

ST. ANSGAR'S



BULLETIN

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Laying the Cornerstone for the Mariakloster in Tautra

The Year of Saint Ansgar

Perhaps I will be excused if I begin with a personal note. The Bulletin relies on a number of people who translate, proofread and set up the magazine. Most of them are named on the proper page. It also has relied on a few persons from St. Thomas More Church who do much of the work of organizing the mailings. One of these women died this year: Ceil Russell. Grant peace to her soul. It also relies on a number of correspondents. Most of these are very reliable. Norwegians seem to be among the best. Thank you.

It still leaves an enormous amount of work to the Editor. I will give a little story from last year. When the proof sheets arrived, the bottoms of most of the articles had been clipped off. I am sorry to say that the names of the couple who wrote the fine article on Birgitta in South America, Sabine and William Hyland, never were restored. When I discovered this problem, I called the women who run a little print shop in the Bronx. It is on a crooked street, fifty crooked steps above the street pavement. When I arrived, the boy at the computer could only find the first half of the pages. We worked on them and I crawled down the crooked steps. Somewhere down the crooked street I realized that he only had to slide the screen to the right. Finally it was done. In the process my feet, attached to my sciatic body, suffered and continued to do so for a long time. The joys of being an editor.

St. Ansgar is now approaching its centennial. European Catholics are often puzzled by an organization in America which preserves connections with the Nordic Countries. In a way it is self defense. To a large extent America is a country of immigrants and this is reflected in the Church. The early history of many dioceses reflects the struggle between these ethnic groups. The founders of St. Ansgar, many of them having become Catholic in America, also wanted to proclaim their place in the American Church. They also wanted to support the struggling Catholic Churches in the North. Unlike the St. Ansgar Societies in Europe, they have never been given permission to take up a collection for this cause. Nevertheless, over the years a good amount of money has been sent to those Churches. Here we must acknowledge that St. Ansgar became a multi cultural organization. Our mailing list reflects the varied ethnic backgrounds that make up the Catholic Church in America. On the other hand, the members of the Society do promise to pray for the Northern Churches. Our official prayer is printed in the Bulletin and we invite all to enter into this prayer.

Organizations struggle to survive today. Once we had Chapters in several cities. Only the New York Chapter is left. We are active and enjoy our meetings together. We would urge people in other centers to start meeting to celebrate being Scandinavian and Catholic.

One of our New York priests retired this year from the Cathedral: Monsignor Thomas Neilsen finally found his health problems demanded that he seek a quieter existence in his home on the Jersey shore. He has been our Chaplain for many years. We wish him well and hope that he enjoys his retirement.

One of our major concerns is the preservation of the Bulletins. For some time the first years of the Bulletin were missing in New York and it is only recently that we have a complete set again. The credit for this is due Viggo Rambusch who has worked to photo copy and save at least two sets of the Bulletin. One of these sets is in New York. The other set is at Catholic University. Recently Mr. Rambusch had the recent copies of the Bulletin bound and presented them to that Library. I am the original Luddite but it is possible that some other ways of preserving and making the Bulletins available should be pursued in addition to a set in a library. Any ideas?

My long years at St. More are coming to an end and there will be a special Mass on 29 February to which I invite you. However mail for me can still be sent to the church at 65 E. 89 St. New York NY 10128 or my home, 90 La Salle St. New York NY 10027. Of course, it can also be directed to the Office and its listing in the Bulletin.

-JEH

A Festival For Grownups

Halvard Rieber-Mohn O.P.

The Christmas Gospel is Christendom's most beautiful text. But it has always been dangerous to be beautiful-it can lead us astray. The writer of this text did not want to create some kind of "feeling" but to set forth a proposition. It reads like this: In and with Jesus Christ, God himself has entered into our human family. Not only in a vague and spiritual sense, but completely tangibly, yes with a shriek: "Unto us a child is born." It is a shocking proposition and both the world and life have been changed by it.

Perhaps most people accept it as a feeling rather than a proposition because the world seems to continue as it always has been and we also are the same. "The Prince of Peace" did not create an eternal peace. What does the Church mean by these harmless and idyllic words, how can they sound so grand? The liturgy for the day before Christmas has a text that reads "Tomorrow shall the iniquity of the earth be abolished; and the Savior of the world shall reign over us."

What kind of an easy promise is this? Iniquity abolished? Oh no-unfortunately. And Jesus Christ will be the only ruler over the life of the world? To say the least this is rather far out. We feel and know, it weighs on our heart and mind, how remote this is at the end of a year in which people have lived in continuous anguish for terror and war, with a global politics where hate and force and blood run like a thick, broad stream.

"Tomorrow shall the iniquity of the world be abolished". We certainly think: This is the great and never realized hope of humanity for the unattainable-a tomorrow that continually escapes us and never actually is a "today". This is human-

ity's most beautiful dream. But it is not reality.

In our tired understanding we do not see that there is something besides reality and dream, and this is where the message of Christmas strikes us. For this message is a possibility. A promise, a proposal to our free will, set forth again and again, with God's untiring patience. God is the Lord of possibilities, it is we humans who content ourselves with dreams or, on the other hand, with the hopeless "reality" we have created by ourselves and that crushes our will to live.

It is hard to be a human being. It is very tempting to want to be tranquilized from it, to look for pain killers against reality. For how many persons is not Christmas just that-seven grandly arranged days for us to escape into a dream? Despite everything we feel a little uneasy about ourselves and we include our fellow men, each other, in the dream. A flight from the world's situation...also a flight from our own problems, milieu and the everyday world-in any case at least for a few days we will be nice to each other. Not least of all, a flight from ourselves. This, we say with some emotion, is a "children's festival." We grownups take a flight back to what we are, or better to what we will never be, to that which we once were: Children. From the sad disappointment of today to the yet unbroken promise of the past in our own beginning life. There is a sad-joy mixture in Christmas: the mystery of Christmas—the most overpowering piece of concrete reality in God's dealings with us humans, we happily make into a generally agreed on unreality.

There is no "peace on earth". Instead there is what the Scriptures

call "wars and rumors of wars". Peace was promised to "men of good will"-can our wills be that evil? No one can draw a visible and ominous line between the minds of those who have given up and surrendered to egoism and the desire for power and those who still keep alive a flickering hope for peace against all that is rational and the boundary of hopelessness.

Neither do we see any radical solution to our own more immediate problems. After the benevolent season of Christmas they arise again, at the latest in January. We become, sadly, soon tired of being helpful and protective of others. After Christmas, the New Year comes with its 52 weeks and all the old and known compromises on the borderlines of faith. The cowardly anguish that God's power and love shall have elbowroom and cause trouble in our lukewarm existence. The fearful explaining away of the command to believe. This deafness to God's grace causes an unbearable lack of peace in our soul. We know that when the candles burn down and the decorations are packed up again that we sit where we were before, with our miserable and unchanged hearts which Jesus, in a sad moment, called evil and the source of all that is evil. What remains for the clear sighted, the unsentimental, the fearlessly truthful?

There are a lot of things that remain-in fact the most important. Don't misunderstand: To believe, in the strength of the word, its true meaning, is to see clearly. That is to separate that which is fast from that which is moveable. Man is only an abyss and falls into emptiness. God is the ground and the stronghold. A true relation to God is never an escape-it is the opposite: faith in real-

ity. Only in this way does Christmas have meaning, its joy is not to be had at sale prices, anything but cheap. In this one child we meet the final and decisive truth about ourselves, a final and decisive answer to the many secrets of our life and our nature. If we see this then we can say yes to the many important facts of the situation where we up to now, in the name of truth, might have answered no. There we find joy and peace, with the homeless one.

Namely, there is a peace which the world cannot give but which God gives. The invulnerable peace in the person who had received the mature freedom of faith. Freedom to escape the tyranny of our narrow circumstances, to see wholeness and eternity in the middle of our existence.

This is a hunted and threatened peace. It was not born for the fearful, because murderers walked out of the shadows of power to destroy it. Thirty years later they put a spear in the heart of the crucified Prince of Peace. This peace is persecuted, scoffed at, vulnerable, wavering and weak. But it endures, it survives in the faith and hope of human-

ity. Since the Son of God came to this cold earth, to a murderous generation, and looked at us through the eyes of a child, we have never been able to completely forget him. Continually he has sought his dwelling in our empty hearts, our too full mind. Some of us have prepared for him a shameful place in the outhouses of our homes. And some have supposed and grasped that really Christmas is not a children's festival. Just the opposite: it is a day of remembrance for people who should be both grown up and mature enough to receive as a personal challenge: the frightening and attracting message of God's love.

Haven't we heard it? The whole Advent liturgy, that which we have just experienced, has a keyword: a solitary cry to God: Come! Now he has come. He is here. But what about ourselves? This is the question for the masses of people as for the individual. Do we have an unwanted guest?

We look up to the altar, into the crib. It is not an idyll, all our cheap decorations cannot hide the drama, each time a decision and a crisis in our personal growth. Possibility, promise, a new beginning lie

before us-as touchable and concrete as a child we can take in our arms and lift up: Jesus Christ. He who from his cross said, "It is finished."-everything is done. To the end of time he is the continually new beginning for our life, the thrilling, the living, the promising point of departure, our source and our strength. Christ has finished-so let us begin.

Christmas is no narcotic for the terrible things we are and do. Christmas is something far deeper. It is the promise that we can change-God in power. God's kingdom bows down to our poverty and confusion. God calls on our good will. God's mercy accepts the little bit of straw we have raked together in our cold and hard minds as a rented room, a dwelling for his use, a beginning place for his life and growth, his pain and his resurrection, yes, for his eternal life in our poor destiny.

So we hold the newborn life in our two hands.

Hallvard Rieber-Mohn O.P.
(1922-1982,) *Menneske Først-Kristen Så*. St. Olav Forlag, Oslo. 1976

AN APPRECIATION OF JOHANNES JORGENSEN

Denmark's greatest Catholic writer was born in Svendborg on 6 November 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, Andree Carof. In 1915 he obtained a civil divorce from his wife and returned, first to Siena and then to Assisi. Andree 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 time 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 Duties 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 a 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.

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

-Viggo Rambusch.

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





The Relevance of Johannes Jorgensen

Early in the twentieth century, Johannes Jorgensen was much read and admired. Despite a chilly reception and rejection by the literary Parnassus, he had in all secrecy many faithful readers among common Danish people and, of course, especially among Catholics. By reading his books, a wise and well written introduction was gained into the Catholic way of thinking and the Catholic influenced cultural life of Southern Europe. Despite improved means of travel, that continued to be a closed land for most Danes.

Neither the founding of an organization in his honor nor the copies of his books to be found in older libraries are of much importance if his writings do not contain values which are important, especially to those who are younger.

It can be admitted that Jorgensen's style is a little old fashioned, perhaps a little sentimental in comparison with modern writers. It is 100 years since most of his writing was done. It could be, however, that it is our time that can learn from his lucid and fine Danish. We may begin to experience a break from the worldly and materialistic view of life which for generations has colored the Western World and, not least

of all, our own land. As a student in Copenhagen, Jorgensen lost his childhood faith for the materialistic view of life that in the 1890's was represented by the group gathered around Georg Brandes.

He soon realized that this "naturalism" could not satisfy him, intellectually or personally. He began the search for the meaning of existence which, after much doubt and inner struggle, led to his conversion in 1896. His honest depiction of this in his writings, including his weaknesses and failings can rightly be seen as a Danish parallel to such classics as St. Augustine's *Confessions* or Newman's *Apologia*. Without being a saint, he was most able to create his most important biographies of saints, of Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Siena and Birgitta of Vadstena et al. In the age of globalization, Jorgensen has another important role. In his own person he is a bridge builder between Denmark and the Southern, Catholic culture. He continued to be most assuredly a Danish writer. He opened the eyes of Danes to Europe's culture and church, but he also made the name of Denmark known in the whole world. He was at home in both cultures. He would have shuddered over certain phenomena in the Danish life style of today. In our present day need for sound cultural bridge building in Europe, he can be an especially good and experienced guide.

-Jorgen Nybo Rasmusen in *Katolsk Orientering in. 3*, 12 February 2003

Johannes Jorgensen: a Short View

Jorgensen had a combative nature. His life with the culturally radical artists in Copenhagen had left a deep impression on his young mind. The free life which despised middle class and Christian morality had entered his blood. It carried inner conflicts which made him a plaything for contradictory forces. He aspired to a deeper meaning but his nature refused to accept it. But

the longing for God also has a certain inclination to stay fast and enter the blood.

We can ask what it was that really brought him to the Catholic Church besides the need for an answer to the inner need to deepen himself in the mysteries of the soul. From childhood, his nature was colored by a certain melancholy that made him introspective at the same time as nature itself was very important for his concept of existence. In his youth, in the artistic milieu of Copenhagen he sought within pantheistic worship of nature where the beings of nature replaced a personal god. At the same time this deepening was not able to satisfy his need for an explanation of the mysteries of existence ... Existence was not an answer in itself; it had to have a basis. The answer he found in the mysticism of the Church, but this did not remove his melancholy and scrupulosity, which had been nourished by the loose living of his youth in Copenhagen ... It is worth noting that his search did not stop with his entering the Catholic Church. He continued to travel as if he were seeking for confirmation for his unending questions. His conversion was only the culmination of the continuous inner struggles, and even if he found a place to stand in the Church, he never ceased asking questions.

On the whole, I do not think he can be characterized as a Catholic author if by this one means an author who, so to say, has "entered into the service of the Church". He wrote because his inner voice told him to do so and not to win adherents for the Church. His fascination with the great figures of the Church, with the spiritual strength and courage of these men and women moved him to the extent, that he had to write about them. Perhaps in this need there was a certain kind of penance, an act of atonement for the fiascos of his life and an attempt to raise himself up over the spiritual indifference of the milieu of native literature.

-Stig Holsting (Condensed)

LAYING OF CORNERSTONE FOR NORWEGIAN MONASTERY

On 8 May, her Majesty, Queen Sonja of Norway, laid the cornerstone for the Cistercian Monastery being built on the island of Tautra in the Trondheim Fjord. The stone was a gift from St. Ansgar's League. It was an old stone from Nidaros Cathedral. Behind it is a strange story. When the chapels were planned for J.F. Kennedy Airport in New York, the idea arose to incorporate stones from around the world. Mr. Viggo F.X. Rambusch asked for a stone from Denmark and was given this stone. Unfortunately, plans changed, and the stones were never used. It remained in the possession of the Rambusch family through the years awaiting a proper use. Last year, at a lunch in New York, it was given to the sisters for the Mariakloster.

The weather can be rough on a small, low island in a broad fjord far north. For the Queen's visit, the sun came out brightly and a good breeze made a show of all the Norwegian flags that were up on every farm. Just as the procession of bishops and priests, sisters and Lutheran ministers and deacons proceeded to the field on the hilltop over the fjord where the new monastic church is to be built, a strong wind blew up from the South, so that the Queen and others had to hold their miters, caps, copes and veils. Bishop Georg



Queen Sonja received by (from left to right) Mother Gail Fitzpatrick, Abbess of our Lady of the Mississippi Abbey; Mother Rosemary Duncan, Prioress of Tautra and the Mayor of Frosta, Boje Reitan.

Müller made a point of the wind as a symbol of the Holy Spirit blowing over the building of the new monastery. Bishop John Willem Gran, the retired Catholic Bishop of Oslo, himself a Cistercian Monk, also took part in the ceremony.

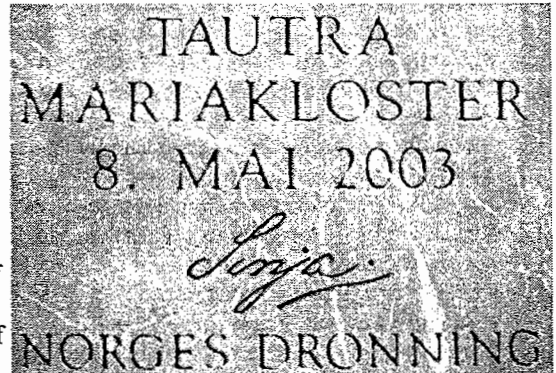
Queen Sonja signed the cornerstone and the documents that will be put in the foundations of the new church when the building actually starts in January 2004. She told the Press that she thinks we need quiet places for meditation and reflection in the hectic world of today's society.

For our little community of eight Sisters and a Chaplain it was a very important ecumenical event. The Queen represents the whole people of Norway in a unique way, and since Norway still has a State Church, the King is the legal head of the Lutheran Church of Norway. Present were also two Ministers from the government, Lutheran Bishop Finn Wagle of Trondheim who is also the Primate of the Church of Norway, and all the regional and local officials both civil and religious, made this a truly historic event that again emphasized the welcome that has met the Cistercian Sisters since the foundation was made.

The foundation of Sancta Maria de Tuta Insula (Our Lady of the Safe Island), Tautra Mariakloster, was made from Our Lady of the Mississippi Abbey in Dubuque, Iowa in 2000. The island of Tautra is situated in the middle of the fjord east of Trondheim where there was a Cistercian Monastery of monks from 1207 to 1537 when the monastery was closed during the reformation. The local people are well aware of their monastic heritage in the sense that they know it has deeply influenced the history of their town. They also show a deep understanding of the importance of spiritual values and a monastic presence. They have eagerly supported the work of a new monastery. The monastery, planned to be finished in 2005, is planned for 16 Sisters and the church

will hold 120 persons. There are only two other Catholics in the town, but many persons of all faiths come to visit and pray with the sisters.

The architect for the new Monastery is Jan Olav Jensen, a Norwegian,



Queen Sonja's signature engraved on the cornerstone given by St. Ansgar's League.

who has won international renown for several of his works including a Leper Hospital in India and Mortensrud Church in Oslo.

St. Ansgar's League has generously supported the building of our new monastery that is budgeted at 39,000,000 Norwegian crowns. With what is pledged, the Sisters have already received three-fourths of the amount needed and trust that the goal will be reached by December of this year. The sisters at the Motherhouse, Our Lady of the Mississippi Abbey, have been running a capital campaign for the cause since 1999. Other monasteries and church organizations in the United States and Europe have also given funds. When the new monastery is built, the present houses will be used for retreatants.

Our community at Tautra has started a small herbal soap industry that we hope will support us in a few years. Already it covers half of our living expenses.

