Diocese: a membership registration and the development of the process for a State Church tax. The Catholic Church in Denmark needs to develop its own support system once financial aid from Germany ceases.

NEWS FROM FINLAND

Three new deacons were consecrated on 10 May. They are seminarians at Redemptoris Mater Missionary Seminary.

Few Churches-many chapels describes an ongoing situation in Finland. The Church in Tampere also serves eight chapels that are as far away as Jakobstad and Vasa. The chapel in Jakobstad uses an abandoned Methodist Church that came to the Catholic Church in 1995. It largely serves the Vietnamese congregation. Nearby a parish, largely Sudanese, has grown up in Karleby. It uses a parish house belonging to the State Church. Recently emigrants from Burma have moved into this area.

Bishop Józef Wróbel has been assigned to be Assistant Bishop in Lublin, Poland. He has been Bishop of Helsingfors for seven years. Father Teeme Sippo SCJ will be Administrator of the Diocese until a new

Bishop is appointed. He was Bishop in Finland for seven and a half years. He mentioned many positive aspects of these years, but he also mentioned the growing secularism in Finland. He also mentioned the need for larger churches to care for the increasing number of Catholics in Finland.

Finland's only Deacon, Krister Korpela has retired from active service due to illness. He served the Chapel in Jakobstad as well as other Catholic Stations in the neighborhood of Gamla Karleby. He was supported in his work by his wife, Anne-Maj, who taught children in the area. He had been active in the State Church before he became a Catholic and one of the buildings he was able to use as a Catholic Center he had helped to build as a Lutheran. *Ad multos annos.*

NEWS FROM ICELAND

On 17 December 2007, Peter Bürcher was installed as the new Bishop of Iceland. Unfortunately, the day before an enormous windstorm prevented the arrival of some of the international guests. Present were two of the Swiss Guards in their colorful costumes.

At the ending of 2007, the Catholic Church in Iceland numbered 7,977 members. There were 156 baptisms and only 16 deaths. It has five parishes, three of them in the South, one in the East and one in the North. There, at Akureyri, there are about 540 Catholics. In the east, (Picture on last year's bulletin) is

a parish that is served by Capuchins from Slovakia. The State donates 10 Euros for every adult member. It continues to need foreign aid to survive.

Merki Krossins, a magazine published by the Catholic Church, contains an article on the "Vinland Map" which it considers a forgery. On the other hand, recent research seems to indicate that Vinland was a trading post and that the Vikings may have reached Quebec and New York harbor. The Kensington Stone seems to have some authentication in Nordic sources.

NEWS FROM NORWAY

As of 1 January 2008, there were 105,300 registered Catholics living in Norway. There were 29,500 persons born in Poland and 24,520 persons born in Norway. In all, persons from 25 countries make up the Church membership.

A small chapel has been set up at Tustna, an isle near Kristiansund. Catholics had hoped to buy a mission station at Valdres, but the local Free Church did not want it to be sold to Catholics. Another alternative will be sought. In Sandefjord, the Diocese has taken over the local Methodist Church. It was built in 1918 in the jugendstil of the time. The community authorities in Stavanger refused the request to enlarge the church which has grown from 150 members in 1967 to 4000. A new appeal means that the church may be enlarged from 300 seats to 600. In Kongsvinger, St. Clara congregation has been erected. St. Gudmund congregation has been erected to serve the area near the Oslo Airport. Weekly Mass is held in the gym of a local school. About 100-130 attend. The area has many Catholic immigrant families. A new chapel will be opened in Kragerø on the second floor of a building holding a Vietnamese restaurant. Mass will be held once a month.

Bishop John Gran died 20 March 2008 in Paris. He was Bishop of Oslo from 13 Dec. 1964 to 26 Nov. 1983. As a young man he was interested in theater and opera. In Italy he went from an atheistic view of life to the Catholic faith. In the Second World War he served with the Allied Forces. In 1949 he entered the Cistercian monastery at Caldey. He took an active part in Vatican II and his term as Bishop was highly influenced by the decisions of the Council. In his reign, the Church grew because of many Catholic immigrants. Many new churches were also erected. He retired to his house in Corsica. He died in Paris where he was attended by the Little Sisters of the Poor.

The Bridgettines have begun to build their house in Tiller, near to Trondheim. The cloister will be built first and then the church and a house for the priest. Finally a wing is planned for a guest house.

The Abbey of Citeaux has begun to develop a cloister for Cistercian monks at Levanger, the nearest city to Tautra. The monks are known for their cheese making and they have made two sample cakes.

There are now 49,988 registered Catholics in Oslo Diocese, 3,664 live in Trondheim and 1,944 in Tromsø. There are problems in registering guest workers and these are in addition to the above numbers.

The Katarina Home in Oslo is 80 years old. It is composed of a cloister, student house and retirement home. They engage in care of the elderly, various research projects including physics, catechetics, media, icon painting, publishing liturgical books, lecturing and writing.

An old acquaintance of St. Ansgar, Fr. Olaf Waering celebrated his fiftieth anniversary as a priest. He was born in Flushing, New York and ordained in the Brooklyn Diocese. He came to Norway in 1963.

Catholic Studies can now be pursued in Oslo at the Menighets Fakultet. Some courses such as Greek are studied jointly with the independent Lutheran school while Catholics teach courses in Introduction to Catholic Fundamental Theology, Catholic education, Catholic teaching from the Middle Ages to the present, Catholic Social teaching and Systematic theology.

A Catholic Priest was removed from his position in Bodø and ordered to return to Poland. He appealed the decision and the Norwegian State ordered his reinstatement and damages to be paid. The case has caused an ongoing discussion of the interference of the State in an internal ecclesiastical matter. In a final solution, he has returned to Poland.

A new Bishop for North Norway was announced in December 2008. He is Msgr. Berislav Grgic. He was born in Bosnia Herzegovina and served in various positions in the Diocese of Oslo from 1996 to 2004. He speaks, in addition to Croatian, Norwegian and German.

The Dominican Lunden Kloster in Oslo has discovered that the foundations of the Convent are at risk because of "subsidence of the ground." The Cloister has been an important center for retreats and also the teaching of the faith. Contributions may be sent to Lunden Kloster Øvre Lunden 5 N-0598 Oslo Norway.

St. Eystein's Seminary has been opened in

Norway. It will use the building of the St. Joseph Sisters in Oslo. There are nine men studying for the priesthood. Studies will take place at the Menigheds-fakultet.

Bishop Müller in Trondheim was granted retirement on 18 June 2009. He will return to the Picpus Brothers in Germany. He is 58 years old.