We have a Norwegian candidate who has spent a few months with us and is hoping to enter next year when she has finished her studies. It is with great joy that we received the official permission to open a novitiate.

—Sr. Hanne-Maria Berentzen OCSO

ARCHBISHOP HEIM: IN MEMORIAM

Archbishop Bruno B. Heim died 17 March 2003 in his home town of Olten at an age of 92 years. He was born 5 March 1911 and was Ordained a priest in 1938. After four years as a parish priest he began the training to be part of the papal diplomatic corps. His diplomatic career began in Paris where he was Secretary to the Nuncio, Angelo Roncalli, who was to become Pope John XXIII. From 1961 to 1969 he was the Apostolic Delegate to the Nordic Countries. He was known for his artistic ability and also for his friendly personality. He also was an expert chef and famed as a floral arranger. His knowledge of heraldry was extensive and he designed the coats of arms of the Dioceses and Bishops of that period. He redesigned the coat of arms of John Paul from those used when he was Archbishop of Krakow. His writings on heraldry remain standard sources of information. As a liturgist, he wished that the changes of Vatican II might have come earlier "to coincide with the progressive liturgical movement developed by the Austrian Benedictine liturgist, Pius Parsch".

The Obituary in the London Times said "As a Vatican diplomat he served first at the nuntiature in Vienna, where he prepared the post-war concordat and skillfully mediated between Catholics and atheistic socialists. Then he went to Bonn as *Chargé d'affaires*. It was said falsely that he was being punished for his too liberal attitude towards Freemasonry. In reality he knew the differences between the atheist Mason of Latin America and other lodges, among them the English and the Scottish, whose worst failing was their secrecy. 'And who are we to complain of

secrecy?' he asked."

When he arrived in Scandinavia, he was disturbed by the condition of the churches that were often only temporary structures. He began to appeal for money from European Catholics and a St. Ansgar Society was formed in Switzerland to help the Northern Churches. It fell to Heim to introduce the liturgical changes of Vatican II to people, formerly protestants, who resented these changes.

Following his years in Scandinavia he became Nuncio for The United Kingdom. He had an enormous influence in reshaping the Church in England and perhaps the most visible sign was the appointment of Basil Hume to be Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster.

On 4 June 1962 John Dwight had a lengthy interview with Heim. (I cite it at length because it is an interesting example of John's visits). He reported on a number of matters. Bishop Nelson was in poor health and was leaving to live with Nuns in Switzerland. The Sisters in Vadstena were having internal problems that the Bishop hoped to solve. They seemed to be having some trouble with the way they were governed. Heim was going the next day to see an Abbess of the old order of Birgitta to see if they wished to take charge of the Convent. There was a real possibility that the Convent would be lost to the Catholic Church and Heim viewed this as serious, not least because of its symbolic value. There was a rumor that Catholic Relief Service would end and John was commissioned to see Bishop Swanstrom for an assurance that aid to Scandinavia would continue. Stockholm was in need of a better Cathedral for the



Diocese. A dozen Lutheran clergy in Sweden were interested in becoming priests and he hoped one of them might become a librarian so that Stockholm would have as good a Catholic Library as Copenhagen. In Norway Bishop Mangers was old and there was a need for a new bishop.

In Norway, the Catholic hospitals are too expensive and not able to compete with the government's health services. The Nuns in Norway are now overworked and only able to care for these institutions: "they get sick, have breakdowns, always look sad and careworn." (John did not find this the case when he came to Norway). Heim would rather have the nuns teach and do social work.

The death of Archbishop Heim is another reminder that the post Vatican II era is ever further behind us and in need of re-evaluation.

Scandinavian Feast Days

Mass is said by our Chaplain for the intention of the League on the Feasts of our patrons as follows: St. Ansgar (Scandinavia) February 3, Saint Canute (Denmark) and Saint Henry (Finland) January 19, St. Thorlak (Iceland) July 20, St. Olav (Norway) July 29, St. Erik (Sweden) May 18, St. Brigitta July 23 and October 7

Honorary Patrons

Most Rev. Robert Carlson, Bishop of Sioux Falls
His Eminence Francis Cardinal George, Archbishop of Chicago

Officers of Parent Unit

Rev. Thomas Nielsen, *Chaplain*; Mr. Eric H. Rambusch, *Director of Publicity*; Sister Hanne Bang, O.P.; Rev. John E. Halborg, *Director of Programs and Editor of the Bulletin*; Mr. Viggo Rambusch, *Honorary Chairman and Treasurer*, Mrs. Astrid O'Brien, *President*; Ms. Bernadette Grandy, *Vice President - Special Events*; Miss Pamela Downing, *Assistant to the Editor*; Mrs. Jo Ellen Sehn, *Corresponding Secretary*; Mr. Erik Staffan Tozzi, *Bulletin*.

SOME INSIGHTS INTO NORTHERN SPIRITUALITY

An address given by Bishop of Stockholm Anders Arborelius OCD

All Christian spiritualities focus on the same triune God. Everyone has their own unique calling, even if focused on the same triune God and in the same religious community. In the north the emphasis is on the uniqueness of each person's individual road. Recognizing this could be a valuable gift to the entire church. But often it creates tension. We may even speak about a northern drama: here faith and spirituality belong to such a very private domain of life that people barely dare to speak about the subject - except when drunk. It is not unusual for spouses to be unaware of each other's faith. Northern people love solitude. They do not seek God in church but in nature. When looking for God they practically fear other people. The church is not known as ecclesia, connection, communion.

There is something beautiful in this: the ability to live alone with God. But also tragic: fear that other people will take God away from us. Someone experiencing this does not feel that he needs the church. To some extent this is a tradition originating from Lutheranism, but other factors are nature, culture, and isolation.

The northern people have an ability to walk a silent path with God, so as to listen to him in silence. There is a danger that liturgy and words are not getting understood.

Northern people appreciate simplicity. St. Francis of Assisi is more

popular than St. Bridget. The danger here is that a simple life is recommended for other people, for churches and cloisters in particular, without any wish to give up life's comforts for oneself.

Sincerity. The northern belief is that one must always talk openly, be oneself, honest in one's feelings. Everything else is hypocrisy. If one thinks this way it is difficult to see that "wandering through the dark night" is part of God's plan to teach us and to lead us to pray with depth.

Subjectivity. People want to have community, but they find it difficult to live in it. There is a great longing to live together with other people - and living together is enormously difficult. This is the tragedy within life in an order, in marriage, etc.

Society. Not too long ago the state was considered almost sacred. God spoke through the ruler. This is a Lutheran tradition, features of which still remain. Laws are deeply respected. Government is only marginally corrupt. Decision makers can view their work as a calling, as did Dag Hammarskjöld. There is a big difference in this from the southern mentality.

In the northern countries secularization started early, in the beginning of 20th century. The next stage has already been reached: in the return of religiosity.

People are open to religion as long as it meets their personal

wishes. Receiving revelation is difficult: I have my own concept of God, it is difficult for me to believe in faith as a gift of God, difficult to accept church.

All of this can be crystallized in one word: emotion. People are looking for feeling and want to experience something. The starting point for faith is emotion. People do not go to church to meet God, they go to experience a feeling. There is something right in this too: God speaks to human emotion. But God is also truth. The northern people easily switch from part to part, from one question to the next, but creating a whole is difficult, as is also the understanding that the truth of faith, the revelation, forms the whole.

At the same time people feel a great longing to meet the God of revelation. Therefore it is important in spiritual teaching not to stop at emotion but to help people to understand that God is greater than emotions. Luther and the pietists emphasized salvation as conversion. It is important to realize that salvation continues after conversion as a road to holiness.

The northern spiritual experience is a message of hope for the church. Secularization has already been experienced here, but the faithful have continued on the road of faith and wandered through the wilderness of worldliness.

-Bishop Anders Arborelius
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MOTHER ELISABETH — HER AMERICAN ROOTS

MARGUERITE TJADER

Just as Birgitta, during her 600-year Jubilee, celebrated in three countries, was said by the Holy Father to be a Saint of Rome as well as a Saint of Sweden, so Mother Elisabeth Hasselblad, who brought new life to the Order of St. Birgitta, can be called an outstanding personality of three countries, Italy, Sweden and America.

Cardinal Merry del Val called her "the most extraordinary woman of Rome" (*La Donna piu straordinaria di Roma*) which is the Italian

title of the story of her life, published in 1970 by Herder and Herder as *Mother Elisabeth*. She was born in Sweden and remained, until her death, intensely Swedish through her great love and zeal for her native land. Yet it was in New York that she found her first vocation, as a nurse in Roosevelt Hospital. She migrated from Sweden in the great "fever for America," at the turn of the century -- so

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powerfully illustrated by the books and film of Moberg's story, *The Emigrants*.

It was the American period of her life which formed her character and her destiny. Here she developed from a simple nurse into a head nurse, almost ready to become a doctor. It was here that circumstances led her into the Catholic Church, where she found her remarkable spiritual director Father Hagen, S.J. And it was from New York that she started off to take refuge in Rome, in the house of St. Birgitta, sick and ready to die in that place to which she had been mysteriously drawn. The end of the story was to be there in Rome, but it was in America that all those desires and spiritual powers were generated. These propelled her on, so that she was ready to complete her life's mission when she left these shores..

Maria Elisabeth landed in New York harbor with a little band of Swedes, to whom she had endeared herself through her cheer and helpfulness during a very rough voyage. She was an appealing young girl of seventeen, quite beautiful with her regular features, light brown eyes and thick brown hair swept up in a graceful knot.

Through her travelling companions she found her first job as a mother's helper with a family near White Plains. She worked all day and studied English at night, when she was hardly able to stay awake. But she knew that knowledge of the English language would make it possible to train herself for higher types of work. Her Swedish friends could see that she was tiring herself, and found her a better job in the city, where there were six children! But Maria had had nine little brothers and sisters of her own. Indeed, it was one of her reasons for leaving Sweden, to be able to help her family feed and educate so many. Yes, it was true — America was the "land of the dollar". One was able to make money, and already Maria had begun to send some dollars back to her beloved ones in Sweden.

But the second year of work in the suffocating heat of a New York summer was too much for her. She was overtaken by an old intestinal weakness that had troubled her when she was only twelve, helping her mother with the babies and hard, household chores. Internal bleeding sent her to a city hospital in a joggling, horse-drawn ambulance.

As luck would have it, this was the Roosevelt Hospital, then already at Ninth Avenue and 59th Street. She was put in a ward with some twenty or thirty others. This was not the day of rose-tinted walls nor semi-private rooms. The ward was grim as a prison, and here she lay in the sweltering heat. Since she was not supposed to eat in her condition, no one paid attention to her. Only toward evening an old nurse stopped to give her a drink of water, and pulled off a compress which had been plastered on her abdomen that morning. By this time it had adhered to her skin and pulling it away caused an external wound more painful than the internal ulcer. Maria was willing to accept pain, but now she felt she might die, and no one knew where she was, nor would she ever be able to help her beloved family again. . . . As the night wore on, she prayed and prayed for them, and for herself that she might be able to endure this suffering and the feeling that she was abandoned by all.

Slowly, she realized that God was with her, perhaps trying to tell her something. . . . It was then that she made her first resolve: Perhaps she could become a nurse, so that she could help the poor and suffering as they lay in wards like this; so that they would not feel abandoned as she had felt abandoned.

During her weeks of convalescence, Maria's resolve was strengthened. She saw that most of the nurses were good-hearted but overworked. She tried to help them, and they gave her encouragement to seek training herself. She could become a professional, and make more money to help others. But most clearly she grasped the meaning of the Gospel teaching: she could love God and serve Him through ministering to the sick and unfortunate. Graduating from Roosevelt Hospital and working there, as well as with many private

patients, she was sure she had found her true vocation. Under her care, many small miracles of healing seemed to occur. No case seemed too difficult for her, and many encouraged her to become a doctor. But destiny took another turn.

To the growing city had come a family named Cisneros. They had not been obliged to stop with the immigrants at Ellis Island, but took a cab to a fashionable hotel. Mrs. Cisneros was mortally ill, and they had come from Colombia, South America, to see if New York doctors could help her. Maria was summoned to their suite, and for the next month nursed the mother while the two young daughters, Marie and Emma, who were around her own age, clung to Maria in their anxiety.

In the summer, Maria accompanied them to a mountain resort where, as always, she was struck by the wonders of nature. Back in the city Mrs. Cisneros grew worse. Realizing that she had not long to live, she wanted to return to her native land. All begged Maria to come with them. They embarked for Barranquilla, Colombia, and reached their family estate just in time. The mother's dying wish was that Maria should remain with her daughters. Mr. Cisneros also considered her one of the family. He took them into the high mountains of his country, and then to London. Before they returned to America, they visited Sweden, for Maria's sake, and she was able to see her own mother and sisters.

Maria went back to her work as a nurse, and the sisters remained in the city to be near her. They were devout Catholics and Maria respected their religion, as she did those of the patients she had nursed at Roosevelt Hospital. Often, when one of them was dying, she had sent for a priest, to the nearby Paulist Church. Once, at night, she had gone over the street in a storm to fetch an old priest, and afterwards he had said to her: "Some day you will not only become a Catholic, but you will die a nun." She was deeply shocked by his remark, for she was only doing a good turn for her patient. The Catholic faith seemed far too complicated to her, with her simple trust and love. She did not understand their rituals, their sanctuaries. She had often received patients who had been workmen injured during the building of St. Patrick's Cathedral at that time. She wondered — Why did Catholics have to build such huge churches?

Then came a great shock. Emma Cisneros announced her intention of becoming a nun of the Visitation Order, in Washington. Maria was deeply disturbed. She even pleaded with the Jesuit Fathers of Georgetown University nearby to stop her friend's folly. But, on the contrary, they patiently tried to explain that her friend was seeking a higher type of life, and that she could always return to living in the world if she was not satisfied that her vocation was real.

Back in New York, Maria spent another winter working among the poor of the city, under certain charity organizations or *Guilds*. But she felt a great loneliness of soul. She had long been seeking a spiritual group to which she could belong. But no church had exactly met her need. She was looking for some completely pure and special *Little Flock*. . . . but slowly she began to realize that there was no such perfection in this world. Even Christ had not been able to create a perfect flock out of his followers. One of His twelve disciples had betrayed Him. Peter denied Him thrice. They slept when He had asked them to wake with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane. . . . Then how could she expect to find a *Flock* where none are weak, none are guilty?

From that time on she began to be drawn ever more strongly to the Catholic faith. Finally, she found herself at Georgetown again, pleading with these same Jesuits to help her become a Catholic.

Then came another encounter such as America could uniquely



*Maria Elisabeth Hesselblad as a teen-ager
and hospital nurse in New York City.*

bring about between two people from differing countries, meeting in the New World, where each had found new lives. From then on, their paths would coincide!

Fr. Hagen had come from his native Austria to take charge of the Georgetown University Observatory. Tall, kind, and lofty in spirit, he had at once recognized in Maria Elisabeth a fearless, dedicated soul.

As he gave her instruction, he found also that he could lead her into the deepest spiritual teaching — the acceptance of all suffering as something which one could offer up to God, feeling that it was a willing participation in Christ's redeeming work.

This is a hard teaching for modern man who seeks escape from all pain and discomfort. But Fr. Hagen sensed that Maria would need this consolation. In a sense it had already been a secret hidden in her childhood — faith and unselfishness. Now she was to need it even more, in the whole new life which lay ahead for her.

But she was yet to live through another episode, before her path lay straight before her. Leaving for Europe once more for a needed rest in her work, she was seized with her old illness on the steamer. But now she had Fr. Hagen's direction to uphold her. She recovered in England, and was able to visit Sweden once more, and then Rome, for the first time. When she saw the House of St. Birgitta she was overwhelmed with a desire to stay there, to pray there, and went away unwillingly.

Back in New York, she plunged into work once more with those charity Guilds that visited the worst tenements. She often climbed six or seven stories, with her bag of bandages and medicines, and it was almost as if she was forcing herself to forget her new intuition, that there was another mission calling to her.

Up until now, her vocation as a nurse had satisfied her and brought her rich rewards. She had been able to help all of her family, even her father, before he died. She had brought her sister Anna to America, though Anna could not stand the heat and stress of New York life and had returned to Sweden. Axel, her brother, had also come, returned and finally settled in California. Sten Ture, the youngest brother, had come to study navigation, and passed his examinations as a sea-captain. He had been in the harbor of Havana, when the American battleship *Maine* was blown up — a dramatic page of American history.

Sending her money to Sweden, Maria had bought *Fridhem*, a villa for her mother and family, where she had hoped to spend her old age. But now something different was brewing, was drawing on her inner senses. She had Father Hagen to direct her, when the crisis came.

Suddenly, her work as a nurse was cancelled for her by a new and more severe return of her old illness. Violent bleeding and pain almost ended her life.

What should she do if there was not much time left for her to live? She had been to the House of St. Birgitta in Rome (it was a Carmelite Monastery at that time). There she had seemed to feel that God was calling her to stay. Now Father Hagen encouraged her to write to the Carmelite Superior, to ask if she could come to die in her Community. The Superior had already seen her devotion to Birgitta, and was well aware that the House had belonged to the Swedish Saint. So she answered nobly: "The Mother's House is the place for her sick child". . . . Fr. Hagen agreed that she should go to Rome as soon as she was strong enough.

The last phase of her life in New York was marked by Maria's courage and complete trust that God would somehow make her suffering count in His plan for her. From Sweden her family begged her to come home to them, to *Fridhem*, where they could nurse her now in her weakness. Their pleas inspired a long letter, written as she lay in the hospital, slowly regaining strength to leave and sail for Rome. She had written to her young brother Ture to ask if he could take time off to accompany her. He had received it just in time to cancel a sailing in the Pacific, and came to her bedside. With a charming gesture he brought flowers to Maria, whom he loved as a second mother. A few days later, leaning on his strong arm, she was able to go down to the ship *Empress Louise*, and they sailed for Naples.

Once more she passed the Statue of Liberty, this time never to see it again. Her letter to her family seems to summarize her experiences up to this point in a most graphic manner. She entitled it *My Life*.