NEWS FROM SWEDEN

Södertälje now has 2,500 Chaldean Christians from Iraq. One of them, Martin Elia, is an architect who designed a Cathedral in Iraq. He has prepared a proposal for a church center for the 2,500 Chaldeans in Södertälje and fund raising is in progress.

In Angered 102 languages are spoken. The area, near to Gothenburg, is home to many immigrants and exiles, many of them are unemployed. A special form of Swedish has developed among the immigrants with its own grammar. In Hjärbo, a number of voluntary organizations including the Catholic Caritas are seeking to help, both by their own efforts including teaching Swedish, and also by trying to deal with red tape in getting government aid. The Franciscan Help is also doing social work in the immigrant community in Gothenburg. They now have a center for their work which includes beds for the homeless.

Church art has been of interest in Sweden. In Sundsvall a state church was purchased. It had a dominating picture back of the altar, producing a great deal of controversy. In Lapland an EFS (Evangelical Fatherland Foundation) church building has been purchased for a Catholic chapel to be called Mary Queen of Heaven. Seven hundred people were present for the dedication in January. The first Mass in the community drew a congregation of one. Today there are 90 persons on the average.

As the building is too large for its present use, it also houses a number of other activities including a studio for workers in glass.

The former State Church in Sundsvall (Nacksta Church) was dedicated as a Catholic Church on Ascension Day. It was designed by the well known architect, Peter Celsing and dates from 1969. The Catholic Church had outgrown a small chapel and house and the state church had fewer members in the area. The St. Francis Chapel in Märsta is now a Church for the area between Stockholm and Uppsala.

The Diocese now has a Music Consultant. Ulf Samuelsson will hold a two year training session for

church organists and vocal musicians. He has recently played a series of Bach concerts in Swedish churches. Samuelsson will also be an organist at St. Eugenia Church in Stockholm.

Östenbeck Cloister is a community in the Swedish Church which is strongly influenced by the Benedictine tradition. In January it issued an appeal, endorsed by leaders of the several Swedish denominations, for full sacramental unity of Christians. The community is planning a church building to be called the "Oneness Church."

The Dominican Sisters who have had a home in the Johannesgård in Gothenburg have moved back to Stockholm. Johannesgård was built in the post Vatican II era as a center for church activities. It is uncertain what use will be made of the facilities.

A Cistercian Cloister has been founded in Nydala, Småland. The first brothers are from Vietnam. The local community has been active in welcoming the group back as Nydala was the site of an important medieval house. The first Cistercians came to Sweden in 1143, sent by St. Bernhard of Clairvaux. The Nydala Church was the chapel of the community. The brothers will live in a manor house they have been lent by the community. The brothers were driven out of Sweden by Gustav Vasa in 1529.

The medieval pilgrimage routes are being traveled again. One of them traces the path that St. Olav took when he returned from exile in Russia to Sörförsa before making his way to Nidarås.

Six students took part in the trial year of training for the priesthood. The Seminary is about to move to the Newman House in Uppsala. They are receiving training in theology, liturgy and music. One day a week they help in the Stockholm City Mission and a soup kitchen. Until the Newman House rooms are ready, the Seminary will use the Koinonia House in Uppsala, familiar to many as a student house associated with Brother Caesarians.

State support for the Catholic Church amounted

to about five million kronor last year. About 50,000 Catholics contribute to this fund in their taxes. Congregations can also apply for aid for handicapped members. There are now over 90,000 registered Catholics in Sweden. There are c.140,000 Catholics in Sweden. Over 100 converts are received each year. The number of baptisms and confirmations continues to grow.

The Vatican has delayed the issuing of the new hymnal and prayer book for Sweden. There is a severe shortage of these books for use and an "emergency" hymnal with a few most used hymns has been issued. The new rules for translation of liturgical texts demand close translations of Latin originals. Sweden had rather loose translations of the Collects in its present liturgical books. The Vatican also faulted the ecumenical Bible translation from 2000. This fall the prayer book, Oremus, came in a new edition. One of the changes from the previous edition was that the Our Father regained its traditional wording: "lead us not into temptation" instead of "do not expose us to testing."

The great Swedish New Testament exegete, Harald Riesenfeldt died 9 June 2008 at the age of 95. As a professor at Uppsala University he upheld the unity between the teaching of the New Testament and the church fathers, something denied by prevalent Swedish theology which saw Luther as the great rediscoverer of the teachings of grace and justification. He also represented a new theology which, *inter alia*, thought of the Church sacramentally instead of the "folk church" concept of the time. He became a Catholic in reaction to the ordination of women and the growing dependence of the church on the Swedish State. As he read the New Testament he found the teachings of "early Catholicism" present in its writings. When he became a Catholic, he felt that he had come home. Requiescat in pace.

A new Cloister for male Benedictines is being built near to the Jesus' Mother Mary Cloister for female Benedictines in Mariavall. The first building to be built will be a residence with five cells for the brothers.

Birgitta was celebrated with a Mass in her home church of Finsta, now a State Church. This was the forty eighth year of this event. There was also a procession from the cave where, it is said, in her youth Birgitta went to pray.

The Extraordinary (Tridentine) form of the Mass is now said in Stockholm, Eskilstuna, Lund, Gothenburg and Jonsered.

Bishop Anders Arborelius celebrated the Tenth Anniversary of being Bishop of Stockholm. He is the first native Swede to be ordained a Bishop since the Reformation. He is a Carmelite of the Cloister at Norraby in Skåne

The Historical Museum in Stockholm has held a large exhibit of presentations of the Blessed Virgin. It caused controversy as it presented the importance of Mary in the modern world. Such events as the Annunciation are said not to have happened. In general, the exhibit was furnished with information considered to be anti-Catholic.

At Eskilstuna the Chaldeans have gained their own home. There are more than 2,000 Chaldean Christians living there. The building was a stockroom. A curtain will enable the space to be used both as a church and a social center. In 2008, 23,000 Iraqis requested asylum in Sweden of which 5,400 were accepted. It is becoming more difficult for Iraqis to come to Sweden.

In 1020, a Viking ship sailed from Vadstena carrying Anna, the daughter of Olof Skötkonung to Russia where she would marry Jaroslav the Wise of Novgorod. She died in 1150 with a reputation of concern for the poor and godliness. She was the first Swede to be called a Saint. A relic of Anna has been given to the Orthodox Church in Eskilstuna by the Russian Orthodox Church.

Catholic Scandinavia on the Internet.

The Catholic Churches of Scandinavia have established very fine internet stations, most of them offering information in both English and their respective language. The Norwegian station is especially fine with remarkable resources for hagiology. It also offers the complete Catholic Encyclopedia of 1913.