"In my childhood, I saw You in my country's deep forests and I heard Your voice in the sighing of the pines and firs. . . . I saw You in the beautiful *Sätters Valley*. I dreamed of learning and science, but You led my way over the great ocean. I heard Your voice in the roar of the big waves as our little ship was thrown up against the heavens and plunged back into the depths of the water. Calmly I rested in the arms of Your almighty power during the storm's horrible commotion.

"I saw You in my new land: in the loneliness and abandon of my heart. You were near me. You were my highest good. You kindled in my mind a longing for good, for the healing of pain, sorrow and need. In the long, dark nights of the house of the sick You stood beside me, You supported me like a brother. You walked with me through the narrow, dark streets where the least and most neglected of your children live.

"I thanked You that I was able to give help and trust. I prayed that You would give me the precious gift of humility, that You would keep my soul clean for Yourself. I saw You in the high mountains of my new land, in the beautiful and fruitful plains which give food to millions of Your children. In the mighty Niagara, in the foaming waters of the St. Lawrence between its Thousand Islands, in the dark rivers which pour out from the eternal snows of the Polar Circle, I heard Your voice. I saw you in the wonders of Nature in the South and in the Tropics. I took the twitter and song of the birds as a message from You to my heart, and I wanted to unite my voice with theirs to praise You. I gazed with wonder on the world which You have created in Your love for us and begged You to forgive us for trampling upon its flowering fields without gratitude.

"I dreamed of travelling back to the place of my youth, to a *Fridhem*, a peaceful home in my fair fatherland. But Your voice called me to eternal Rome, to the House of Holy Birgitta. Lord, how can I break all ties once more? The struggle was great!

It was hard! But this was what Your voice commanded. Lord, take this cup from me, yet not my will but Yours. Your nail-pierced hands stretched out to me, asking me to follow you on the way of the Cross, until life's end.

"*Ecce, Ancilla Domini*, Behold the servant of the Lord, Do with me what you will, Lord, Your grace is sufficient for me."

So she went on to fulfill her destiny, which was to become a Sister of St. Birgitta and to bring new life into her medieval Order. The story is well-known, through many articles and the book *Mother Elisabeth*, which incorporates her own *Notes*, written in obedience to Fr. Hagen's request.

"You have promoted the glory of God by writing down this ex-

traordinary vocation," he declared upon reading them. "This manuscript must remain a document in your Order and its value will increase with time."

Father Hagen had been called to the Vatican Observatory just when Maria Elisabeth needed him most. He had followed all her spiritual adventure, encouraged her in every step, feeling God's power and guidance in her life as in his own. And he wrote that she had gone far beyond him in the school of suffering.

Perhaps he had had an intimation that one day some would undertake to work *for her Cause*. . . . Beatification or sainthood is a far-reaching ideal. It seems equally important to honor Mother Elisabeth in the present by working for the Order she loved, for Sweden and for all souls in search of healing and faith.



Viggo B. Rambusch presenting the three volume bound set of St. Ansgar's Bulletins from 1955 to 2000 to the President of Catholic University on March 11, 2003.

From left to right: Edwin Rambusch; Rev. Stephen Happel, Dean, School of Religious Studies, holding the much used bound set of St. Ansgar's Bulletins from 1910 to 1955, which was presented by Viggo F. Rambusch 47 years ago; President Daniel M. O'Connell; Viggo B. Rambusch; Vice President Richard Collins; Adele Chwalels, Director of Libraries.

A Diocese is Erected

Bishop Theodor Suhr (1896-1997) took charge of the Apostolic Vicariate for Denmark in February 1939. The Vicariate gained as a leader a practical man who had grown up for this responsibility. From the beginning, "obedience" was a key word to understand the role of Suhr as a father figure for Danish Catholics. It was in harmony not only with what was happening at the time, but with the tradition of the Church and Suhr's own background when, in 1939, he wrote, "We created a family of which the bishop is the central point. As with all good families, the children consider it an honor to be obedient. They do this, because the authority of the father is not to be doubted, it is clear to them, that when their father asks them to do something, it is for their own and everyone's best, even if the reasons are not always known to them."

An Apostolic Vicariate does not normally have a Cathedral, because the pope is the real bishop for the Vicariate. However on 1 January 1941 two years after he became Bishop, Bishop Suhr elevated St. Ansgar's Church on Bredgade to the head and mother church, as if it were the Cathedral of the Vicariate. He had received approval for this from the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. In the decree of elevation, the Bishop noted that St. Ansgar already in practice for a century had this dignity but that now was the time to establish it by law. It can hardly be doubted that Bishop Suhr at this point of time wished to gather more of the modest central functions of the Vicariate to Bredgade. He also chose to make the rectory into the episcopal mansion and supplied the parish with a dynamic and modern priest, Pastor Kjeld Geertz-Hansen. The Vicariate gained a clear geographical center. In addition, the elevation of St. Ansgar to the main Church in the vicariate was a preparation for the celebration of the centennial of the church on 1 November

1942, it was thought to be a manifestation to the Danish public. 1942 also marked the fiftieth year of the Vicariate. The decree pointed out something else: "it is now right and proper to work for the shining conclusion: to let the Catholic Church...rise up in Denmark in its full and proper form and structure in agreement with old and traditional Catholic custom and practice."

In 1952, Bishop Suhr was to make his first *ad limina* visit to Rome, with the obligatory visits to the graves of the Apostles, and report to the Curia on conditions in the Vicariate. It may surprise the reader that this had not happened earlier. He had in fact visited Rome earlier but he did not say what was the purpose of these visits. In connection with an *ad limina* visit, a report was to be prepared for the Congregation of Propaganda. The report which had been prepared covered the whole period of his bishopric. The task of preparing it was given to the Vicariate Secretary, Pastor Olaf V. Sørensen, with the words, "You don't need to make a big thing out of this: really no one reads them." Sørensen replied, "I'll take care of that." In fact, the report was worked on for two months. It was written in Latin and was a comprehensive report on the activities of the Vicariate. It stressed the generally good estate of the Diocese and the secularism of the Danish state together with the liberalism of the Danish Church. The Vicariate was not, like many other places in Europe, troubled "by the so-called progressives or an over heated interest in the liturgy." The report concludes by saying, "It is the common wish of priests and people that the Vicariate should soon be elevated to a Diocese."

The Bishop did not reveal everything that happened in Rome but gossip in the Vicariate said Denmark was to be a Diocese, Perhaps it would even become an archdiocese so that Bishop Suhr would be independent.

It was customary that the prefect, when Propaganda had evaluated the five year report, accounted for their reception with a letter in which there was praise or criticism. Cardinal Fumasoni Biondi was very satisfied. The prefect noted the progress in relation to Catholic schools, founding of new parishes, church buildings and new Orders. For these, he thanked and praised Bishop Suhr and all the "missionaries." The letter, written in Latin and dated 10 June 1952, closes with a note that the wish of the priests and the faithful that the Vicariate be



Pastor Olaf V. Sørensen

raised to a Bishopric, would be handled at the proper time.

It is often said, that Rome has time to wait, because Rome works under the aspect of eternity. In this matter, however, they used a more earthly measuring rod. In fact, the Propaganda was not only going to consider the situation in Denmark, but that in all of Scandinavia. When the Apostolic Prefect was established in Denmark, Norway and Slesvig-Holsten at the end of the

1860's, the Congregation had taken a united Nordic view.

As soon as 29 April 1953 two papal bulls were prepared. The first contained the decree "Certiores Facti" by which the Bishopric of Copenhagen was erected with St. Ansgar's Church in Copenhagen as its Cathedral. In the other, Bishop Suhr was chosen as Bishop of the new See. He was no longer to be titular Bishop of Balecia, but chosen Bishop (episcopus electus) of Copenhagen.

On 5 May, Cardinal Fumasoni wrote again to Suhr, this time in Italian. The letter begins with a practical question concerning the preparations for the great meeting to be held in Copenhagen on Pentecost that year and then continues with a discussion of the arrangements the Pope has made after the proposals from the Propaganda. They are described as a proof of the Pope's trust in Bishop Suhr and an expression of his fatherly goodness. They are to strengthen Suhr's standing and be for the honor and spiritual development of the faithful. Suhr could decide when the change should be published in *l'Osservatore Romano*. The bull will be sent after this. In his answer of 18 May, Suhr was concerned that the announcement be made public in connection with the celebration of Pentecost. He thanked the Prefect for his "fatherly goodwill."

In the middle of May, Suhr visited the Lutheran Bishop of Copenhagen, Hans Fuglsang Damgaard. Suhr wanted to see how it would be received that there now were to be two Bishops of Copenhagen, a Catholic along side of the folk church bishop. Fuglsang Damgaard took it very well. On such situations, Suhr had an undoubted advantage in being Danish, with his culture and his aristocratic manner.

Pastor Kjeld Geertz-Hansen advised the Bishop that the priests in the Vicariate should be informed of what was to happen so that they could feel part of it.

On 22 May, the Vicariate sent out a press release, which confirmed the

rumors that the Vicariate was to be raised to a See.

The preparations for the Pentecost Celebration which was to be held the 22-24th May had commanded a great deal of effort and Bishop Suhr had traveled a great deal, both inside Denmark to ensure that there would be a large gathering of Danish Catholics and also outside of Denmark to find a Cardinal who would do honor to the gathering. The last task was not easy: He had begun too late. Cardinal Innitzer in Vienna could not be free for the occasion. He was lucky in Cologne. Cardinal Frings promised to come to Copenhagen. It was not by chance that Suhr first visited Vienna. Innitzer was Austrian and had been badly used by the Nazis, even if he had tried to be conciliatory to the new regime. In a letter, Suhr confided to Cardinal Griffin in London that there would be problems if the gathering became "too German affair". Bishop Frings was to be well received.

It was said that Pius XII would send a message to the gathering. The manuscript in which the Pope calls Suhr "Bishop of Copenhagen" was sent from the Secretary of State, Monsignore Montini, who was to become Pope Paul VI. It was based on information from the Vicariate. It was not a masterpiece.

Bishop Suhr was excused from making the confession of faith which he had taken when he was consecrated as Bishop. On the other hand he was obliged to make the oath of obedience to the Pope. This oath he made on 26 May to the Apostolic Vicar for Finland, Bishop W. Cobben, who was in Denmark for the Pentecost gathering.

Everything was now in order for Bishop Suhr to take possession of the new See. This happened on the morning of the feast of Corpus Christi, 4 June, in the chancellery of the Vicariate. When it was shown to be authentic, it was declared, "Therefore he has now full jurisdiction over us and enjoys all the rights and privileges which come as being the lawful shepherd of

the Bishopric." The naming of Suhr as Bishop was publicly announced at St. Ansgar's on the following Sunday.

When the Pentecost Celebration was finished, Bishop Suhr traveled again. This time he went to Norway to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the founding of the Diocese of Trondheim. He told Pastor Geertz-Hansen that Oslo would become a Diocese that same day. The bull for the erection of the Bishoprics of Oslo and Stockholm was signed 29 June 1953. North Norway became an Apostolic Vicariate on 18 February 1955, the Missionaries of the Holy Family who were in charge of the Mission, having requested it in 1953. Helsingfors was to wait until 25 February 1955 before becoming a Bishopric.

The Bull of erection, *Certiores Facti*, relates in general terms the reasons why the Pope had approved Propaganda's position on the founding of the Diocese: "We have been told that the Church in Denmark flourishes and grows impressively. This pleases and comforts us greatly when the many attacks which are launched from all sides against the Church, cause us great sorrow. As it is our desire to encourage the priests, who with great zeal and energy have used all their energy to spread the name of Christian in Denmark and to new advances in the area of religion, and when at the same time we want to give proof of the praise they deserve, it is our intention to raise the Apostolic Vicariate of Denmark to the rank of a Diocese."

The tone is characteristic. The paradigm shift with a new optimism for the world that the Blessed Pope John XXIII introduced was yet to be the music of the future.

In the Bull, no consideration had been given to the fact that most of the Danes were already baptized. The Vicariate translated the words of the Bull, "the spreading of the name of Christian" to the spreading of "the Catholic faith" in Denmark.

The situation of the Catholic Church in Denmark was said to be the result of the diligence and personal self

sacrifice of several generations of priests and Religious. Even so it is a cause for thought that the role of the laity, which had been stressed especially under Pius XI, was not part of the conceptual world of the decree. In his message to the Pentecost gathering, Pius XII highlighted the importance of "the leading laymen" in this development. And the encyclical on missions, *Evangelii Praecones* had stressed the lay apostolate in missions. Many of the dignitaries of the Church still had, however, the concept that the task of the finer laymen was "to hunt, to entertain and to pay up."

It is worth noting that the Bull does not trace the line back to the middle ages, as, for example, was done in the message of Pius XII to the Pentecost gathering. It made no mention of the middle ages or the reformation, and the Pope's decision is presented as an erection, not a re erection, of the hierarchy in Denmark. In the middle ages Copenhagen had not been the seat of a bishop. The reference to the medieval church would otherwise have been one of the Catholic methods to claim their Danish legitimacy, especially in the time of Bishop Euch. In the time of Bishop Suhr, it was still said that the radio transmission of a Catholic children's service was for "the first time since the reformation." The medieval connection arose again when the See was to have a seal. At first a symbol connecting the power of the bishop with the city of Copenhagen was proposed. Then the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Bruno B. Heim came into the picture. Heim had come to Denmark in 1961 when the Apostolic Delegation to the Nordic Countries was erected. In 1964 he had Bishop Suhr base the coat of arms of the Bishopric on the old coat of arms of the Diocese of Roskilde: a cross with the two keys of St. Peter. The keys related to Pope Lucius II whose cranium was the chief relic in the Cathedral of Roskilde during the middle ages. Today this relic is kept in the Church of Saint Ansgar. The present day Lutheran Bishops of Copenhagen continue to use the medieval arms of Roskilde. For this reason the Catholic



Bishop Suhr and First Communion candidates

seal was somewhat changed as not to offend the State Church. That church also considered itself to be an heir of the medieval inheritance. (Suhr's predecessor, Bishop Brems, who, somewhat provocatively, was named titular bishop of Roskilde, had chosen the arms of that city to be part of his personal coat of arms!)

An Apostolic Vicariate cannot be part of a church province under an archbishop. A bishopric can, but the new bishopric was laid directly under the Pope. In practice, the new See was attached to the Propaganda. The Pope had decided on this at the same time as the agreement was made on the erection of the new Diocese. It was presumed in Canon Law, that a newly erected See in a mission territory would be under the Propaganda until it had reached a further state of development. *Katolsk Ugeblad* wrote, "It has the advantage that we are able to get help from outside, as long as there is a priest shortage or a weak economic base. In addition, our Bishop can get things which are to be decided in Rome expedited easier and faster through this Congregation" The "navel string" which tied the Nordic Sees to the Propaganda was first cut by Paul VI at the request of the Nordic Bishops' Conference (established in 1960

by Bishop Suhr as its first chairman). Ecumenism, at that point of time, had ended the idea of a classic Catholic mission among protestants in the North. Moreover it had become increasingly clear to the outer world in the 1960s that the relationship between Propaganda and the territories it controlled was less than idyllic.

It was necessary for the Bishop to establish a cathedral chapter. It was added that as long as this seemed impossible, he would be permitted to have instead counselors to the bishop which could offer him help and support. It would have been a problem, both in terms of personnel and economics, to found a cathedral chapter. Instead the episcopal advisors developed into *consultores diocesani*, Diocesan Consultants) with a more comprehensive authority, especially if the seat of the bishop should become empty.

In regards to economic support from Rome, as early as the beginnings of the 40s, Propaganda had noted that other vicariates which were the same age as Denmark had long been economically independent. After the war, however, Propaganda supported vicariates and diocese, although the amount of support varied. Bishop Suhr worked to get the Danish Catholics to

give more, but also sought support in other countries. Among others, he went to the USA to "beg" as he himself expressed it.

An Apostolic Vicariate, which is headed by a bishop is Vicar for the Pope. Is a comparatively new entity in the history of the Church. On the other hand, a bishopric in the Catholic understanding is a part of the unchanging structure of the Church. In the "Roman school" of theology it was the common opinion that the jurisdictional competence of the residing bishop did not devolve directly from Christ but was given to him by the Pope; This concept could make it difficult-purely theologically-to know the difference between a residing bishop and an apostolic vicar.

Elevation to a bishopric meant that conditions in Denmark now were regulated by the regular Canon Law and not by the special rules for mission territories. For example, Bishop Suhr in his capacity of Apostolic Vicar had the same power as a residing vicar except for certain competences which were delegated by the Propaganda. He could not name a general vicar because he was in reality the general vicar of the Pope.

The Catholic Church in Denmark, which had enjoyed the work of foreign priests and religious orders and contained many immigrants, had gained a foreign appearance. This was not a theological problem because the Catholic Church is an international organization. On the other hand it could cause practical difficulties, both internal and external. As Pastor Peter Schindler- who played a leading role in this question-said, "Only a Danish fellowship can gain a hearing in Denmark, and we are well on the way to become one." The idea of a mult-

cultural church in a diverse society was not yet a reality.

The choice of Bishop Suhr as Apostolic Vicar after the very "foreign" Bishop Brems had been an important step towards Danishness, completely in step with Pius XI's modern practice of selecting missionaries. The Pope would have said that Suhr got his position because he was a convert and because he was Danish. Suhr joined in his person Danishness with being cosmopolitan and ease in using the Danish language. His work was easier because there was not such a large immigration of Catholics in his time.

What lay in the future for the newly erected See, not even the most forward seeing and daring could have foreseen. There was still peace in the Catholic organism here at home.

Five years later, the blessed John XXIII became Pope. He maintained that "reform shall begin from above." Surprisingly and bravely he called the Second Vatican Council (1962-65.) Bishop Suhr was a member of the Central Commission to prepare for the Council and together with the other Nordic bishops placed himself in the reform line. At a press conference in 1963 Bishop Suhr said, "The centralization which has characterized the leadership of the church for the last hundred years, does not necessarily belong to the being of the Church. The important thing is that the Church is led by the Pope and bishops. One of the most important things from this Council will certainly be that the local bishops and bishops conferences will be given greater authority in the area where consideration should be given to local conditions and customs which deserve to be respected, especially in the area of the liturgy, but also in other areas."