- **Denmark:** www.katolsk.dk
- **Finland:** www.katolinen.net
- **Iceland:** www.catholica.is
- **Norway:** www.katolsk.no
- **Sweden:** www.katolskakyrkan.se

A TRIP TO SCANDINAVIA

Rev. John E. Halborg

I had been urged to visit Scandinavia again for several years but health and other problems interfered. Finally an invitation to the Ordination of the new Bishop of Tromsø from my dear friends, the Kermits, provided the reason to go. I had to limit the trip to Stockholm and north Norway which meant that Denmark and Southern Sweden would be impossible, but there will be other trips, I hope.

Bishop Aurelius had kindly offered to house me in the Cathedral complex. I had not seen Söder for some time so that was a great offering. I remember the Cathedral area as being rather grim. It has become yuppified so that it somewhat resembles Soho in New York.

Actually my main interest in visiting Sweden at this time was to see a little of the Iraqi exile community created by the Iraqi conflict.

In international agreements, Iraqis were to be resettled in various countries around the world. America agreed to take 8,000, but has taken virtually none. Sweden was very generous and for some years now there has been a steady flow of Iraqis to Sweden. Near Malmö a number of Islamic Iraqis have taken residence. In a number of other communities Christian Iraqis have established communities. The largest number of refugees is found in Södertälje, a community of 60,000 that now hosts 20,000 Iraqis.

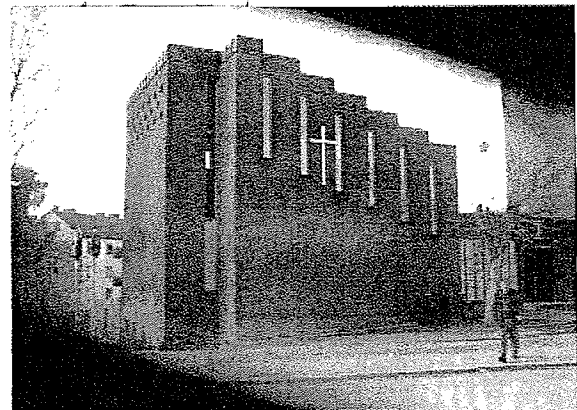
The number of Chaldean, Syrian-Catholic and Armenian persons in Sweden registered with the Diocese now numbers over 20,000. The real number may be much higher. In addition there are many Iraqi Orthodox, some of whom have been in Sweden for a longer time. The Swedish State has also begun to place a lower limit on the number of refugees it accepts. In Södertälje there are now 5,000 persons of the Chaldean or Syrian Catholic Rite.

The Diocese of Stockholm has been concerned about this immigration for some time. In February 2009, together with Fr. Matthias Grahm, Bishop Aurelius visited Iraq for seven days. They flew first to the Kurdish North where they were received with great hospitality. They discovered a number of Iraqis who had immigrated to the USA, but had to return because they could not support themselves after six months.

Bishop Aurelius wrote that "it is strange and un-

comfortable for the church representatives to travel around with an escort and to celebrate Mass in churches that need to be guarded by several armed guards." He had a very positive impression of the young who seemed deeply engaged in their Christian life.

Matthias Grahm OSB, the Bishop's Vicar for the oriental Catholic Churches, drove me to Södertälje to meet with the Chaldean Catholics. They are the largest group of Eastern Catholics in Sweden and form a Mission. Until recently they are also the only group in Sweden with a church building of their own. Johanneskyrkan was bought by the Diocese some years ago and later was given to the Chaldeans for their use. Church purchases in Sweden seem to come with problems.



Chaldean Church Södertälje

Built by the evangelical segment of the Church of Sweden after the war, it is a rather attractive building from the outside. On the inside there are problems. Built for a congregation of, hopefully, 500 people, it now has crowds of over 2,000 on some Sundays. A large part of the congregation takes part in the Liturgy by audiovisual equipment in the basement. Moreover, as with most buildings of that era, there are urgent maintenance problems.

A number of Iraqis eagerly surrounded us in a small room, offering us coffee and various Middle Eastern delicacies. They also wanted to discuss the problems they had as they sought to work in obviously inadequate facilities. They had discovered an Iraqi architect who had a slide presentation of his view of the future church. It was to be a Catholic center for the whole range of Chaldean life activities including,

of course, a church. The idea of the architecture was that they should build a ziggurat to represent Iraqi culture. In a site nearby, now a thriving pine forest, they showed me where they planned to build, but especially, where the parking lot would go. Camels, anyone?

I could not help but be impressed by their enthusiasm and their hopes for their future in Sweden.

On Sunday I returned to Södertälje for a celebration of St. Joseph by the Syrian Catholics who worship at St. Ansgar's Church. They more than fill that structure and also could use better facilities. (In addition there is a smaller Armenian congregation that uses this Church.) A Syrian Orthodox Church had been rented for the occasion. It looked like one of those halls in America that can be rented for weddings.

When we came, there was a large group of people seated and saying the rosary. There still was room for socializing in the rear of the room. A folding table had been set up to say a versus populi Mass (the small Orthodox altar hovered in the background)

Although I often attend an Eastern Liturgy, I am always amazed at the variations in Eastern liturgies as celebrated. There were a group of five men who did parts of the liturgy. There was also a choir with an electronic organ who sang parts of the ritual to a vaguely 1920's melody, but with great devotion. The Liturgy was followed by a social hour and I could not help but think that these functions have an ecumenicity of their own. Again, I was overwhelmed by the friendliness of the people and their seeming adaptation to Sweden and intention of remaining there.

YOUNG CATHOLICS

Rev. John E. Halborg

I have wanted to see Marielund for many years. Marie Labensky, Polish and English by descent, married Baron Rudolf Klinkowström in 1863. He was from an old Swedish family to which she brought a large estate. Marie became a Catholic in 1877. In 1902, when her husband died, Baroness Marie Klinkowström built a widow's house at Eckerö. On her death in 1907, she left her house and its surrounding property to the Catholic Diocese. The property is wooded and fronts on the beautiful waters of Lake Mälaren. The house is a stately jugendstil building on the top of a rise over the water. A number of other buildings make this an impressive center for Diocesan activities. The estate is also used for a number of secular activities. The Chapel was built in 1965, mostly by German volunteers. There is also a large and functional building that serves as a center for youth work.

On Sunday, Bishop Aurelius said Mass there and asked if I wanted to accompany him. Said and done. About 90 young persons had gathered at Marielund

to discuss a number of issues facing youth work in Sweden. I have often noted Scandinavian young people are not as falsely sophisticated as their American counterparts. The business meeting I attended was lively and engaged. Another characteristic of Scandinavian youth is its interest in America. At least one of them told me of his desire to come to America. I was also asked about the priest scandal. I heard confessions. Perhaps there was a novelty to confessing in English.

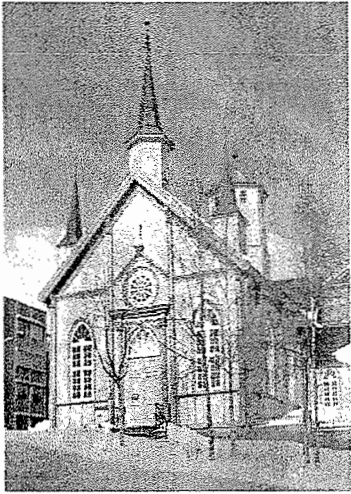


Young Swedish Catholics at Marielund

The highpoint of our visit was the Mass. The chapel was full with the young people and also people from the neighborhood for whom it serves as a chapel of ease. Much of the Mass, including the Creed, was chanted to plainsong melodies, but there were also songs sung to the twang of the guitar. So often we hear the problems of Catholic children living as a minority and losing their faith. I wonder if such a vivacious group could be found in America?

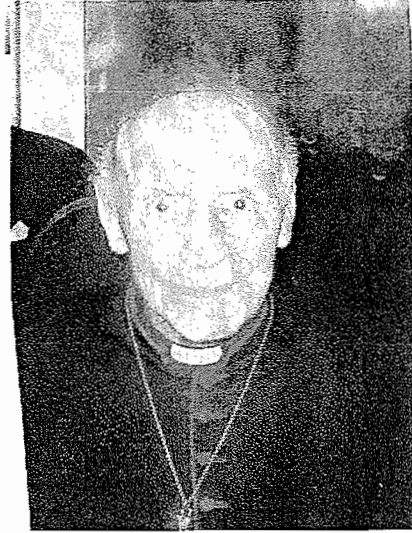
TO TROMSØ IN NORTH NORWAY

Rev. John E. Halborg

*The Cathedral of Tromsø*

I had promised that I would come to Tromsø when a new Bishop was installed. It was several years until a successor was named for the beloved Bishop Gerhard Goebel. Finally, on 28 March 2009, Berislav Grgiæ was installed as Bishop-Prelate. He is from Croatia but spent several years in the Oslo Diocese and so speaks Norwegian. The Kermit family had agreed to be my hosts and I flew north from Stockholm.

Tromsø lies north of the Polar Circle and lay covered with four feet of snow. Piles and drifts of snow reached over one's head. While it was a pleasant time, I will limit my comments to three events. One was the appearance of Bishop Brandenburg, emeritus of Stockholm, at the banquet for the new Bishop. He is now 85 and has gone through bad health periods.

*Presenting the gift to the Polar Museum**Bishop Emeritus Brandenburg*

He looks much the same although somehow thinner of face. He gave a talk that sounded like his own factual self. *Ad multos annos.*

The other event took place at the local polar expedition museum. This museum has a fascinating collection of articles and displays relating to the far north. There is a great deal that is tragic as so often the explorations ended in unfortunate accidents. This was the case with Willem Barents (1555-1597) who attempted to find the Northeast Passage. On the third attempt, his ship was frozen in the ice and the crew tried to over-winter at Novaja Semlja in Norway. Barents died as did his crew. In years afterwards attempts were made to find their cabin and ship. Finally, the camp was found and the remaining artifacts were sold to Russia and Holland where they may be seen at the Haag. A few small things were given to the Catholic Bishop of Oslo, Johannes Smit, (1922-1928) Dutch by birth. At the museum, Bishop Bernt Eidsvig gave these items to the Museum.

They will help to tell the whole story of arctic exploration.

THE ORDINATION OF A BISHOP

Rev. John E. Halborg

On 28 March it was time for the Ordination of the new bishop, Berislav Grgiæ. The Cathedral of Our Lady is a charming carpenter gothic church. It has



Procession to the Ordination

a rather large church house for activities as it once ran a school, but the church itself only seats 150. Generously, the State Church Cathedral had been offered for the Ordination Service. Clergy and others who were to take part in the Ordination at Our Lady's Church and went in procession through the icy streets of Tromsø. I could not help but think that at one time we would have been the target of snowballs or worse from some resolute protestant. When we came to the protestant Cathedral, we began to sing a grand hymn by the Norwegian hymn writer, Petter Dass. Has there ever been a manlier hymn writer? The hymn included the wish that "the sea and great whale shall praise Him, and also the porpoise that swims in the wake of the ship, the wolf-fish and pollock and cod". An unusual group to remember at an Ordination!

The Cathedral Choirs did themselves proud with the music. Most of it was plainsong. There were no embarrassing sounds of harp glissandos as at a recent American Installation of a Bishop. How beautiful the liturgy of the Church is when it is allowed to be done without embellishments! The ordainer was Bishop Bernt Eidsvig from Oslo. It was good to see Bishop Schwenzer as a co-ordainer. In all there were 12 Bishops.

On Sunday, at the Cathedral of Our Lady, the Mass



The Norwegian Bishops Bernt Eidsvig, Berislav Grig, Georg Müller and Bishop Emeritus Gerhard Schwenzer.

of Taking Possession of the Chair took place. There was a general feeling of relaxation after the strenuous efforts of the previous days.

I am leaving out a great deal that happened on this busy trip. I should, however, mention concelebrating at the Carmel in Tromsø. This is the furthest north Carmel in the world. Most of the nuns are Polish, only one is Norwegian. They have been very well received by the community and indeed a number of neighbors were at the Mass. Remember the Carmels of Scandinavia in your prayers.



The Totus Tuus Carmel

CZESLAW KOZON

ROMERSK-KATOLSK BISKOP AF KØBENHAVN
GL. KONGEVEJ 15
DK-1610 KØBENHAVN V



Mr. Viggo Bech Rambusch
160 Cornelison Avenue
Jersey City, NJ 07304
USA

13 February, 2009

Dear Mr. Rambusch,

Thank you so much for your kind letter of February 9 and for the enclosed cheque of the amount of USD 32,000 for the benefit of our Diocese.

It is a generous gift, but it is also sad to know that it has been made possible by the dissolution of St. Ansgar's League. I am really grateful for what this organisation has done to the Church in Scandinavia in the centenary of its existence and for the many individuals who have been so committed to the wellbeing of the Catholic Community in the Nordic Countries. This is particularly true of the members of your family.