Soon the Council changed every part of the life of the Church, also in Denmark. Attitudes changed, and there was more open discussion. Ahead lay the revolt of youth. To try to put the intentions of the Council to work in the young See of Copenhagen would be a comprehensive and very difficult task. It did not fall to Bishop Suhr. In 1964, Paul VI retired him from office because of sickness.

The council aimed, not the least, at a deeper understanding of the relation of the college of bishops to the pope, but also of the work of the bishop in his diocese. The church meeting will not sway on obedience as a supporting pillar in a diocese and a leading thread of the spiritual life, but stated that the bishop acted as a servant, who teaches and leads. He carries out his service in the diocese under the leadership of the Pope but in the strength of his own competence, not as the Pope's substitute. The most important task of the bishop is to proclaim the Gospel. He is the base for the unity of the diocese, but the diocese shall be open as well to society, to the universal church and also to other faith groups. The inner dialog shall be ensured.

The Council taught that a "bishopric is a part of the people of God, entrusted to a bishop to take care of in union with the priests." In this way the bishopric is united to its shepherds and from him to the Gospel and the Eucharist is gathered in the Holy Spirit, they constitute a local church where the one, holy Catholic and apostolic Church in truth is present and works.

—Frosell, Bertil A.,

Bispedømmets opprettelse i Eftermoden overvejelse. Copenhagen, 2003.

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ABBÉ GEORG JOSEPH VOGLER

*Would that the structure brave, the manifold music I build,
Bidding my organ obey, calling its keys to their work,
Claiming each slave of the sound, at a touch, as when Solomon willed
Armies of angels that soar, legions of demons that lurk,
Man, brute, reptile, fly, alien of end and of aim
Adverse, each from the other heaven-high, hell-deep removed,
Should rush into sight at once as he named the ineffable Name,
And pile him a palace straight, to pleasure the princess he loved.*

*Well, it is earth with me; silence resumes her reign:
I will be patient and proud, and soberly acquiesce
Give me the keys. I feel for the common chord again,
Sliding by semitones till I sink to the minor-yes,
And I blunt it into a ninth, and I stand on alien ground,
Surveying awhile the heights I rolled from into the deep;
Which hark, I have dared and done for my resting place is found
The C Major of this life: so, now I will try to sleep.*

These are two stanzas from the poem "Abt Vogler" written by Robert Browning. He imagines that this is the feeling of Vogler when he has finished extemporizing on a musical instrument he has invented. Vogler was the musical genius of the early romantic movement: Bernstein, Liszt, with just a dash of Liberace thrown in. He was the teacher of Weber and a friend of Meyerbeer. On the other hand, Mozart thought of him as a "trickster pure and simple." In a contemporary Swedish review and defense of Vogler, the writer still had to admit "that in the announcements of the concerts something too grandiose or 'charlatan' was to be found. (In what field of knowledge is that not the case?)" The Swedish poet, Carl Michael Bellman commented on a concert Vogler gave 18 September 1786 by saying that when Vogler touched the organ's divine thunder, the bellowing from the bottom of tarturus was heard, the storms of the abyss etc. When he plays softly and depicts blessedness, the bright day of eternity comes with the rosy rays of morning; the eye weeps, feelings suffer, the breast sighs, the blood struggles and rejoices in God. It is hard to reproduce the pompous tones of the poet at this point.

Georg Joseph Vogler was born in Würzburg, Germany on 15 June 1749. From an early age he was interested in music and also in becoming a Catholic priest. He managed to study music and be ordained by living for a time in Rome. Pius VI, who strongly favored him, named him a papal protonotary and made him a Knight of The Holy Sepulcher. In Mannheim he filled both roles as court chaplain and Kapellmeister. Vogler became known as a composer, organist and also music theorist.

In 1786, Gustav III called him to Sweden where he was to direct at the king's new opera house, compose one new opera each year and be the music instructor of the crown prince. He was allowed to travel half of the year and he made continued trips as an organ virtuoso to other European countries.

There were very few Catholics in Sweden as no Swedish citizen could belong to the Catholic Church. Vogler took over the care of the small group of resident German Catholics. However, his parishioners found the idea of a priest working in

the theater rather much of a scandal. Vogler also visited Norway where he played organ concerts in the Lutheran churches in Trondheim (1791) and Christiania (1794 and 1797). While in Oslo, he also said Mass and gave spiritual care to the few Catholics. He also wrote a composition based on a Norwegian folk song.

When Gustav III was murdered, Vogler left Sweden but returned to serve as a musician under Gustav IV (1793-1799).

Vogler is mentioned several times in Albert Schweitzer's study of Bach. Weber said that musicians rather looked askance at Vogler's dramatic style as an organist. However he claimed Vogler was, in some ways, a greater music theorist than Bach. Vogler himself said "They complained that I tried to represent on the all-powerful instrument, the organ, natural phenomena such as thunder, earthquakes, collapsing walls, &c." Schweitzer tells us that, at Uppsala, "he made children cry and dogs howl as well as a deaf mute feel the music." Grove's writes that his "theory of harmony influenced nineteenth century approach to music analysis and he anticipated the romantic period in his chromatic harmony, colouristic orchestration and melodic borrowing from folk tradition and exotic cultures."

Grove's catalogs a long list of his compositions, some of which are now lost. Among those still known are a setting of the Swedish Christmas hymn "En jungfru födde" that would be interesting to hear. He also set Norwegian folk music as well as German hymns. He even dared to reharmonize some of the Bach chorale settings. In 1792 he traveled to Tangiers where he transcribed North African folk music and noted the native musical modes.

Happily there has recently been issued on the Arte Nova label a CD of Vogler's *Requiem*. (74321 71663 2). This work dates to the last years of his life. When he presented himself to the Grand Duke of Darmstadt in 1807 for a position as "privy councilor for ecclesiastical affairs" he wrote that "the Requiem would not suffer much in comparison to Mozart's." Unfortunately we will not hear Mozart's response to this bit of hybrid. He had hoped that it would be used for the funeral of Haydn but that was not to be the case. One of his operas, *Gustav*

Handwritten musical score for "Marches of Abbe Vogler" and "Discant". The score is written on five staves with lyrics in Swedish. The lyrics include: "Hosi-anna Davids Son, Wal sig-nga va-re", "Hau! Wal signa Davids Son, som komma i Herrans", "Kron! Hosi-an-na i höj- den Hosi-an-na Hosi-an-na Wal signa Davids Son, som komma i Herrans Kron!"



Adolf och Ebba Brahe was issued on MRF records but is no longer available. It was written at the request of Gustav III who hoped to create a native opera tradition. It tells the story of the Queen Mother's plotting to separate Gustaf Adolf from his childhood sweetheart to whom he was engaged. It is of uneven interest. The nobility sing in a tired baroque tradition but the common folk sound different. What he

seems to have done for them is an imitation of Swedish folk music although I did not catch any direct quotations. From time to time some of his instrumental music is also available on record.

In Sweden, Vogler's organ concerts were very popular. He used some of the receipts to buy a house for a Catholic school. Another time he bought shoes and clothing for 70 poor children so that they could attend catechism classes. He also bought an organ for the Catholic Church in Stockholm. The Vogler *Hosianna* has become one of the favorite Christmas hymns in Sweden, Finland and Norway. That is a strange fate for a choral piece written for a Lenten concert at Klara Church in Stockholm in 1795. It is like a fanfare to announce the beginning of Advent and the Christmas season. In the nineteenth century, when church choirs were rare in Scandinavia, a group would be gathered to sing this song. Immigrant congregations in America also continued this tradition and church choirs regularly sang it on the First Sunday in Advent. It was also translated into English. It is strange that, of all the compositions by this romantic musician, only *Hosianna* seems assured of at least an annual hearing.

(I am also indebted to correspondence from Barbro Lindqvist for information on Vogler.)

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SWEDEN: THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

During this time of such unrest in the world, consider the war in Iraq, the civil war in Liberia and the disturbances in the Near East, it seems a little removed to give a lecture on the first fifty years of the Diocese, even if during these fifty years the Diocese grew, not the least, because of war and oppression in the outside world. The refugees and the working immigrants that together make up most of the Catholics in the Diocese have, at the same time, to a certain extent, been considered "a danger", the "Catholic danger", a threat to the unity of the Swedish community, to the "Swedish model", against the Swedish welfare state. When the Diocese had its beginning, many politicians thought that the members of the so called immigrant churches would little by little adapt and finally become ordinary

"Swensons": that is, secularized members of the State Church. If this did not happen, danger lurked; there were headlines in the paper that read: "CATHOLIC DANGER DRAWS STILL CLOSER."

At the same time: What an unexpected joy! Who of all the Catholics who worked in post-reformation Sweden could have believed that a Catholic Diocese could be reestablished in our country? Hardly the Swedish exiles or the martyrs who died for their faith during the persecutions of the 1500s and 1600s, hardly the many immigrant lay persons and priests who came in the 1700s as a workforce in the manufacturing industry. Hardly the Swedes who were still being exiled in the nineteenth century and had their property seized, hardly those who far into the twentieth

century were denied work in schools, those caring for the sick or health workers, solely on the grounds that they were Catholic. Neither perhaps would the founders of the Diocese have believed that it would develop as it has during these fifty years, with so many more Catholics, with new congregations, schools, convents, a seminary for priests, Diocesan centers and much more. But the prayers of so many could not go unanswered: after a long winter at last the signs of spring are seen.

What unexpected joy! Who of the reformers in Sweden, or who in the long line of good protestants in this country could have dreamed that the Catholic church in our time should proclaim that the church must be continually open to reformation, to return to the fount of the faith? Yes, what a surprise Vatican II

created both in and outside the Church. Now the liturgy is celebrated in the vernacular, communion under both kinds becomes ever more common, the role of the layperson becomes more focused, new spiritual movements have arisen etc. And who would have believed that one day the Catholic Church would become such an active partner in ecumenical discussions of all kinds? Who would have expected that we and the Lutherans would formulate a common document about the interpretation of justification by faith? Who could have believed that Sweden would be visited by the Pope during this period or that Saint Birgitta would be celebrated with ecumenical services, both in Sweden and in Rome. Not to speak of the beatification of Elisabeth Hasselblad! We have surely noticed that many persons in other denominations in Sweden listen with interest to what we have to say, even if the tendency to place us in a special pigeon-hole, as an exotic and curious element does show itself. Indeed we are a long way from agreeing on everything, but increased respect and introductory dialog have begun to replace polemics and confrontation.

The fifty-year history of the diocese began immediately after Professor Ingmar Hedenius began his critical scrutiny of Christianity's claim to truth. Hedenius' view that faith lacked a logical rational basis influenced a whole generation of Swedes to say a final (?) farewell to Christianity: it is remarkable that Jesus Christ is a focus of debate again today. For two months the Christian faith has been debated in our media (above all in Svenska Dagbladet). The debate is now finished in SvD but continues in the evening edition (more than 300 articles and contributions have been sent to the paper.) Perhaps something good can come out of the sometimes confused discussion which has been carried on. We have been reminded by this dialog that, for the Catholic faith, fundamentalism as well as blind faith are unacceptable viewpoints, just as are a supposed scientific reduction of the very content of faith and naturally all those-they may be called- theological home constructions.

During the short history of the Diocese, a technological revolution has also taken place: television, the fax, com-

puters, mobile telephones, the internet and e mail are only some of the mile posts. Politically, colonialism has ended, the Soviet empire has been buried and a "new Europe" is in process of being created, the world is about to be bound together in a way which is relatively new. At the same time, extreme forms of individualism and liberalism have come to be welcome-what I "feel for" is right for me, "truth" has become something relative. We have lived and live today in, as it seems, a time of change which has created a great deal of confusion. Stability has been replaced by mobility, both physical and psychical. During this period, the voice of the church has- not seldom-been experienced as a voice from the past, a no-sayer to "the beautiful new world" which is dawning, nor have we always been able to show that we belong to the future. The history of the Diocese must be seen against this background of quick and startling changes and by sharp criticism of things abiding. We build the Church in a time when institutions, traditional values, and patterns of life are questioned. Naturally, all of this contains both thrilling challenges and important difficulties for the Church.

May I give some personal memories? The Diocese cannot have been much more than two years old when, for the first time, in Gävle-to my surprised eyes-I met the Church in the form of two nuns on the other side of the street. The mental picture fastened in my consciousness (the sight of a person at a distance can, perhaps, really begin a whole life process). My other Catholic memory is from the time when the Diocese had completed eight years: I saw for the first time in the shadows the red eternal light in one of the Diocesan chapels, a quick look which struck more than the retina. I also remember going to Mass in the Church of Christ the King in Gothenburg during the years after the Council. The slow transition from the old to the new liturgy. During the summer of 1969 when I did my army service in Gävle, the Diocese was a teenager. I remember how Don Ricardo, the Pastor, in a closet in his apartment and with the primitive and smelly techniques of that time, joyfully duplicated liturgical texts, prayers and hymns. From the fall of 1969, more regularly and with growing

interest, I kept myself informed about the growth of the Diocese, something which finally led to my being received in the Church.

Anyone who has followed the history of the Diocese during this half century, can assert that the Diocese grew in a chaotic and Catholic manner, we ever so slowly begin to come up out of the catacombs. Naturally such a fast growth is not without certain difficulties. Not seldom it is the more extreme Catholic happening, person or movement that is picked up by the Swedish media, what is often noticed in the public debates, is often converts (of whom some made notable contributions to the Church), while many groups of immigrants are marginalized (for example, the many groups who have a rite other than the Latin usage). More "ordinary" Catholics are heard or seen more rarely in the public discussion. Our many structural problems remain unsolved. In many important contexts we remain invisible. Anyone who will live through the next fifty-year cycle will certainly come to have thrilling things to talk about.

This little Diocese, with its merits and demerits, is, at the same time, in an improbable way the most important multi-cultural meeting place in Sweden. We have grown accustomed to see people of so many nationalities gathered for Mass that we don't consider it to be unusual (in large congregations people from seventy or more countries come together for Mass), but we show in the middle of our diversity that faith joins and binds us together beyond the boundaries of culture and nationality. Here we have an important task, also in the future: in the middle of our smallness we can show Catholic completeness in a prophetic manner, both to churches in other countries and to people here in our secularized land. All Catholics are needed in this work-men, women, young, old, lay, religious and priests-working together with mutual respect (and sometimes in critical dialog.) Without doubt it is important for the future that we create the conditions for recruiting a native priesthood. A local church can hardly long fulfill its responsibilities being unfamiliar with the native culture and its different forms of expression. Here the church has something to

learn from the "Swedish model:" forms for making decisions, participation in decision making, the principle of openness and delegation of responsibility which can certainly be inspiring (even if not everything can be carried over into our structure,) including work in such areas as international solidarity and equality between men and women.

Naturally, the Diocese also has a pre history. Those now living are only a little part of Sweden's Catholic history. In fact, for more than twelve hundred years Catholics have existed in Sweden. When, in the beginning of the 800s, Saint Ansgar came to Birka on one of his missionary journeys he found that there already existed a group of Catholics at the market place in Birka in the Mälaren, consisting of both Swedes and foreigners. Probably there were also small groups in other places: people who had become Christian in other countries, Christian slaves and tradesmen who had ended up in the North for two hundred years, however, these would be a very unimportant minority. First through the Benedictine mission around the year 1000, these conditions began to change. From then for almost five hundred years, the Catholic faith was dominant in our land, then, as a result of the reformation, for more that 350 years, the Lutheran faith. In our time a new era has begun which we still cannot summarize, religious indifference dominates the scene. Secularization is a fact which we cannot ignore. On the usual Sunday, hardly 6% of the population gathers for some kind of worship service, four out of ten attend one of the services of the Swedish Church, one out of ten visits a Catholic or Orthodox service.

The "modern" history of the Catholic Church in Sweden began in 1783 when the Swedish Apostolic Vicariate was founded. In fact, even after the last Catholic institutions were forced to end their work (The Bridgettines at Vadstena were expelled in 1595), there were some Catholics in Sweden but these lived under ever more difficult circumstances- after 1617 it was forbidden under sentence of death for a Swedish citizen to belong to the Catholic Church. This punishment was carried out during the following years. (Naturally we must not

forget that, in the same way, protestants were punished in the so-called Catholic countries, intolerance for religious minorities was the order of the day). On the other hand, foreign Catholics were allowed to live in Sweden. During the long period before the Apostolic Vicariate was founded, the priests connected with the foreign embassies were able to help by conducting Masses and giving spiritual care to their countrymen (and to a few secret Swedish Catholics).

The first Apostolic Vicar was Nicolas Oster, a French Abbé with roots in the Tyrol who arrived in Stockholm 24 July 1783 in an attempt to build up Catholic activities. After only a few years, Oster left the country and others came to take over the Vicariate. About 1800, the Vicariate had its own Catechism in Swedish, translated by the Swedish Catholic priest, Father Ignatius Thjulén. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are not a period of development in Swedish Catholic activity, rather, the number of Catholics diminished over a long period of years. Well known are the words of Vicar Jacob Studach: "No church, no school, no teacher, no prayer book, no catechisms- only a continually diminishing congregation and 25 poor children to take care of." Studach was ordained a bishop in 1862 and so became the first Catholic bishop in Sweden after the reformation. He managed also, together with the Swedish Catholic Queen, Josephine, to get the first two Orders to be established in the Vicariate: the Sisters of St. Joseph who came in 1861 and the Sisters of St. Elizabeth who began their work in 1866. The Jesuits who came in 1879 have meant a great deal for the growth of the Catholic Church in Sweden.

During the later part of the nineteenth century and up to the time of the founding of the Diocese in 1953, the number of Catholics grew very little: 2,500 Catholics in 1900, 5,000 in 1940, 16,000 in 1950. The return of the Bridgettines to Sweden in 1923 (eightieth anniversary this year) can be said to mark something new, just as the establishment of the Dominicans in 1933 was important. Early in the twentieth century, the Vicariate gained a magazine, *Credo*, (the first roots of *Signum*)

and later also *Hemmet och Helgedom* (today *Katolsk Magasin*). Slowly, Swedish born sisters and priests began to appear, An important name is Bernt David Assarsson, ordained 1917, an energetic Catholic publicist and apologist, During the years after the war, an increasing number of Catholic books were published (not least, the many translations of French and English fine literature have been important.) The young Diocese was gifted with many famous authors: Sven Stolpe, Barbro Alving, Birgitta Trotzig, Eva Alexander, Torgny Lindgren, and Gunnel Vallquist are six important persons in the number of intellectual laymen and women who helped to make the Church respected and understood in Sweden, the last named reached many with her important reports from the Council.