I will be glad to write a short appreciation of the activities of St. Ansgar's League. I suppose I should send the text to Father Halborg.

I am sorry for not having tried to call you back after my recent attempt; but I was lucky to be able to talk to your wife, who told me that you are planning a trip to Denmark. I hope to meet you when you are here although July is normally my only possibility to go on holiday. However, if I know the dates of your stay in advance, I will happily try to arrange a meeting.

With every good wish I remain,
with kindest regards - also to your wife,

Yours sincerely,

✠ Czeslaw Kozon



OSLO KATOLSKKE BISPEDØMME
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Org. nr. 938431744 • Bankgiro: 3000.15.43683

Oslo, 3. vi. 2009.

Dear brothers and sisters,

It was with much regret that I received the news that St Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League, which has offered much need spiritual and financial support to the Diocese of Oslo, will conclude its activities and ministry next year.

On behalf of the entire diocese, and especially on behalf of my predecessors, I wish to thank you all for the loyal and tremendous support you have given us over these many years. The history of the Catholic Church in Norway clearly shows that a fundamental requirement for its initial settlement, post-Reformation re-settlement, and continued growth since, has been devoted support from friends abroad. Especially valuable has been the Mass stipend programme through the years, your devoted prayers and regular visits to our country, the link you have provided to the Universal Church, and the U.S. Church in particular, and the service of one of your chaplains, the now retired Father Olaf Wæring, in this diocese, into which he is also incardinated. A special word of thanks also for the check in the amount of \$16.000 for the benefit of our diocese, which we received together with the news of your closure.

The Diocese of Oslo today counts some 65.000 Catholics, in addition to as many as 150.000 mainly Polish workers following the opening of the borders to Eastern Europe some years ago. To the care of the faithful there are over 60 priests, nearly 100 religious sisters, and at this time 9 seminarians preparing for ordination. Each of our 23 parishes, as well as the number of baptisms, first communions, confirmations and receptions into the Church, grows year after year. Because of the great expansion we also face many significant challenges, but we are blessed with optimism and good spirit.

Despite the sadness of your closure, I hope that it is of some comfort in knowing that your hard work and prayers have helped built this diocese, that will never forget you, and whose May the Lord bless and reward you abundantly for your generosity and prayers,

In Christo,

+ Bernt Eidsvig

+ Bernt Eidsvig Can.Reg.

Bishop of Oslo





Den katolske kirke
i Midt-Norge
TRONDHEIM
STIFT

Viggo Bech Rambusch
160 Cornelison Avenue
Jersey City, NJ 07304
USA

22 February 2009

Ref.: St. Ansgar Catholic League

Dear Mr. Rambusch,

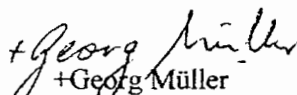
Thank you for your letter of February 9, 2009, with a check on the amount of USD 8.000 as enclosure. You are distributing your funds as you complete the St. Ansgar's activities next year on February 3, 2010.

I'm sorry that you have to complete your activities after 100 years. St. Ansgar's catholic League was for us a bridge between East and West, between Norway and the USA. Economic support was involved, mostly as Mass Intentions for our priest. This underlined and maintained the spiritual connection between our Churches. And it showed from your side the effort to support a church living in Diaspora. I'm very grateful for this. Not at least the feeling you gave, not to be forgotten. Therefore we feel sorry about this step you are forced to take.

But we have also to admit that new relationships have grown. We received from America a monastic community when the sisters of Mississippi Abbey founded their monastery in Tautra. The foundation celebrates its 10years jubilee this year. And it has really changed the face of the Catholic Church in Central Norway. Now with the help of the Sisters the Monks of Cîteaux have started to erect their monastery near Tautra. We look grateful to history and remember what previous generations did. We go on on this way in unity and continuity with St. Ansgar's Catholic League. Please give my kind regards to all the benefactors who supported us in the past.

Your find more informations about this projects in the Internett: www.tautra.no and www.munkeby.com.

With my best regards
Yours


+Georg Müller
bishop



Tromsø stift

Den katolske kirke
i Nord-Norge
Postboks 132
9252 Tromsø

Tromsø, April 27, 2009

Viggo Bech Rambusch
160 Cornelison Avenue
Jersey City NJ 07304
U.S.A.

Dear Sir,

Thank you very much for your letter dated February 9th. It was sad to get confirmed that you have decided to complete the St. Ansgar's activities next year. Thank you very much for your generous donation of \$ 8,000.00 to our diocese. It makes us both happy and sad at the same time. Happy that the money will make it possible for us to maintain our activities in the future. We face many economic challenges in the time to come. During the past few years we have received many immigrants especially from Poland, The Philippines and Rwanda and we must establish a spiritual service for them. It fills us with great sadness that you complete your activities after a century of support to the church in Scandinavia. The printed St. Ansgar Bulletin has been a connecting link between us reminding us of that Catholics in the New York area care for us. The annual statistics you have been asking for is a testimony for your concern for the Church in Scandinavia. The latest issue of the printed St. Ansgar Bulletin has always been exposed in our church and in our library. I do not think an internet edition will fill the same function. It is my hope that you in the future will be able to take up your activities again. Please convey my blessings to Father John E. Halborg who for years has been working for the St. Ansgar League by sending us many letters, e-mails and by personal calls to Scandinavia.

With the most cordial regards, I remain,

Sincerely,

+ *Berislav Grgic*
+ Berislav Grgic
Bishop of Tromsø



Biskop Anders Arborelius ocd

Stockholm
February 16th,
2009

Mr Viggo Beck Rambusch
160 Cornelison Avenue
Jersey City
NJ 07304
USA

Dear Mr Rambusch,

Thanks very so much for your kind letter and the generous gift to our Diocese. We are most grateful. Of course, it is sad that St. Ansgar's League will finish its activities, but I understand the situation. Thanks to all of you who have worked so hard during many years! When do you need the letter and the report from the Diocese?

Yours sincerely in Christ, + Anders Arborelius ocd

DIOECESIS HOLMIENSIS
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THE CATHOLIC BISHOP OF REYKJAVÍK

REYKJAVÍK,
12 March 2009

Mr. Viggo Bech Rambusch
Design Studio / Workshops
160 Cornelison Avenue
Jersey City, NJ 07304
USA

Dear Mr. Rambusch,

Thank you very much for your letter of February 9, 2009, which enclosed a check of \$8,000.00 for the benefit of the Diocese of Reykjavík. That is a very welcome addition to our budget, since the Icelandic economic situation is especially precarious, due to some very negative course of events in our financial sector, which is influencing all other aspects of our economy.

As the activities of St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League are to be completed early next year, I will separately write a short appreciation for the final issue of your Bulletin. This I will send to you soon, along with the news from our Diocese.

I thank you again, dear Mr. Rambusch, for the valuable help of the St. Ansgar's League, and I can assure you of our prayers for you and all of our benefactors in the United States of America.

In Christo et Maria



+Peter Bürcher

Bishop of Reykjavík

KATOLINEN KIRKKO SUOMESSA

CURIA EPISCOPALIS HELSINKIENSIS



**Respected John E. Hallborg,
Dear benefactors and friends of the St. Ansgar Society,**

In Finland we regret that the St. Ansgar Bulletin must cease to be published after such a lengthy period. We certainly understand that the lack of resources makes it impossible to continue.

Nonetheless, we are deeply grateful for the one hundred years of affiliation with the St. Ansgar Society in the United States, which we hope will continue. Through the Bulletin, the Catholics of the United States and of the Nordic countries have been able to maintain contact. The paper has long delivered information about the life, joys and sorrows of the Church in the Nordic countries. We are sincerely appreciative of the fraternal financial aid, from which the Diocese of Helsinki has also benefitted. We shall remain united by the prayers for one another.

I write this greeting as the Diocesan Administrator of the Diocese of Helsinki. The most noteworthy happening in our Diocese in 2008 was the nomination of Bishop Józef Wróbel SCJ to become the Auxiliary Bishop of Lublin, Poland. Consequently, his Excellency left Finland in July to accept his new assignment in his native land. Patiently, and in prayer, we now await a new bishop.

The Diocese grows steadily, as Catholic baptisms, the arrival of Catholic immigrants and converts to the Faith continue to increase. Soon it will be necessary to found new parishes. Fortunately, there seem to be enough vocations to the priesthood. Financially, the situation is difficult, though not only due to global financial woes. In many parishes there are fundamental renovations to be undertaken and there is not enough money to cover even everyday expenses. Yet, we envision bright days ahead for our Diocese and we look, with trust in the Father's providence, into the future.

The relationship with the other churches has developed positively. Lately, the Pentecostals have increasingly joined in the work of the Finnish Ecumenical Council, of which we have been a member ever since the 1960's. A discussion has also been started between the Christian churches and the Jewish and Islamic congregations. At this point the contacts are in the early stages, with the intent to get to know each other; happily, interaction and cooperation have begun to take place.

We know that God continuously blesses our Diocese and assists us with the care of the entire diaspora, with all the challenges this entails.

We thank you Rev. Hallborg, along with all your associates and all the benefactors for the help as well as your friendship throughout the past decades. We wish you God's plentiful blessings!

With prayer and kind greetings,

**Fr. Teemu Sippo, SCJ
Diocesan Administrator of the Diocese of Helsinki**

BISHOP SWANSTROM



Most Reverend Edward F. Swanstrom, Ph.D. first wrote for St. Ansgar's Bulletin in 1943. He was the spiritual director of the Scandinavian Catholic League from 1946 until 1984. He was consecrated Bishop in 1960.

He was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1903 of a Swedish father and an Irish mother. Ordained in Brooklyn in 1928, he received his doctorate in Sociology from Catholic University in 1938. He wrote extensively and published two books: *The Waterfront Labor Problem* (1938) and *Pilgrims of the Night* (1950), which dealt with refugees from World War II.

During World War II he was appointed, by the American Bishops Assistant Executive Director and then in 1947 the Executive Director of Catholic War Relief, which became Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Under Bishop Swanstrom, there was a tremendous outpouring of American relief to the world's needy. He traveled the world visiting refugees and arranged for food and clothing to be shipped to the poor.

Viggo Bech Ansgar Rambush

FATHER JOHN LAFARGE, S.J.

Father John LaFarge, S.J. was born on February 13, 1880, the son of the distinguished artist, painter John LaFarge. Among his forebears were Benjamin Franklin and Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry. Of his four brothers, one was the muralist Bancel LaFarge and another Christopher LaFarge, one of the architects of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

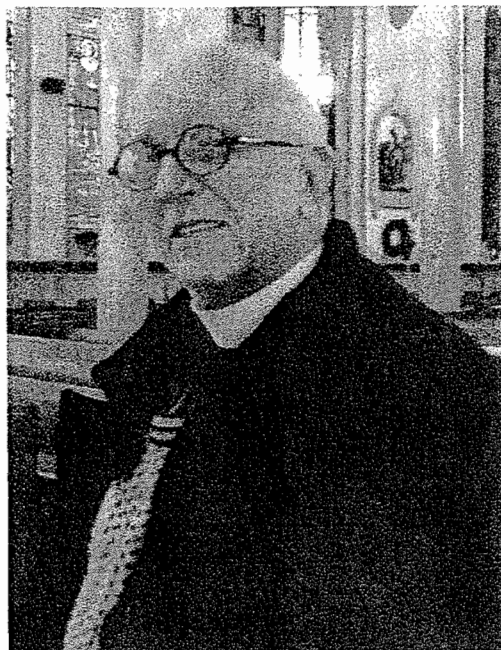
Father LaFarge graduated from Harvard in 1901 and received a Licentiate in Theology from the University of Innsbruck. He joined St. Ansgar's League in 1928 and over 35 years wrote an article almost every year for the Bulletin. He was Chaplain and then Director of Programs of the League. He took a profound interest in the Church in Scandinavia especially the 500 years when all of the Northern countries were Catholic, from 1000 AD to 1520 AD.

His presence at most meetings of the League through the years gave a wonderful spirit and richness to the proceedings. He was editor of the Jesuit Weekly Magazine America. As well he was active in other organizations especially the Catholic Interracial Council.

His autobiography, *The Manner is Ordinary* showed him to be an urbane gentleman. St. Ansgar's was proud of his commitment to the League's work. He died in his sleep in 1963.

Viggo Bech Ansgar Rambush

FATHER JOHN E. HALBORG



The Reverend John E. Halborg took up the succession to John Dwight as the Editor of the Saint Ansgar's Bulletin gradually and added authority over the years. He also has continued the custom of the regular trips and other contacts with the Church in the Scandinavian countries. He has deepened his knowledge of the situation and religious history of these countries through his academic researches.