The Diocese was founded in 1953, it had almost fifty priests and less than 20,000 members. Naturally, in the background lie the great number of exiles who came to Sweden after the Second World War, among them many Catholics. The little and very Swedishized Catholic Church from the inter-war period had now been changed into a greater and more multi-cultural church, with great economic and personal difficulties, with Catholics who suffered great trauma with the difficult task of building up a functioning fellowship in the land. In basements, apartments and houses that were enlarged to be chapels, Mass was celebrated for many years and religious education was conducted often under very primitive conditions, often by engaged laymen who carried out the whole endeavor. More new Orders and congregations were established in the Diocese. The male and female Carmelites have carried out important missions, not least through publishing books and the magazine *Karmel*. The Carmelite Convent in Glumslöv was consecrated in 1963 after a long and somewhat prejudiced debate in the parliament that at last approved the building of a Convent. The revolt in Hungary, the crushing of the Prague spring, the coup in Chile, oppression in Poland, disturbances in the Near East, problems in Central America etc have meant that continually new streams of Catholics

came to Sweden.

It is important to remember that Sweden received a new law for religious freedom the year before the Diocese was founded, the law of 1951, that went into force the following year. Now even a Catholic could be a teacher in the government school system a nurse in the public health system, now the prohibition against founding a convent was repealed (a prohibition which did not hinder the Bridgettines thirty years earlier from beginning their work in Djursholm). According to the new law, the faith of the Swedish Church was no longer the official religion in Sweden, even if for many years the idea continued that Catholics were something "foreign" (and perhaps really dangerous) continued to color many Swedish minds about the Catholic faith. As late as the middle of the 50s, a newspaper warned that "the Catholic danger comes ever nearer", yes in Småland it was said "the Catholic envoys have taken their post", the article dealt with the establishment of the Passionists in Växjö (the community to which our Bishop Kenney belongs). Perhaps first during the time of Bishop Hubertus Brandenburg (1978-1998 the ice began to melt in earnest; not least because the many churches that were built made the church visible. In Sweden many continue to speak of Catholics as an "immigrant Church", that is as something unSwedish, something only for foreigners. Many young persons are forced to deal with their "exotic" Catholic inheritance, in their desire not to appear different from their schoolmates and friends a number of them choose to distance themselves from the faith of their "fathers" and "mothers." We note also that a number of immigrants have difficulty knowing their way around in the Swedish Diocese, as a result some look for other denominations. In the 1920s, the Swedish author Marika Stiernstedt wrote a so called Catholic novel, *von Sneckenströms*, where she writes of a conversations between two boys who are beginning their studies at the gymnasium at Uppsala. It is worth quoting a bit of the thinking, because it depicts something which bears the stamp of truthfulness and surely is still repeated among

Catholic youth today:

You. This is important. You must never breath a word about Catholicism, even if you know about it. What do you mean? questioned Hans in surprise. I mean that if you ever let on that we are different from the others in school. I will beat you so that you won't forget it. Don't you dare speak to anyone a single word about that damned religion. Do you think that even one boy would leave off calling you a papist and Jesuit everyday? I have had enough from pappa when he comes home carrying on and mamma only cries. No thanks. Furthermore, I think I'll say to hell with it when I grow up. The "foreign" continues to be a sociological truth which holds for the Diocese. Of the five Diocesan Bishops during this period, two have been German, one Danish, one American and now one Swedish. Bishop Anders Arborelius is the first native Catholic bishop since the days of Olauus Magnus who died in Rome in 1557. In the parishes there are only a few places where the native presence is foremost, perhaps most of all in some university cities, and in a few Convents (not least in the Benedictine Sisters at Mariavall and Omberg, both Convents with roots in the Swedish Church and perhaps in some other communities (especially the Dominicans and the Franciscans in Jonsered). At the time I write, there are four Catholic members of the Swedish Academy (only in the Swedish Academy and in the jails are Catholics over represented). But naturally our calling is not to be as Catholic as possible but to be a melting pot, a meeting place for everyone, a sign of atonement in our land and our time. Of course such a public square for dialog cannot be without a profile, we must be able to offer a meeting place which can contribute to integration and in order to do this we can not live isolated and uninformed about things Swedish How this dilemma is to be solved in practice, I do not know, but without doubt the Diocese needs to invest both resources and energy in creating specially designed courses for newly arrived priests and sisters so that they do not feel that they are cast out into an unknown and

strange land. We must also pray for more native calls (and for yet more engaged and ingenuous laymen). What unexpected joy! As I began these personal lines, so I will end them, We who today live in this diverse Diocese, in this time which is hard to figure out but fascinating, we who stand before the almost impossible tasks of supervision, we must not forget the gifts of grace which are given to us. We are here not only for our own sake, not to create a club for internal admiration, not to build a ghetto. Our task is to make the faith understood in the modern world. Our task is to work together with all good forces in politics, culture; work and knowledge. Our calling is in the midst of our weakness to exalt Him who is given us as a gift. What an unexpected joy!

—F. Magnus Nyman

(Priest at St. Franciscus Chapel Congregation in Märsta and Professor in the History of Ideas at Uppsala University. This was a speech given to the Swedish Catholic Historical Society in 2003) (Lars Hallberg contributed an interesting note on the anniversary of the Swedish Diocese in *Arv och Minne*. There was a lengthy interval between the date on the Papal bull establishing the Diocese and its publication. This was due to differing opinions as to the suitability of making the Vicariate into a Diocese. Bishop Müller was afraid that becoming a Diocese would mean that it would be harder to collect money in other countries for the Church in Sweden. The priests in the Vicariate met in October of 1953 and most of them were in favor of the step. In November the Bull was published. In contrast to the Danish Bull, Pius called Sweden "a land which has won much fame both because of its historic deeds, its culture and its interest in the fine arts. Therefore the beautiful hope shines forth that the Catholic Church there will be able to regain some of its earlier radiance." As one of the reasons for the change, he mentions the strengthening of the steadfastness of the faithful. The Bishop took charge of his Diocese on 10 December 1953 and on 10 January 1954, the initial Service of the new Diocese was celebrated.)

NEWS FROM SCANDANAVIA

NEWS FROM DENMARK

From Katolsk Orientering

The rebuilt Church of Our Lady in Herlev was dedicated 21 Saturday 2002. The church has been completely rebuilt and is larger with a higher roof. A new window casts a bright light on the once dark interior.

The Saint Knud School in Århus has been renovated so that it will have new science laboratories, a new gymnasium and a new auditorium. It has 400 students, 28% of them are Catholic.

A campaign to increase the number of Catholic who pay their church tax has resulted in 600 new donors. Many of them are the result of two Philippine women.

Bishop Hans Martensen celebrated his seventy fifth birthday last year. He was Bishop of Copenhagen for 30 years. He was noted for his work in ecumenical relations, especially with the Danish Church. He emphasized that today Catholics and protestants face the same problems.

A number of Asian Catholics live in Denmark. A celebration of our Lady of Madu brought 700 Tamils together. A celebration of Vietnamese martyrs gathered a comparable number of people from that Country. This festival lasted for three days..

There is only one society for Eucharistic adoration in Denmark today. On the First Friday of the month it meets in the Church of St. Mary in Aalborg. It began with 53 members and today there are 13 remaining members.

On 26 January 2003, the Diocese of Copenhagen celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. In his sermon, Bishop Czeslaw mentioned the need to consider "our national identity, its Christian roots when something of our identity is threatened or in any case chal-



Mass at St. Ansgar's Cathedral during Cardinal Kasper's visit.

lenged by new cultural and religious influences." He said that there was a need for a deepening of life with God that carried with it a force for missions.

The St. Joseph Sisters who have a Convent north of Copenhagen have developed a retreat center, Stella Matutina. They have a large home and garden near Øresund. Sister Emma studied psychology in Chicago in the 80s. The spiritual direction is taken from the Ignatian Method.

Niels Steensen's Gymnasium in Copenhagen wants to work together with Catholic high schools in America. In America, the leaders say, the Catholic identity of the schools is greater than in Denmark. It is hoped that a dialog will develop that will benefit both groups.

The three altars of Heart of Jesus Church in Copenhagen have been restored to their former glory. When the Church was "Vatican IIed" some of the Fathers managed to preserve the elements of the old altars.

Walter Cardinal Kasper lectured at the Universities of Copenhagen and Århus in March to speak on ecumenical concerns. A central question now is that of the ministry or priesthood. He also said Mass at the Catholic Ca-

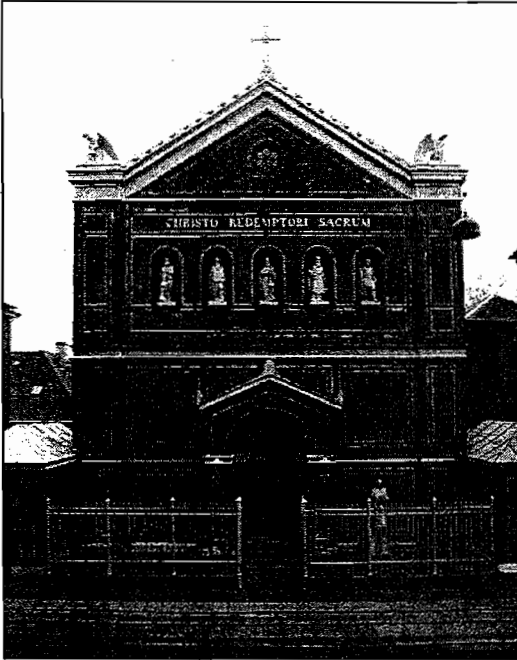
thedral. The Cardinal said he did not see any slowing down of the ecumenical process. He said that the Holy Spirit will bring the movement to its conclusion

The organization, We are the Church, has 123 members in Denmark. Its last meeting had 45 participants. A meeting was held at the Islamic Christian Center on "New Thought among Jews, Muslims and Christians." The representative at that meeting was Pastor Georg Nibler (*vide* last year's Bulletin).

Sister Ursula Ledóchowska, who was canonized 18 May 2003, also made her contribution to the Catholic Church in Denmark. In 1915 she came to Denmark to speak on the unbearable suffering of Poland, her native Land. In 1917 she founded a children's home in Aalborg which had a special concern for Polish children. Many of them worked in Denmark under the most deplorable conditions and grew up without any care. She returned to Poland in 1922.

In 1203, the holy Abbott Wilhelm died in Denmark. That was the year Birgitta was born.

He was originally from Paris, a Canon at the Church of Saint Gene-



St. Ansgar's Church, Copenhagen

viewe. He strove to give a stricter rule to the Augustinians. Bishop Absalon asked him to continue his work in Denmark where he reformed a Convent. After ten years he gave up and asked to found a new convent. In 1175 he founded the Convent of Aebelholt. He became a strong leader in questions of political leadership. The convent also housed a hospital which was noted for its advanced methods of care. Aebelholt continued to be an important site for pilgrimages up to the reformation. In 1224 he was canonized by Honorius III. The Life of Wilhelm is mainly concerned with his miracles. However there are also c. 100 letters from him dealing with canonical marriage problems and his interest in a marriage tie between Denmark and France.

Our own Sister Hanne Bang o.p. was interviewed in the *Katolsk Orientering*. She was born in 1934 in Ordrup. She was the leader of the Catholic Youth Organization and also eventually became a teacher of mathematics. She became a Dominican postulant in Paris and then was in Brussels for four years. She completed her studies at the Institut Catholique in Paris and then worked for ten years in Stockholm at the Pastoral Center. In

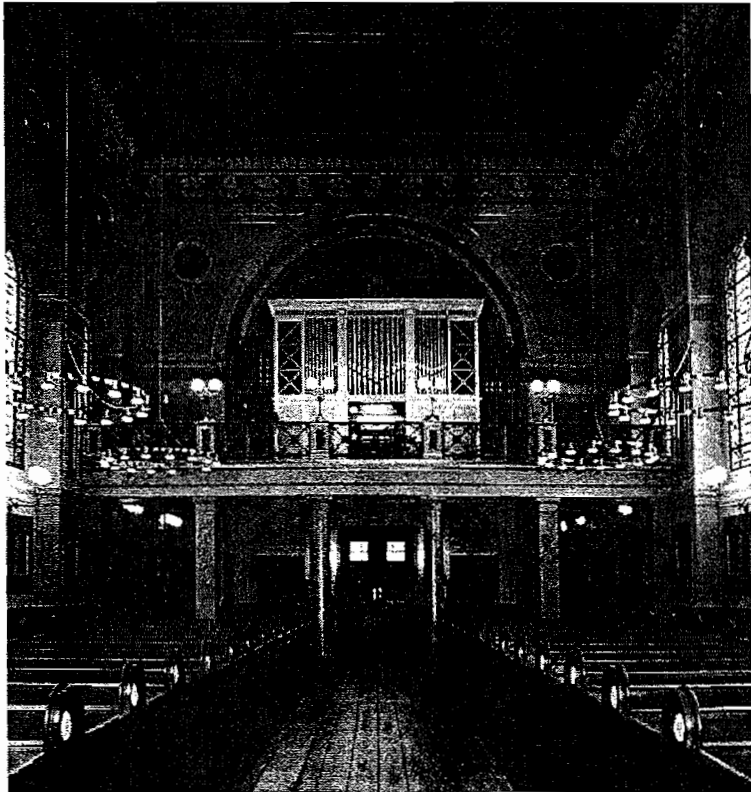
1990 she received a PhD. D with a study of religious identity in a Croatian immigrant family. After 2 and 1/2 years in Canada she came to a community on Staten Island. We are happy to have her in St. Ansgar.

Father David Vincent Nelson and Niels Henrik Arendt, a Bishop in the "folk church", engaged in a lively discussion of Holy Communion. Behind it was the refusal of the Danish Church to allow the use of the Cathedral in Odense for a Catholic Mass if Lutherans could not commune at this Mass. Arendt pointed out that both churches share a belief in the real presence but that Lutherans reject the idea of the Mass as a sacrifice and the

teaching of transubstantiation. Nielsen told of a Holy Thursday Mass in a state church that served beer and sausage as the sacramental elements. The Bishop

pointed to the need for greater place for the idea of fellowship in worship, of which this was an example. The Bishop accused Nielsen of being a "neo-conservative" and said that he had taken part in Catholic communions on several occasions. Nielsen discussed the problem of the priestly office and the different traditions in the state church between low and high church as to the sacrament. The Bishop commented that there were Lutherans who really should be Catholics and Catholics who should be Lutheran. (A good point.)

The year 2003 also marks the 750th anniversary of the death of St. Clare. In the middle ages there were three of her convents in Denmark. The first of them was established in Roskilde in 1257. It was founded by Ingerd Jakobsdatter Hvide. She had also founded four Franciscan communities for men in Denmark. The hope for such a convent in Denmark may have been relayed to Pope Innocent IV by St. Agnes of Prague although it is pos-



Interior of St. Ansgar's Church

sible that it was Clare herself who conveyed the hopes of this convent to the Pope.

In addition to the ceremonies in Copenhagen, about 2,000 persons made a pilgrimage to the island of Øm on 31 August to celebrate the founding of the Diocese. The various organizations in the Diocese used the day to make themselves known.

The Danish Diocese has moved its offices to Gammel Kongevej 15 A 1610 Copenhagen V. Its new telephone number is 33 55 60 00 This will allow them to consolidate all of their space needs in one building. This includes the library which needed new space after the University had not renewed its lease. The building belongs to the Jesuits and is no longer needed by its former tenants.

THE FLEXIBLE NETWORK: Catholic Youth Work in Denmark 2003

Danmarks Unge Katolikker (DUK) is the official initiative of the Danish Bishop for children and youth work on Denmark. It was founded in 1947/48 to unite the various parish level youth groups that flourished at that time and to create a national network for young Catholics. Over the years, DUK has changed in many ways but the basic idea of upholding and developing a dynamic network for growing Catholics in Denmark remains.

The Catholic Church in Denmark numbers about 35,000 persons, 2,000 of them are members of DUK. Even though this makes us one of the larger Christian youth movements in Denmark (not counting the huge Christian scout movements that are non-religious) the small size of the group makes for good social relationships but it also presents a challenge. We want to avoid forming a closed community to which newcomers don't feel welcome—we need to be able to attract new volunteers with fresh ideas to DUK. We try to meet this challenge with recruiting schemes, educational pro-

grams for new volunteers etc.

In one sentence, the heart of DUK's work is to form a flexible network attractive to all Danish Catholics aged 0-30. A very effective and traditional way of forming social relations between young Catholics from different parts of Denmark is the camps held at Øm Around 1,300 participants and volunteer leaders meet yearly in summer camps, theme weekends, preparations before receiving a sacrament etc.

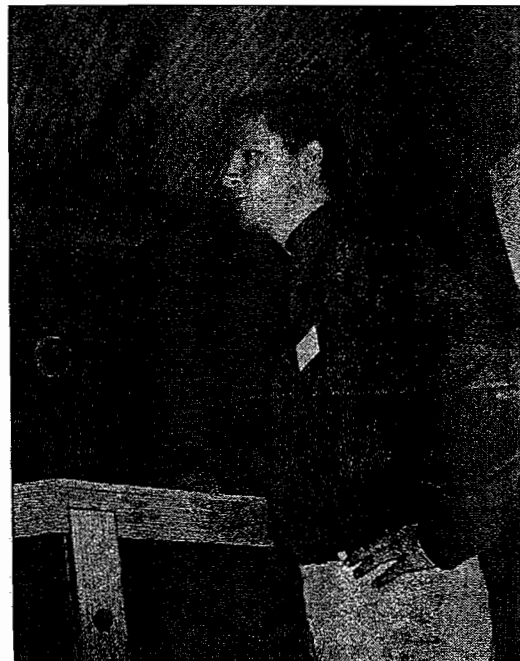
But in order to move on and develop as an organization, DUK also needs to find new ways of working with Catholic children and youth. This is particularly important in these years when the youth culture changes with accelerating speed (or at least so it seems to us post-teenagers). This doesn't mean that we want to throw all our traditions overboard—that would make us a poor Catholic Organization—but it means that we in DUK try to be aware of our target groups's preferences and adjust our range of activities in that direction. Let me mention a few recent initiatives;

A weekend for new and experienced role players, where we play fantasy, sci-fi and live games. This has turned out to attract a whole new segment of our target group and the combination of playing fantasy games and celebrating Mass (afterwards) works out well

A monthly youth Mass with a specific theme—for example—a techno-Mass. To merge the Catholic liturgy with heavy beating rhythms creates a whole new expression. One of the ideas behind this is to meet the young in a Mass, where the musical form has an instant appeal to them.