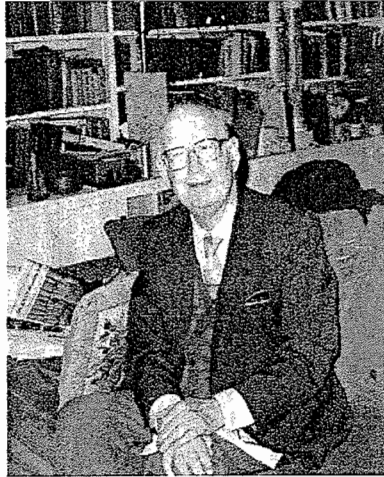
Father Halborg was born of Nels and Anna Halborg in Rockford, IL. He was baptized and brought up in the Lutheran Church. He was ordained as a Pastor in the Augustana Lutheran Church June of 1954, working as Pastor of congregations in Pennsylvania and New York City. He became Dean of Manhattan and the Bronx for the Lutheran Church of America.

Influenced by his father's understanding as a lay theologian and by the book *Liturgical Piety* by French Oratorian, Father Louis Bouyer (who also started as a Lutheran Pastor), as well as the writings of Swedish Lutheran Pastor Gunnar Rosendahl, Father Halborg moved to enter the Catholic Church. This he sees not so much as a "conversion" but as a fulfillment in his life as a follower of Jesus Christ.

He entered the Seminary of the Archdiocese of New York in 1978. He was ordained Priest for the Archdiocese in 1980. He served for a number of years in the Parish of Saint Thomas More in Manhattan. Fr. John Halborg retired in 2004, but he continues to celebrate Mass at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church.

Rev. Philip J. Sandstrom

JOHN T. DWIGHT



All long time members of St. Ansgar have the happy memory of John Dwight welcoming them to meetings of the League. Never ruffled, always positive, always a gentleman.

He bore the same forename as his ancestor, the John Dwight who emigrated from Denham, England to Denham, Massachusetts in 1634. A long succession of Dwights, Ketchums, Kirbys and other relatives were sturdy members of the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches over the centuries. An ancestor discovered the process of making baking powder. His home still stands at Mt. Morris Park in Harlem. John said that the first thing his mother did when they visited was to open the blinds to let the sun in. I have always thought of John's childhood as not unlike the world of *Life with Father*. His parents were Dr. Kirby Dwight and Genevieve Ketchum. The family lived in one of the brownstones south of the Whitney Museum.

From childhood, John had been interested in architecture and this eventually led to an interest in the Catholic Church. He became a Catholic as a teenager, to the dismay of some of the family, but his will was respected.

He graduated from Holy Cross College in Worcester and did graduate work at Harvard. For a time he taught at the Newman School in New Jersey. He became interested in Eastern Rites and was active at the Byzantine-Russian Chapel of St. Michael on Mulberry street. There he met members of St. Ansgar and came to the League meetings, taking a number of offices through the years.

It is, however, as Editor of the Bulletin that he became most known. He was a voracious reader of Scandinavian publications. He learned to read and speak Norwegian. He dealt with difficult printers and somehow managed to produce a yearly Bulletin. In order to keep the Bulletin up to date, almost yearly he travelled to Scandinavia. Sometimes he would wait for days in a town before he could visit someone, but he doggedly continued his pursuit of the latest news of the Church.

For 38 years he remained the Editor. The last few editions represented a triumph of the will. The last trips to Scandinavia were a small martyrdom. Somehow the Bulletin appeared, as interesting as ever.

In 1986 John Dwight was honored with the Holy Cross of Jerusalem for his contributions to Eastern Catholic Churches. Posthumously he became a Knight of the Equestrian Order of St. Gregory for his work in the League. He died 6 February 1994. His Mass was held at St. Thomas More Church and he was buried in the family crypt at Woodlawn Cemetery.

Rev. John E. Halborg

PROFESSOR ASTRID M. O'BRIEN



Professor Astrid M. O'Brien has been the very active President of the Saint Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League from 1993 to the present. She combines this with her family life and her teaching and research as an Associate Professor in the Philosophy Department of Fordham University at Lincoln Center in Manhattan.

As President, Prof. O'Brien has taken responsibility for the annual Lucia Mass (in December) and the Saint Ansgar's Mass (in February) as well as the festivities which traditionally go with them. For a number of years there also has been a Mass and Picnic at the Convent of St. Birgitta, Darien, CT. She also arranged participation in ecumenical Vesper Service at the Norwegian Seaman's Church to celebrate the 1000 years of Christianity in Norway (1985).

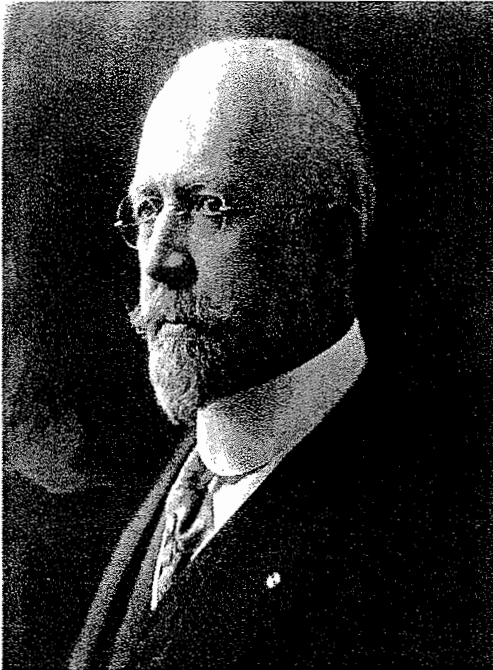
Over many years since 1986, she has written and translated from Norwegian and also published her own articles in the Saint Ansgar's Bulletin. Prof. O'Brien has given several conferences on Saint Birgitta (2007 and 1991). At Fordham University at Lincoln Center she was the co-moderator for the conference: "Sigrid Undset: Saints, Sinners, and the Human Condition".

Along with everything else, Professor O'Brien is at present preparing a biography of "Lucie Christine" whose real name was Mathilde Bertrand-Boutle. This 19th Century Frenchwoman was, like Saint Birgitta of Sweden, a wife, a mother and a mystic.

Rev. Philip J. Sandstrom

THREE GENERATIONS OF RAMBUSCHS

Frode Christian Valdimar Rambusch



Karen Elise Juel Rambusch



The principal founder of St. Ansgar's League, Frode Christian Valdimar Rambusch, was born in his father's Lutheran parsonage in 1859 in Sønder Omme, Denmark. He was tutored at home and later studied at the Royal Art Academy in Copenhagen. After some years of working in various European capitals, he came to New York in 1889 and married Valborg Olsen of Christiania, Norway at the Danish Seamen's Church in Brooklyn in 1890. He was converted to Catholicism in 1896 by the Paulists Fathers, stating that he and his father, a high church Lutheran pastor, had always believed in the basic truths of the Catholic faith. His wife died in 1900. He married a second time in 1902 to another convert, Karen Elise Juel. In 1910, together with three friends, he founded St. Ansgar's League as a social gathering place for other Scandinavian converts in Brooklyn, New York. He had a great love of Scandinavian history, the stories of the Vikings and the early Catholic faith in Scandinavia and wrote on these subjects in the early annual issues of St. Ansgar's Bulletin. He was made a Knight of the Order of Dannebrog by King Frederick VIII in 1911.

Upon his death in 1924, his wife, Karen Elise Juel Rambusch (1865-1937) became President of the League and continued his work, strengthening the Bulletin and attracting others, such as Father John LaFarge, to the League. She was born in Copenhagen in 1865 and was drawn to the Catholic Faith in 1894 after hearing a sermon in French in St. Ansgar's Cathedral preached by the Dominican, Father Lange O.P. She was a tireless correspondent and Editor of the Bulletin from 1924 to 1934. Under her leadership the League meeting were culturally rich and vibrant.

Viggo Frode Edvard Rambusch**Viggo Bech Ansgar Rambusch**

Frode's son, Viggo Frode Edvard Rambusch, a member of St. Ansgar's since 1916, became President and Editor in 1934 and actively continued the work of the League. During his years, the League's membership grew nationally, the financial support for the Scandinavian Dioceses developed after WW II, especially the stipend program. Many receptions for visiting Scandinavian bishops took place at the Rambusch Company's Studios in Greenwich Village. Viggo passed on the editorship of the Bulletin to John T. Dwight in 1956 and the presidency of the League to Professor Astrid M. O'Brien in 1993. In recognition of his contributions, Pope John Paul II installed Viggo F. E. Rambusch a Knight of the Order of St. Gregory. He died in 1997.

Viggo Bech Ansgar Rambusch, his son, already an active member for forty years, continued the family's support of the League. He wrote articles for the Bulletin, maintained correspondence and the office as well as functioning as Treasurer of the League. Since World War II the League has distributed in excess of one million US dollars to the Catholic Church of Scandinavia.

Viggo Bech Ansgar Rambusch

SIGRID UNDSET



Sigrid Undset entered the world scene in literature in 1928 when she won the Nobel Prize in Literature for her trilogy, “Kristin Lavransdatter”, the saga of a fourteenth century Norwegian woman.

Undset was born in Denmark in 1882. Her father was an archaeologist. She converted to the Catholic faith in 1924 as a result of her deep study of the Medieval era in Norway. After the Germans invaded Norway, her work was banned. In 1940, she fled to New York leaving behind her papers and manuscripts. Her eldest son was killed defending his homeland that same year.

She was active during the war years in the United States, living in Brooklyn Heights, and speaking out for the Allied cause, against the dark age of the Nazi's regime. Her lecture at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1940 was attended by 2,400 people. In 1943, Smith College, among others, awarded her an Honorary Degree. She was an active member of St. Ansgar's League and contributed many articles to the Bulletin.

Undset returned to Norway in 1945 after the defeat of Germany. She died in 1949.

Viggo Bech Ansgar Rambush

***On the occasion of the publication of
Last Bulletin of St. Ansgar's
Scandinavian Catholic League
Ågot Kermit, Chancellor, Tromsø, Diocese Norway***

With sadness we received the news, that the annual Bulletin from St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League no longer will be published. For many years we have read this well written publication with great interest. Besides being an annual state of affairs for us, the Bulletin has also been a source for hope and inspiration for our spiritual life. When you live in the world's northernmost and smallest diocese with regard to number of Catholics, you often feel that you belong to a forgotten minority. But reading the Bulletin from St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League reminds us that some people in the City of New York think of us and daily pray for us gives us a great warmth and gratitude. This knowledge gives us strength to continue to practice our Catholic faith and to meet the challenge of being a good example to other people.

Tromsø Stift is all very grateful for the generous donations from you. We appreciate very much the arrangement with priests in parishes in need, for the saying of the Masses as per the request of the donors.

A special donation from St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League made it possible for us to build a bell tower to serve the new chapel in Alta. The chapel and the bell tower were consecrated in 2001. Alta belongs to the northernmost Catholic parish in the world. The chapel is situated at the same place where the central missionary post for the North Pole Mission was established in 1856. The missionaries established in Alta also the first Catholic cemetery in the Nordic countries.

The chapel in Alta was used when the 150th anniversary for the establishment of the North Pole Mission was celebrated at June 3rd 2006. Catholics from the entire Tromsø Stift gathered in Alta and participated in the Holy Mass celebrated in the chapel. Later the same year the Nordic Episcopal conference arranged one of its regular meetings in Alta.

Everyone visiting the place will notice how the bell tower makes the chapel in Alta complete and brings the spirit of St. Ansgar in mind. The holy Ansgar was the first to introduce the use of church bells in Scandinavia when he in 852 put up the churches in Hedeby and Ribe in Denmark. The legend says that the pagans were scared by the bells which they considered as magic instruments. The bell tower in Alta will remind us in Northern Norway of our benefactors in New York and bring in mind our common heritage from the holy Ansgar.

In spite of the cease of the Bulletin we hope that we still in the future can maintain the personal contact with Father John E. Halborg. He has for us for many years been the personification of St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League. We are very grateful for the great achievement he has done by writing us, visiting us in order to maintain a vivid contact with our fellow Catholic believers in New York. We have been especially delighted that Father Halborg could come to visit us in order to participate in the ceremony of the consecration of our new bishop Berislav Grgić on the 28th of March 2009

For further information, please contact:

Viggo Bech Rambusch
Rambusch Studios 160 Cornelison Avenue Jersey City, NJ 07304



S. Bridges/Rambusch. 1960

PRAYER FOR SCANDINAVIA

O Jesus our God and Savior, by the merits of Your Most Precious Blood, shed for all men, we ask You to look with special love upon the peoples of Scandinavia. Grant peace and holiness to Your Church in these countries. Instill zeal, courage and confidence in the hearts of their bishops, priests, religious and faithful.

Promote the work of Unity among all Christian people, giving them courage and humility to seek the means of advancing this Cause for which You prayed and gave Your life. Grant to all who profess belief in You, harmony and love, as well as the grace to grow in holiness and to attain eternal salvation.

We ask these blessings through Your Virgin Mother, St. Ansgar and all the saints of these lands, for the honor and glory of Your Name, and for the welfare of Your Church. Amen

Fr. Titus Cranny, S.A.,
National Director of Unity Apostolate, Graymoor. (with permission of superiors)