Alpine ski trip.

The last several years we've sent a small group of Catholic skiing enthusiasts to Austria. Again, this appeals to another type of participants than our



Henrik Bang

traditional camps and common sports activities are a good way of shaking people together—an outdoor Mass in 3,000m height can be quite a freezing experience.

Being a Catholic youth organization brings with it the responsibility to look outside your own borders. DUK has a long tradition of participating in international projects. At the moment, we are in the start up phase of our next three year beneficial project, working together with a Bolivian NGO on improving educational possibilities for Bolivian children. In Scandinavia, we have a good forum for Catholic youth work in Nordisk Katolsk Ungdoms Råd (NKUR). In NKUR, board members from DUK and sister organizations in Norway and Finland meet twice a year to exchange experiences and views on subjects of common interest.

On the local, national and international level we in DUK try to create the flexible network that can make today's youth tomorrow's church.

—Henrik Bang, former Board Chairman of Young Danish Catholic (DUK).

News From Finland

A LOOK AT THE DIOCESE OF HELSINKI

In the last twenty years, the Diocese of Helsinki—all of Finland—has experienced great changes. In terms of numbers, the faithful have more than doubled. There were 3,300 persons at the end of 1981, 4,000 at the end of 1987, 5,500 at the end of 1991 and about 8,000 at the end of 2001.

This is an average growth of 5% a year. Growth from births and conversions make up the smaller part. Today the Church in Finland is made of people from about seventy nations. Today, 60% of our people are Finnish, the larger groups of immigrants are composed of Vietnamese, Italians, Filipinos and Spanish speaking people.

A new law on religious freedom took effect on 1 August 2003. The law is quite bad because it keeps the distinction between state churches (Lutheran and Orthodox) and others. Only state churches receive state taxes. A positive change is that the state might (!) support social and youth work done by the church. Another bad point of principle is that for teaching any religious confession it is not necessary to belong to that confession. It is sufficient to have adequate academic qualifications. So, in principle, an atheist could teach Orthodox religion or a Lutheran could teach Catholic religion. That this will not happen in practice is another thing. What *does* happen is that religion is treated more and more as merely a cultural phenomenon that belongs to the history of Finland, but nothing more.

Presently, the Diocese of Finland has three candidates for the priesthood, one is studying in Poland and two are in Rome. One more candidate will begin his studies in the spring. A seminary for priests has also been opened in Helsinki. The seminary is a diocesan seminary, i.e. founded by the Bishop of Helsinki, but it is run and "fed" by students of the Neo Catechumenate movement, Its name is Redemptoris

Mater, as is the case with all their seminaries. It presently has ten students. They will attend some lectures in Lugano.

Extracted from letters of Bishop Józef Wróbel and Fr. Rudolf Larenz, Episcopal Vicar

gians, and lay people. Father Teemu Sippo emphasized the need for local dialogue as the basis of ecumenism and as called for by the document in question. Without concrete contacts and discussions true ecumenism cannot be attained. Common prayers are espe-



Visiting in Finland in October, Cardinal Walter Casper (middle) met the Catholic Bishop of Finland Józef Wróbel (left) and Archbishop Leo (right), the Orthodox Bishop of Finland and Carelia.

Articles in Fides: Finland on the ecumenical map: Charta Oecumenica seminar 1.28 (2003)

The Ecumenical Council of Finland has included the *Charta Oecumenica* -document in its series of publications in four languages: Finnish, Swedish, German (original text), and English. As a supplement the council also published *Ekumenian hyvät tavat - Takt och ton inom ekumeniken* (Good manners for ecumenism) their recommendations for good conduct and manners for use in local ecumenical functions.

The document calls for dialogue between local churches and religious institutions. A good example of such a dialogue was the Charta Oecumenica seminar held in the assembly room of St. Henry's church to discuss how to apply the document and place Finland on the map of ecumenism. There were about 60 persons participating in the seminar, churchmen, university theolo-

gically important, but it is also important to be on the alert for possible common functions.

Generally it was held that the level of ecumenism is fairly good in Finland, but problems do exist, e.g. attention should be paid to what churches or religious communities an immigrant had belonged to in his/her home country.

—Katri Tenhunen

If parents wish their children to receive Catholic education in school they need to inform the principal that their child is Catholic and that they wish the child to receive instruction in his/her faith. This should happen when the child is being registered for first grade.

The school is obligated to provide instruction in Catholic faith if the governing organization (e.g. city, county, or private institution) has at least three Catholic students. In the case of a city or county these three students need not

even be in the same school. Here and there sometimes even single Catholic children may receive lessons in the Catholic faith. However, more often groups are formed of students gathered from different grades and in some cases from different schools nearby.

Even when the child has already started Lutheran instruction it can be changed to Catholic teaching. At this time there are six full-time teachers of Catholic religion and several part-timers primarily in the capital metropolitan area. Plans are to gradually expand Catholic teaching in schools to include other cities and counties as far as resources permit.

The new bill of religious freedom supports this solution: that children receive instruction in their own faith in schools. The same teaching materials are used in schools that are used in parish education. On the average there are 1 to 2 one hour long lessons per week in religion, depending on grade level. As a study subject it is on the same level as any other subject. The teachers receive their pay from the school district that also pays for the teaching materials. Irene Alvarez

The first Catholic Mass to be celebrated in the parish church of Närpes since the reformation was held 28 December 2002. The local Lutheran pastor agreed to schedule the Mass on a busy day and even lent them his cantor and arranged for music.

Närpes is a town on the western seacoast of Finland. One of the islands off the coast bears the name of St. Peter and it is claimed that he drove all the snakes from the island. The church in Närpes dates to the middle ages although it has been added on to at various times. The first wooden church was built between 1359 and 1366. The present church dates to 1435. One of the relics of that period is the hanging crucifix. The Church was originally named for the Holy Cross but in 1551 was renamed St. Mary.

It was 480 years since a Catholic Mass had been celebrated in the church. It is thought that Bishop Arvid Kurck celebrated his last Mass in this church. Arvid Kurck was the Bishop of Åbo/Turku. He was one of the few

remaining bishops in Sweden/Finland and was on his way to Stockholm for the discussions of who was to be the Swedish Archbishop, he being a leading contender. He drowned in a storm at sea in 1522. About twenty five persons were present for the Mass and reception. They represented the wide spectrum of nationalities in the Finnish Catholic Church together with native Finns.

Leena Kangas and Esa Erävalo were the first Finns to graduate with a B.A. in theology from the Maryvale Institute. Their degree for five years of off campus courses in Catholic theology was awarded at a solemn ceremony in November at the Cathedral of St. Chad in Birmingham. Six years ago the then rector of Maryvale Institute, monsignor Daniel McHugh and Archbishop Couve de Murville visited Finland to demonstrate opportunities for off campus courses.

In 1997 Leena Kangas, director of the Stella Maris learning center, and Esa Erävalo, currently the head editor of *Kristityn Vastuu* (Christian Responsibility)-paper were the first Finnish students at Maryvale. The study consisted of eight essays of about 3500 words or 10-12 pages in length each year. The topics covered a wide variety of areas in Catholic theology. Every year there was a test on these subjects that the Finns took under supervision in Helsinki. In Finland Father Jan Aarts SCJ and Father Martti Voutilainen advised the students. "The Maryvale lecture-series always included praying the hours every day and a morning mass. According to the institutional vision theology is learned on your knees with faith", remarks Leena Kangas.

Two more students from Finland are studying at Maryvale: Irene Alvarez on her third year, and Juho Kyntäjä on his fourth. They both are concentrating on catechesis. Esa Erävalo

Winds of history were blowing in the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome on May 17 when Father Tuomo T. Vimpari presented his dissertation in canon law. The world famous Jesuit University under Vatican authority was founded in 1551 but even so Father

Vimpari's dissertation was registered as the first doctorate granted a native born Finnish Catholic priest since the Middle Ages. The 300-page dissertation in English deals with an area not previously examined: the juridical person of the Catholic Church in all the five northern countries in light of the canon law.

Bishop Józef Wróbel SJC, Finland's ambassador Antti Hynninen with spouse, monsignor Furio Cesare, rector of the Swedish collegio for priests, were present as were several priests staying or working in Rome. Abbess General Mother Tekla Famiglietti OSSS attended with her Bridgettine sisters. Sisters from other orders and Finns living in Rome were also there.

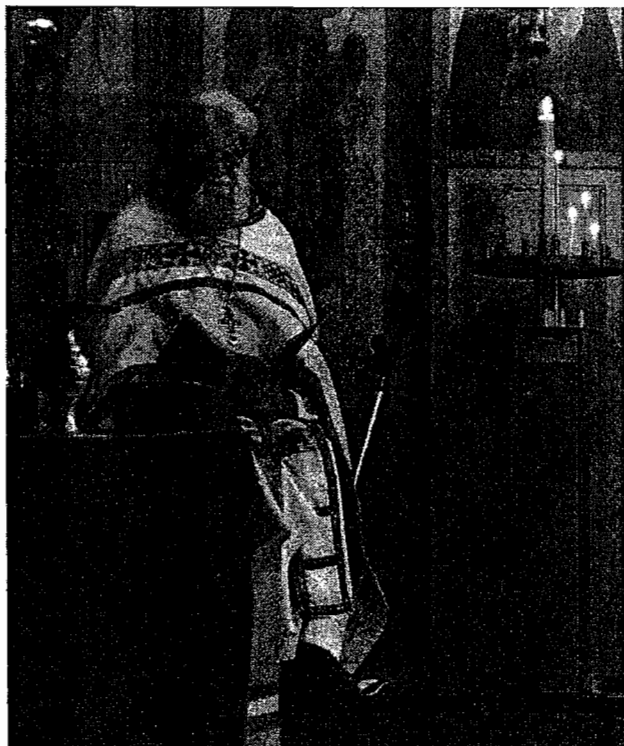
Surprisingly the topic of the dissertation opens up interesting historical and theological insights into the reasons for the relation of canon law to the civil law in our countries. During the discussion that followed the presenter was praised for his analytical grasp of the subject.

His dissertation *The juridical personality of the Catholic church in Scandinavia - canonical problems and prospects* will in all likelihood be published in a series of international juridical publications.

The organ of St. Mary's parish was silenced for a week or two in the spring. This is the first major repair of the 37-year old organ

Only two sets of organs built by the Dutch-Swedish Richard Jacoby are found in Finland, those of St. Mary's and St. Henry's parishes.

The organ of St. Mary is quite versatile. It can be used to play baroque music as well as romantic organ music. Even so the sound of this unique instrument is no longer on its correct pitch. "During the church renovation in the 1980's a lot of dust settled into the organ. During the repair work in the spring all 1158 pipes will have to be removed, dusted, and wiped inside with a damp cloth. Each pipe has to be sound tested and possible problems fixed. Also the instrument machinery and its overall technical apparatus will have to be tested and problems corrected.



Father Robert de Caluwé

The restoration will cost approximately 7000 euros. Ann-Catrin and her assistant, music and theology student Marco Bonacci from Italy, are organizing small concerts at St. Mary's from January to Lent to raise funds to help pay for the repair.

The congregation will hear the new sound at Easter. In 2004 when the parish celebrates its 50th anniversary the organ will sound clean and jubilant for the glory of God.

The Church of St. Mary started a Boy Scout Troop for boys between the ages of 11 to 16. Their plan is to play games, acquire technical skills such as using a compass and find tracks, learn emergency aid, and improve the understanding of nature. They will also have common prayers and singalongs.

Attendance at the skiing holiday at Stella Maris this year was delightful: 25 girls, 11 boys and seven young seniors. At mass they were singing a song well describing the group: "We are one family of all nations and like Christ we wish to serve our heavenly father". In the light of common joys and sorrows and aided by the bright lights of the rosary we were pondering about how to witness God's grace in our own

lives. All in all pleasant and active times of togetherness were spent at the camp with prayer, outdoor activities, works, and relaxation. "Olympic games" were held in skiing, skating, downhill. Walking trips to nearby region were organized, and of course there was a disco

Last year the Caritas of St. Mary organized a Christmas fund drive for the Tartu Christian Adolescent Home in Estonia. The home is a non-profit institution founded about 10 years ago to take care of children from very poor or troubled homes or

living alone on the streets. Almost all of the staff members working with the children are volunteers drawing no salary. The city of Tartu pays a small sum for the upkeep of Tartu children but many of the children are from outside the city and their care and education is solely dependent on donations. Therefore funds to cover the expenses have to be collected separately every month, and there is, for instance, no chance to accumulate monies for something like a renovation budget. Through Sister Mary Ve'nard Caritas of St. Mary participates in building a future for the children of this home. The home offers immediate help for children in trouble and also an opportunity for education and the learning of everyday skills.

An eastern rite mass is starting at the Ecumenical Center in Myllyjärvi, Espoo.

At the altar is Father Robert de Caluwé who is in charge of the center and whose hands also have produced almost all of the icons nearly covering the walls of the chapel.

Father Robert's voice is still clear and vigorous, only the cane is a reminder of his 90 years. That too is for-

gotten as in the sermon we hear a lively story about a happenstance with a photographer at a site where asphalt had split and cracked, but after rain mushrooms had grown with tremendous force as if to testify to the force of life over dead matter.

Here Christianity is what connects, not what separates.

In the main building there are icons too, they even cover some of the bookshelves. In some ways the center operation depends on the icons. It has been self sustaining from the start: Father Robert paints icons, writes about icons, and the income from that makes it possible for the center to operate without outside help.

Icon painting is part of Father Robert's original calling. A Dutch primary school teacher in 1932 he heard news from Soviet Union about the persecution and hunger of religious people. Conversations with his confessor led to seminary in Rome that prepared priests for Russia. "For six years I studied the Orthodox Church culture and Eastern Church fathers. It is a magnificently rich tradition, and I am thankful that I had the opportunity to familiarize myself with it", Father Robert reminisces.

By the time he had finished seminary, Russia was closed from the outside world, and during the interim peace Father Robert was called to Finland in 1940. The first more independent base and in a way a predecessor for the ecumenical center was the Rekola chapel in 1951 - a small room for prayers that was plagued by bad relations with its neighbors. Finally the church and the room serving as the living quarter were moved to the other side of the road, but even that did not bring harmony with the neighbors.

A satisfactory solution came with a place in Myllyjärvi, Espoo that was to be called ecumenic center. The church was completed in 1964, and Father Robert together with another priest, Theodor Rohner, already then active in Rekola, had decided to dedicate the place to ecumenism - a notion that was new in the Catholic church at that time. Some even thought of it as luxury.



The Catholic Students' Club is a meeting place for foreign and Finnish students and young adults. The rosary and Holy Mass in Latin and English are the reasons that this group come together. On this evening, a Franciscan Father of the Immaculate, Fr. Carlo F.I. joins, while waiting for his visa to Russia to be renewed.

The time after Vatican II seems to have been the busiest at the center. There were up to 12 to 13,000 visitors annually those days.

In 1971 Father Theodor left for Brazil as a missionary. One more priest joined the ecumenic center, Father Guy Barbier, whom Father Robert invited to learn to speak Russian which was spoken in the eastern rite house. Father Robert believes that the work of the ecumenical center is widely respected. This belief was confirmed recently at the 90th birthday celebration. In addition to Catholics, Lutheran congregations in Espoo participated, as

did many Orthodox from farther away. The fact that the mass resembles an Orthodox Mass, and also that Father Robert himself lives as an Orthodox, may nevertheless irritate or even frighten some.

"Many think that I am converting people," he says. "In sixty years, however, no converts have shown up. We are one church through baptism and we have to be good members of our own church without hating anyone."

Father Robert says that to the extent that he has learned to know other churches he has found much to respect in them. In the Orthodox Church he

specially values its loving attitude to mankind and the understanding it demonstrates toward human beings even in their fallibility. About priestly celibacy he seems to be closer to the Orthodox. Even for the Catholic church, celibacy is not a doctrinal but rather a practical question.

"Finnish Lutheranism is also close to me. Thinking about ecumenism I have learned a lot from them too", says Father Robert.

Note from *Helsingin Sanomat*

In its July 2003 monthly magazine the HELSINGIN SANOMAT, the largest newspaper in Finland, notes the publication of *Jumalan valtio*, St. Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, translated into Finnish after 1500 years. The translation from Latin was done by the 83 year old Heikki Koskenniemi and took four years. The first part of more than 600 pages is ready, and the second part is in its final editorial phase.

Reign Spring, 2003

Fr. Paul Grizzelle-Reid SCJ from Sacred Heart Monastery in America spent the summer of 2002 as a "working visitor" in Finland. He was joined by a seminarian, Don Malin who has expertise in music and the liturgy. Their main task was to help at the youth camp at Stella Maris.

A two-week session was for English speaking persons and they helped out with catechesis. They also did retreats for women's religious communities and Fr. Paul was given the duty of a first communion for a Spanish speaking girl.

New Members of the St. Ansgar's League

Mary T. Conley Minneapolis MN
Mr. and Mrs. William Curtin Storrs CT
Mr. And Mrs. Theodore Foss Albuquerque NM
Rev. John Krenzke Denver CO
Muriel Monahan Sudbury MA
Lucia Paolesi Woodside NY
Patricia Sullivan New York City

David Corey Brattleboro VT
Michael Dvorack Albuquerque NM
Brendan Heslin Seagirt NJ
Peter Langesen Arlington VA
Helen Orlando Cooperstown NY
Mae Peterson Edina MN
Fr. Rolf Tollefsen Minneapolis MN

News from Iceland

The rapid increase in the number of Catholics in Iceland, which we could observe in the last four years, has kept up. At the moment, about 5,500 are living in the country. This increase is mainly caused by the immigration of people who found work in the fish factories. The great majority of them come from Poland, but also many Philipinos and peoples from South America have settled down in several places, particularly in the south west of the country. Also the number of child baptisms increases: up to 120 a year. Lastly a small number of converts coming from the Lutheran Church enlarges the Catholic Church. At the same time, only a few Catholics have died or left the Church. Because of the immigration of many Catholics, the proportion of born Icelanders and foreigners altered drastically: ten years ago it was 80-20%, now it is 50-50%.

Although the great majority of the Catholics, as most of the inhabitants, live in the south west of the country in and around Reykjavik, there are a few Catholics in all of the small towns and villages. To take care of them, the priests and sisters travel around to say Mass, to catechize and to prepare people for the sacraments. Because there are only nine Catholic churches and

chapels, they often use Lutheran churches. Fortunately the Lutheran clergy are very accommodating. A special problem is the great diversity of languages spoken, principally we celebrate the liturgy in Icelandic but because so many people do not understand it, we also offer Masses in Polish and English and we call on the sisters who come from different countries and speak the native languages of the people, to draw them into meetings and celebrations.

So, the pastoral working field embraces at the moment the whole country. Fortunately our priests and sisters are quite young and do a "whale of a work". The faithful appreciate this and take part in many meetings with joy. Also more and more laypersons are involved in the apostolate, particularly the pastoral work for families and children. The worldwide movement of Couples for Christ has a lively branch in Iceland. The Focolare are winning influence with several prayer groups. And also a Philippine charismatic movement has gathered a group of people who wish to deepen their faith. In addition to the lay associations that have existed for many years, the content of the faith and particularly of the Bible and liturgy are studied. Very important is the increase of many people who become engaged in the unselfish care of sick, handicapped, elderly and

lonely people. Thanks to the work of the Missionaries of Charity (Sisters of Mother Teresa) they look after them and bring their situation to the notice of the authorities who react positively to it. They work very ecumenically and also are supported by the Lutherans. This has been proven by the large interest in the beatification of Mother Teresa. Even the President of Iceland and the Lutheran Bishop took part in the festivities the Sisters had organized and the national television and all the papers paid ample tribute to it.

So we may be happy that not only the number of Catholics in Iceland is increasing but also the pastoral care, the deepening of faith and the caritative initiatives are growing. And the Catholic Church gains more and more influence in society. Although she only accounts for 1.7 per cent of the population, her importance is proportionately much larger and it is well esteemed! We hope and pray to further it in a tolerant way so that all people will recognize the worth and the truth of the Christian way of life that the Catholic Church proclaims. Only this road will lead to a fruitful re-evangelization of this very secularized country.

—Johannes Gijzen
Bishop of Reykjavik

Deceased Members of St. Ansgar

Janice Alling
Anne Marie Crofton
Msgr Walter Heenan
Rev. John Nelson
Sr. Ann Marie
Anna Pascarelli
Agnes Scanlon
Aase Sjovald
Joseph Torpay

Gone before us with the sign of faith



NEWS FROM NORWAY

Fifty Years of the Catholic
Diocese of Oslo

On 29 June 1953, Pope Pius XII Re-erected the Catholic Diocese in parts of Scandinavia. Three Apostolic Vicariates, Denmark, Oslo and Stockholm, became Bishoprics and their leaders were named as "ordinary" bishops. Earlier they had been Apostolic Vicars and titular bishops.

What was the meaning of this change?

For ordinary Catholics this was not a large change. But it marked and acknowledged that the local churches had reached a certain degree of maturity. That it happened 800 years after the erection of the medieval church province with its seat in Nidaros made clear that the Catholic Church was no new phenomenon in Norway, but indeed the same as distinguished and formed Norway for 500 years up to the reformation.

The name and title changed in 1953. In Oslo the Apostolic Vicar, Jacob Mangers of Selja, became the Bishop of Oslo. Selja is an island in the west of Norway which had been a See in missionary times but which had been suppressed because it was impractical to have a Bishop there.

Why were two of the three Apostolic Vicariates called after their countries but the Norwegian one was called Oslo? Because in Sweden and Denmark there was only one church district in the whole country, embracing the whole nation. It would have been wrong for Norway where there were three districts. In the case of Mid Norway and North Norway, it would wait for 1979 before they gained an Episcopal-like rank as the prelatures of Trondheim and Tromsø.

It was an administrative change without certain practical consequences. Even the consequence, which the papal decree of erection gave a green light to, the erection of a cathedral chapter, did not happen.

This was a milestone. In Norway it

also had great importance: by creating a See with the name Oslo, the medieval bishopric was in fact re-erected. This meant that the Catholic Church implicitly gave notice to the Lutheran diocese with the name of Oslo that it was not to be considered as a continuation of the medieval diocese. This did not cause any controversy-either the point passed the Lutheran Church by or it was notices but didn't bother anyone. The Catholic Church in Norway at that time was even smaller than it is today.

The Bishopric in 1953 had only one tenth of the 39,000 registered members it has today. It had 16 parishes (today it has twenty). Catholics were, in terms of nationality, very different from today: The waves of Philipinos, Vietnamese, Tamils and Chileans, which mark today's church, had not yet come. The first Poles were, however, in place. Neither were there Hungarians.

Bishop Jacob Mangers: 1953-1964

Bishop John Willem Gran 1962-1983

Bishop Gerhard Schwenzer 1983-

-Condensed from *Broen* no. 3 2003

The Diocese of Oslo

I should like to be able to send more than just a few words to the members of the St. Ansgar's League. In 1957, as Ordination approached and I was looking for a suitable holy card for distribution to friends on the occasion, my choice pictured St. Ansgar, the same image pictured through the years in the Bulletin. The prayer which always accompanied the image began, "May the example of St. Ansgar inspire us to pray for the people of the North..." Actually, St. Ansgar never got to Norway but he was certainly a source of inspiration through Denmark and Sweden. My Ordination Cards were a gift from Bishop Ansgar Nelson O.S.B. who was Bishop Of Stockholm forty-five years ago when I was ordained. I had always admired that representation of St. Ansgar and had written to Bishop Nelson asking for the name of the printer, whereupon he sent

me a goodly supply as an Ordination gift.

The New Year 2003 coincided with my being a hospital guest, laid up with a heart attack. Things are progressing slowly but positively, but all these months of practical inactivity have kept me out of the mainstream of Diocesan activity.

My first five years In Norway, 1963-1968 involved a real effort at re-adjustment. I had been Ordained in 1958 for the Diocese of Brooklyn. These years were spent as a Curate in Jackson Heights in Queens at Our Lady of Fatima. The Church was an old army Quonset hut acquired at a very reasonable price from the military. When the new and permanent church opened in 1961 we were obliged to make sure that the blueprints kept the height of the tower well below the danger point prescribed by the airport authorities.

I had maintained some connections with Norway since my seminary days. There was a need for priests and the Bishop of Oslo at that time, Bishop Mangers, had encouraged me to consider coming to Norway. My father was born and raised in Norway. He emigrated as a teenager and later met and married my English-Irish mother. After 25 years of married life he became a Catholic.

In 1963 I took the boat, literally, to Norway. It was a nine day journey. I thought that it would never end. Once settled, and enrolled at the University of Oslo for special Norwegian language courses, I set about the task of enculturation. This had both its burdens and its blessings. There were all of 6,000 Catholics in the country. The number of priests was about 40. We priests were a salad of nationalities and backgrounds and, to some extent, education. There was only one other English language speaking priest, Fr. Alan Littlewood from England. But he was stationed in Bergen, clear across the country so we saw very little of each other. Especially we secular priests had a rather difficult time. The priestly camaraderie one enjoyed in the States

simply could not exist in Norway. The provincial parishes had the one priest, the pastor, and the distance between the different parishes made any contact very difficult. Loneliness was a built in factor of life. And at that time there was not a little residue of the old anti-Catholicism that did indeed prove to be a tremendous burden for some of us. Fortunately for me, my working area except for an eight month exception, has always been in the city of Oslo; at the Episcopal Residence in Oslo we were six or seven priests, including the Bishop. But again, we came from as many countries, and on the purely human level we had precious little in common. Then, especially for the diocesan priests, there was the problem of very little money. The set wage was 40 kroner a month plus room and board. That was about \$5.50 at that time. I remember one of my fellow curates, a Belgian, who needed shoes very badly. He asked the Bishop for a new pair of shoes and was given the classic forty kronor. Whereupon the priest exclaimed, "But I need two shoes". This in no way indicates or implies that the Bishop was tight fisted. He had no money. It was as simple as that. The descent from \$90.00 in Brooklyn to \$5.50 did involve a certain amount of enculturization. By 1966-1967, due to the great generosity of the German Bishops, a fund was established which provides for a solid minimum wage for the clergy of all of Scandinavia.

There are just two priests from the U.S.A. who are officially stationed in Norway, Father Robert Anderson and I. Fr. Robert is a Trappist from Spencer Abbey. He received permission to follow the eremitical life in Norway in the late sixties and has since then been a source of inspiration to many Norwegians who have visited him at his mountain retreat and experienced the depth of his spirituality. A group of American Oblate Fathers took over the parish in Stavanger for about ten years c.1977-1987. They have since returned to the States and partly also to Denmark where they have long-standing missions.

In about 1975-1976 I came into

possession of what is called in Norway a "klenodium", i.e. a real gem of a thing. It was a harmonium, a little (but not too little) reed organ, the bellows pumped by two pedals. One sees not a few of these instruments here and there in second hand and antique shops and usually they are in pretty sad shape. But not this one. And it was given to me. It came from America, like me, was born in 1897, and came from the place associated with my early years in the priesthood. It had a deep resonant tone, unlike the squeakier, sandy tones that one so often hears. The dark oak paneling was highly varnished and remarkably unscratched. The design was the decorative gingerbread style associated with the 1890s. The organ had done service in a little house chapel in the South West town of Sarpsborg where, for about two years, we had a Mass center to meet the needs of immigrants from Catholic areas of Europe. But population was already shifting North East and so it was decided to close that Mass Station. That harmonium brought a wave of nostalgia and not a little home sickness to me at that time. First of all it was an "Estays" and for some reason or other that brand was the one that my parents would always mention whenever the subject of organs came up. So there I was, so far from that world, both my parents long since gone to the Lord and in possession of, of all things, an "Estays". The organ came from Brattleboro, Vt., which was very near to Lake Spofford where what we called the priests' camp was located. Our view of the Priesthood was such that one first assured oneself that one would have access to a Church or Chapel when going away on holiday. It was, for the majority of us, a foregone conclusion that every day in a priest's life included the Eucharistic celebration. A day without the Mass was a kind of aberration. There was a good spirit of companionship and oneness in the Spirit of God at the camp. There one could share experiences and make new friends

In Norway there were simply too few priests to be able to get together. I have always felt that this was a great

lack in the lives, especially of the secular clergy of the Diocese. So you see what a surprise it was to meet that little harmonium from all places, Brattleboro. On a freezing cold day in Sarpsborg, a little town about sixty-five miles south east of Oslo. A little reed organ, handmade by "Estays" which gave it a sort of pedigree for me, and summoned up such fond memories. When I retired three years ago, I had to move into much smaller quarters and there was just no room for "Brattleboro" alas. It was given a good home however and is now in the living room of a musician. He knows its virtues and will take care of it, and he is not an old timer like me.

All good wishes in the Lord to the members of St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League.

-Fr. Olaf I. Waring, Oslo

News from Tromsø

I am very grateful for your work with the Bulletin. I think it is important to have this contact with you and the American Catholics. I hope the organization and the contact between the Catholic Church in the US and in Scandinavia will exist for much more than a hundred years!

The autumn and wintertime have come to North Norway. I am now leaving Tromsø for one month. First I will make a short trip to Germany and then go to a clinic in Poland for further therapy on my right arm and leg.

Church bell to Alta

The lovely bell came from Poland in the summer of 2002 and it has been in use since then but since the Bishop has been ill, the consecration would have to wait to 24 August 2003. The bell is named for St. Joseph and has the following Latin inscription: "*Sancte Joseph ora pro nobis*".

During the Pontifical Mass that was celebrated by Bishop Goebel assisted by pater Nicolai Zeimets from Tromsø and pater Wojciech from Hamfest the bell was properly consecrated. During the Mass, the members

of St. Ansgar were prayed for by Father Wojciech. The many who attended were impressed by the 83 year old Father Zeimetz when he climbed the ladder with the aspergillum and a little less impressed by the twenty years younger pater Wojciech who anointed the bell with Chrism. This project was mainly financed by the St. Ansgar's Scandinavian Catholic League represented by pater John Halborg who has a Scandinavian background.

The Bishop based his homily on the following Latin words about the church bell: *Vivos voco, mortuos plango, fulgura frango*- that means: I call the living (to prayer), I weep for the dead, I break the lightning flashes. In earlier times it was a custom to let the church bell ring when the weather was stormy or lightning flashed as a warning to people and to save their lives and property from danger.

The area around St. Joseph's chapel has really been busy during the summer of 2003. The surrounding fence is almost finished with Alta slate as its main material. The fence will be completed next year. After the Mass, Bishop Goebel praised pater Wojciech for his achievement.

+Gerhard Goebel, Bishop of Tromsø

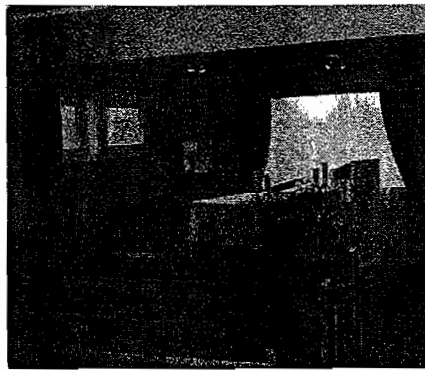
NEWS FROM BROEN

The Church of St. Swithin in Stavanger began in 1898 when there was "hardly a true Catholic in Stavanger". Today the Church has 2,900 members. Masses are celebrated in a number of languages. The Church has recently bought a neighboring building for its extensive program. Funds came from the parish itself.

Saint Eystein's Day is 26 January. It is now an optional memorial in North and South Norway and a Feast in Trondheim where he was Archbishop (ca. 1120-1188).

The Bishop of Oslo, Gerhard Schwenzer, together with the Diocesan Commission for peace and justice, the Young Catholics and Caritas Norway published a statement that war in Iraq would not be a "just war but a humanitarian catastrophe".

The Pope both praised and criticized Norway in an audience with the Ambassador. He praised Norway's role in the cause of peace and also its reception of aliens. On the other side he deplored the decrease in believing Christians and the growth of a materialism which leads people to lose their faith. A professor at the Mission High School in Stavanger, Ole Tjørhom, has become a Catholic. She will continue as a professor at the Lutheran school because of a special dispensation. It was given because the school needed her expertise in systematic and ecumenical theology.



Interior of Bjørnevatn's new chapel.

This marks a breakthrough for Catholics in Norway.

The widespread pastoral work in Northern Scandinavia often seems unbelievable to an American. In 1999 a chapel dedicated to St. Lorenzo Ruiz was established in a little town, Bjørnevatn. This area belongs to the parish of Hammerfest but a priest serves the area from Tromsø, Father Miroslaw Ksiazek. On the second Saturday of the month, Father Mirek flies from Tromsø to Korkenes. He celebrates Mass at noon in Varangerbotn. At 17.00 he says Mass at Vardø in a Lutheran parish house. He drives to Vadsø to spend the night with a family. The next day he says Mass in the Salvation Army locale of that town. Then he drives to Bjørnevatn to say mass at 17.00. Sometimes this trip is impossible because of snow. The whole parish of Hammerfest boasts 314 Catholics.

The Katarinahjemmet in Oslo celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary in

2003. In that year they accompanied Dominican brothers who came to give lectures and publish books on the Catholic faith. Today St. Catharine's home is a student home, guesthouse and convent. There are 12 sisters in the house; three of the sisters are still in formation. Nine of the sisters are Norwegian. Among other tasks, the sisters are active in publishing liturgical books.

Bishop Gerhard Goebel has returned to Tromsø after some weeks recovering from a heart attack. He has begun his work again and seems to be in good health. Work being carried on in the square before the Cathedral in Tromsø has weakened the church foundations. In some places the basement ceiling has separated from the side-walls.

The Diocese of Oslo published its statistics for the last three years. They portray a slight increase in giving, some through taxes, some through donation and a large decrease in giving from Germany, which has concentrated its help on the former Eastern Germany and the Baltic States. As a result, administrative costs have had to be pared. In 1999, income was 24.2 million euros; in 2002 it was 13.4 million. In 1990 there were 28,155 Catholics in Norway, in 2001 there were 43,274 and in 2002 there were 44,141 registered Catholics who make up 0.97 per cent of the population.

On a state visit to Belgium, Queen Sonja unveiled a memorial stone to Olav Engelbrektsson at Lier, which is near Antwerp. He was the last Catholic Archbishop of Norway at Nidaros, serving from 1523 to 1537. He worked for Norwegian independence from Denmark and also for the preservation of the Catholic Church. When he realized he could no longer resist the Danish forces, he fled to Belgium where he died in 1538.

The opening of the new Bridgettine Convent in Cuba is not without controversy. Not only was Castro prominently present at the opening ceremonies, Mother Tekla also presented him with a high honor, "The ecumenical cross with the star of a Commander of

St. Birgitta". He honored her with the medal of "The Order of Felix Varela of the First Grade". Neither Cardinal Ortega nor any of the Cuban bishops were present at any ceremony where Castro took part. Later they made a formal declaration that they did not approve of the public ceremonies, that this was a purely political arrangement and they stressed that they took no part in the ceremonies. They also said that presenting Castro with this honor was unfitting in a time when Castro's government continues to limit the Church's activities.

A new Church has been dedicated in Askim. The parish was separated from Halden in 1992. It had met in a converted house but was in need of better accommodations. The membership is made up of Norwegians, Poles, Vietnamese, Philippines and Croatians.

It has 565 registered members. A large debt remains on the building that needs to be repaid.

In the summer of 2003, 230 children and young persons attended summer camps in Norway. There are five camps, which cover the whole country.

The "Olsok" celebrated at Trondheim was special this year. It marked the 850th anniversary of the erection of Norway as a church province under Trondheim. St. Olav had sent Bishop Grimkjell to Hamburg-Bremen with orders to place the church in Norway under that Diocese. Later, Norway was under the Archbishop of Lund that was part of Denmark at that time. By the twelfth century, the church in Norway had grown in strength and together with Sweden-Finland needed independence. Pope Anastasius was afraid that Fredrik Barbarossa would be too powerful if the North was controlled from Bremen. Cardinal Nicholas Brekespear was the papal ambassador and he erected the Archdiocese of Nidaros with the territory of Norway and also the Islands west of Norway in 1153. Cardinal Walter Kasper was the special speaker at the festival. He stressed the common heritage of Lutherans and Catholics in Norway and at the same time reminded his audience of the need for more work for full unity of the churches: "we have

discovered that we are brothers and sisters and no longer consider each other as enemies, strangers or rivals." He also stressed the growing conflict between Christian values and those of a secularized modern world.

In an interesting article, four Norwegian non Catholics were asked their opinion of the Pope. Finn Wagle, Bishop of Nidaros, called him "a colossal spiritual strength". This strength seems to increase as his body grows weaker. "He is a strong sign of contradiction and a mighty source of inspiration." Eyvind Skeie, an author, hymn writer and theologian, wrote of being part of an ecumenical group in Bethlehem. In the middle of this group, the Pope appeared as "a person who had entrusted himself to God to a degree that goes beyond explanation and words". Fr. Asle Ambrosius Dingstad is a Priest in the Norwegian Catholic Church, a Church that traces its Orders to the Polish National Catholic Church in America. He wrote that the Pope "stands out as one of the greatest witnesses to Christ in the world today, if he is not the greatest". He sees the Pope as an encouragement to traditional movements outside the Catholic Church. He mentions the Pope's hand as outstretched to the Polish National Catholic Church in America, offering dialog and the status of sister church. He says "we will pray and work for full churchly fellowship with the Bishop of Rome, the first of his equals among the followers of the apostles." Odd Sverre Hove, the editor of Dagen, writes that John Paul will probably be remembered as the greatest pope in history. As a protestant, judging from a distance, he still is able to admire this "surprising giant" He writes of the Popes battle for the traditional faith of the Church and for the freedom of Poland and Eastern Europe. "Despite my protestant objections to the faith and teaching of the Roman Church, with an evangelical and protestant judgment from a distance, it is still easy to think sympathetic thoughts for the ceaseless fight of this Pope against the modern liberal dissolution of theology.



St. Olav's Church

News From St. Olav

Bernt T. Oftestad discussed the problem of the Norwegian State church in an article, "From State Church to Folk Church". A revision of the Church Law will contain a new relation between the State and its Church. The present State Church is facing the problems of declining attendance that Oftestad characterizes as an "implosion". "A radical liberation of the Norwegian Church from being a "state's and national support" so that it can be a Christian fellowship of faith based on its own spiritual resources, can lead to restoration and awakening, revival and life... If the Norwegian Church is placed on the same level as other faith fellowships, it will create a new ecumenical situation... There will be greater openness between them and more solidarity between those who confess the name of Christ in the world."

The Norwegian Society for Feminine Theology recently named Kari Elisabeth Børreson as the Female Theologian of the year. She has worked on the relationship between gender and the image of God.

News from Sweden

News from *Katolsk Magasin*

Saint Eugenia in Stockholm faces financial difficulties because of the troubled financial market. It also has invested 14,7sk to build the new church in Järfälla. While support from the State has increased income, it is insufficient to cover perceived needs.

The Dominican Sisters have taken charge of Johannesgården in Gothenburg. It was formerly led by Sacred Heart Sisters. They have left the home in Märsta that the Diocese has bought for the local parish. St. John's is a retreat and cultural center.

The Retirement home in Västerås has been closed after 45 years. The Maria Sisters who managed this institution have all retired and the home would need extensive renovation to bring it up to standard. It was home for eleven retired persons. Some of the Sisters hope to stay in Västerås and work in the parish.

Catholics and Pentecostals have begun an ecumenical dialog. In the debates over the show "Ecce Homo" (showing Jesus as a transvestite etc.) and the uniqueness of Christ, the two groups have discovered closeness. A problem is that Catholics think of the church as a unity while Pentecostals tend to think of individual believers.

The Catholic school in Lund is now ten years old. It is the first Catholic school in Sweden to be started by laypersons. There is now a pre school and grades 1-7. It has 144 children, eleven teachers and twelve persons who work in the pre school. About half of the students are Catholic.

The wife of the well-known author Sven Stolpe died on New Years Day 2003. She had translated the works of many Catholic authors into Swedish. She had a deep Marian devotion and would gather friends to meditate on the Scriptures.

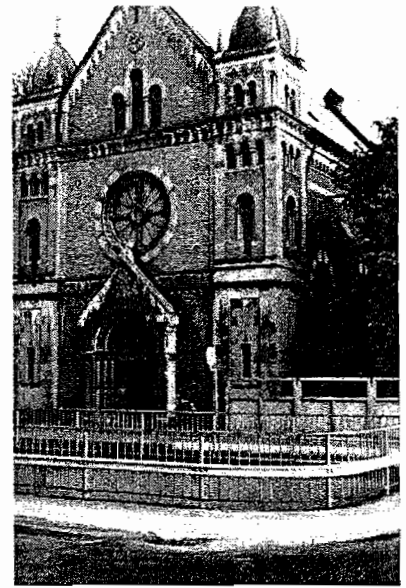
Father Krikor Chahinian, the Armenian spiritual leader, has become Rector for Oriental Catholics in Sweden. There are Syrian Catholics, Chaldeans, Melkites, Maronites and Armenians in Sweden. The Eastern Rite Churches are used to their own groups

and find working together difficult. There are only four Eastern Rite priests in Sweden and recruiting others is a priority.

A major discussion in Sweden centered around the Diocese publication. There is a desire to have more information from parishes and less "abstract" material. There was also some criticism that the paper gave too much time to the opinions of the editor. In the struggle, the editor resigned.

Walter Cardinal Kasper visited Sweden in June. He related that his whole life had been lived in a society divided between Catholics and evangelicals. He stated that much was going on between Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans and Lutherans but it was happening in small steps. He pointed out that Jesus had desired one church and prayed that we all be one. There is also a need for a common witness to the world. He thinks that the Catholic Lutheran agreement on justification was an important statement but that there is need for today's Christians to understand what justification implies. A discussion is now to begin on the priestly office and apostolic succession. This discussion will begin with the churches of Sweden and Finland that claim to have the succession. He was asked if the Church of Sweden was a bridge church and he answered only if it maintains its tradition with many Catholic elements. "If the Swedish Church becomes too liberal, then it is no bridge church but becomes a dying church."

The 700th anniversary of the birth of St. Birgitta was celebrated in Rome and at Vadstena during the past year. A number of Bishops and church leaders was present at Vadstena including Syrian Orthodox Bishop Dositej Motika, Pentecostal Pastor Sten-Gunnar Hedin, Francis Cardinal George from Chicago, Archbishop Benyamin Atas, Walter Cardinal Kasper and Archbishop KG Hammer. A very impressive moment of the celebration came when the church leaders prayed in silence for unity at the reliquary of Birgitta. All five branches of the Bridgettine were present and planned a two-day conference. In addition to the traditional branches in Rome and Spain, there are those founded in the twentieth century:



St. Erik's Cathedral, Stockholm

the Swedish branch, the Brothers in Oregon and a missionary group in Mexico and Venezuela. A new museum was opened in Rome to contain Bridgettine treasures. The museum was given the original Declaration of Sanctity of Birgitta from 1393 with the seal of Boniface IX. The museum is located in the former nun's cloister at Vadstena.

This year it happened: there were no seminarians at St. Sigfrid's Seminary in Sweden. There are, however, two seminarians studying at Rome and three men are doing practical preparations (language etc.) elsewhere in Sweden.

Saint Cecilia's School has opened in Stockholm. It presently has a pre-school class and first grade. The school will emphasize church music and the students will take part in the musical activities of the Diocese. There are twenty students enrolled.

On 30 August a youth day was held in Stockholm. A large cross was carried from the Cathedral to the local square. About 1,000 children took part. The different organizations of the Diocese had an opportunity to present their cause to the youth.

An old friend of St. Ansgar, Sister Catharina Broomé has turned eighty. She was honored with a Doctorate from Uppsala University some years ago for her educational work. She was a strong voice in the debates of the last years. She has also contributed several articles to St. Ansgar over the years. One of

them dealt with Dominicans in Sweden, that being her order. We have, among other things, exchanged views of Scandinavian mythology. She has suffered for some years from Parkinson's. Remember her in your prayers.

The State has begun to be overwhelmed by the problems of collecting money from Catholics to support the church. There have been 11,306 changes needed to be made so far. In the first year (2002) of the new system, 3,000 persons asked to leave the Church. Some of the immigrants have ended up being registered both as Catholics and members of the State Church. Anders Borgstedt from the government office said that it was unfortunate that the Diocese did not ask its members to declare themselves willing to take part in this program before entering into it. In the process of this change, the Church changed its name from The Foundation Roman Catholic Church to Roman-Catholic Church and changed its rules so that money could be received in this manner. Some questioned the legality of this action, done without consulting the members.

The State Church is in the process of preparing services to register homosexuals as partners in the church. They are working on services in the church that will be binding civilly. One plan includes making it illegal to refuse marriage to same sex unions. Henrik Roelvink points out that these actions complicate ecumenical relations in Sweden. It will also mean that anyone licensed to marry persons in Sweden cannot refuse marriage to anyone. In this case, the Church will probably decide that all marriages be done by the State and then Catholics so wishing will be blessed in Church.

After three years, Gävle now has its own church building again. St. Paul is one of the oldest congregations in Sweden. Its Church building was the oldest presently in use but for many years it had been inadequate and structurally unsound. There are at least five congregations in Sweden that presently need new church buildings. Besides the church proper, the new building has a Mary Chapel, Church parlors, educational rooms, offices and apartments for two priests.

The Jesus Manifesto

(This year, Swedish Christians have been debating issues of Christology raised by Archbishop KG Hammar of the State Church in an article published in *Expressen*. Hammar claimed that one did not need to believe in the historic truth of Jesus' miracles, Virgin Birth or Resurrection to be a Christian. Hammar follows a line of liberal Swedish theologians who claim that they do not have the truth but want to search for it. He would allow some Christians to believe in the Virgin Birth if only they do not compel others to believe it. In a sense, Hammar has a poetic reading of the Bible. In an earlier book he wrote "more often Jesus is in the way for God rather than the way to God for today's individual. As their entry into this debate, Bishop Anders Arborelius and a Pentecostal Pastor, Sten-Gunnar Hedin issued a statement called a Jesus Manifesto. Parts of it follow).

There is something that is true in a world of subjective thinking and reflection. Jesus calls himself "the way, the truth and the life" John 14.6. Unfortunately there are Christians who have lost the understanding of the claim to truth made by the Bible and the Christian faith. Briefly, we want to try to describe what we see as unique and essential to Christianity and testify to our respect and reverence for the claim to truth made by the Bible and the Christian faith.

To us, the meaning of life lies in belief in Jesus Christ who from all eternity is the only begotten Son of the Father, but born in time and history by a Virgin. When the early Church summarized its message of Jesus in the Apostolic Creed, it was completely convinced that Jesus in a unique sense was "God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary." That, in the cultural world of the Mediterranean in that time, poetry, legend and myth were used to describe reality, does not entail that the new Testament writer had the same way of proceeding. Jesus does not have much in common with the manner of thinking and speaking of that world. The early Christians believed completely and firmly that what the evangelists wrote about Jesus really had

happened. We do also.

We believe in a God who involves himself in the course of the world and makes history into salvation history. In the midst of our ordinary life, God enters in to heal and save us weak and vulnerable people.

When the Gospels speak of Jesus' miracles and signs we trust that they really took place. They help us to trust in the Savior who heals the sick and raises the dead, in the Good Shepherd who heals sinners and forgave his betrayers.

When Jesus walks on water, stills the storm, turns water into wine and changes wine into his blood and bread into his body (cf. John 5.48-58, Luke 22.19-20) the message becomes something that vibrates with life and brings us to trust in him. If this is only a poetic and mystical message, then it remains poetry and myth. If it really happened, then it is a revolutionary message of joy.

The importance of the question of truth for the Apostles in this connection is especially clear when Paul, after pointing out the many witnesses and polemicalizes against those who say that there is no resurrection from the dead, says,

"But if Christ is not risen, then is your faith meaningless, and you are still in your sins, then those who have died believing on him are also lost. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable". (I Cor.15.17-19)

All men of good will can fumble forward to a kind of faith in God by reading the book of nature and reflecting on our human existence. Other religions contain great treasures of wisdom and truth. But the full truth and revelation of God exists only in Jesus Christ. The message of the Bible about Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world and each person is trustworthy. Therefore, with great humility and bravery we will bear witness that each individual can learn to know Jesus as his Savior through faith and baptism. He not only was-but he is and remains-the only way to fellowship with God. He leads us to his and our Father in the power of the Spirit. We want to build our whole life on him.

Book Review

NIELS STENSEN

Two Lives

There are two books on Niels Stensen that are appearing in the current year. *The Seashell on the Mountain* by Alan Cutler was published earlier this year. *Niels Stensen 1638-1686 The Scientist who was beatified* written by Hans Kermit I have read in proof and it is to be published in October. It is seldom that two books compliment each other so well. Cutler comments that a biography of Stensen from someone who can read the Danish source material would be desirable. Kermit said to me that the Cutler book which is written from a scientist's viewpoint has been needed. While there is some overlapping, on the whole the two books are mutually supportive.

I had read and reviewed the Kermit book several years ago and recommended that it be translated. Of late, translations have been a hard sell on the market and so it is a happy day when this book appears.

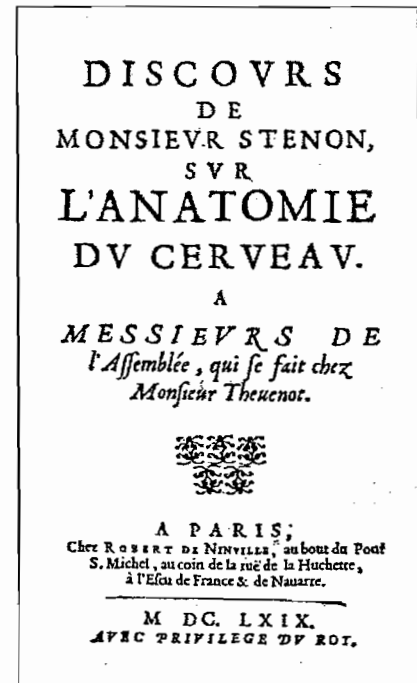
As was not uncommon in earlier times, Stensen's name takes a number of forms: "Niels Steensen, Nicolo Stenon, Niccolo Stenone, Nicholas Steno and often just Steno. He himself used the correct Latin form of Nicolaus Stenonis" (Kermit) Cutler prefers to call him Nicholaus Steno. Some of these names were the result of his travels from Denmark to Italy. Some are the result of the practice in the seventeenth century of Latinizing names. He was Niels, the son of Sten Pedersen. The last name is a patronymic. His father was a goldsmith in Copenhagen and in that shop he began his acquaintance with the need for diligent observation.

Seventeenth century Copenhagen was hardly the wonderful city we visit today. Living conditions were meager at best and life expectancy short. Denmark had accepted a rather puritanical form of Lutheranism which determined the way of life. Moreover, the seventeenth century was one of constant war. At one point Copenhagen itself was besieged by the Swedes for several years. A large

part of Denmark-Norway was lost to Sweden in these years. For some time the University was closed. It is hard to imagine a more difficult place for a scientist to begin his studies.

Nevertheless we have an eloquent witness to the studies of the young Steno. During his student years he wrote a manuscript which is called *Chaos* because of the wide variety of subjects it covers. The religious discussions of the time are reflected in it as well as his interest in science. Today these two subjects might seem mutually exclusive but not in the seventeenth century when science seemed to involve religion, even if rather esoteric religion. Among the well known authors mentioned in *Chaos* are Kepler, Galileo and Descartes. In some sense it is Descartes who might be of most interest to us.

Descartes method of research, beginning with doubt, today is only one form of philosophy among other historical schools. In Scandinavia of that time he was considered heretical in wide circles because of his challenge to Lutheran orthodoxy. To a philosopher it is interesting to consider how Descartes proposed to reconstruct the universe. Beginning with the self, there is a reliance on geometrical patterns to find knowledge. Some of Descartes theses were later to be attacked by Steno. Descartes taught that body and soul were somehow connected by the pineal gland and he claimed that animals did not have this connection, nor did they have souls. Cutler remarks, "Descartes described the body's structures not as he saw them, but as they *necessarily must be*, given the constraints of his system of geometric reasoning and the mechanical view of anatomy." By relying on experimentation rather than geometrical reasoning, Steno arrived at widely different conclusions about the body than did Descartes. Descartes thought that the heart operated somewhat like a furnace. It could not be a muscle being in that part of the body. Steno proceeded to cook an ox heart and demonstrated that it was composed of muscle tissue. He retested his observations to check the results. It is strange to



think of the new certainties of the age of reason being questioned so soon.

A major contribution of Steno was the discovery of the stratification of rock and the way the earth was formed. A literal seven day creation was challenged by the obvious amount of time needed for rock formation but also many of the more colorful theories of the age were discovered to be false. The age of observation had arrived. It seems to me that this method of verification is nearer to the Biblical world than the many fantastic theories of the renaissance. Galileo did not get into trouble for his scientific observations but for some of the theories he derived from them. Cutler makes the wise remark,

Steno's science was never criticized by his contemporaries on religious grounds...conditioned by the familiar story of Galileo's persecution by the Catholic Church and by the modern-day clash between scientists and Protestant fundamentalists over evolution in the classroom, we often assume antagonism between religion and science is inevitable...over the history of both there has been easily as much cross-fertilization as conflict.

as much cross-fertilization as conflict.

In Italy, Steno was a part of the scientific academy formed by Leopaldo de Medici in Florence. Leopaldo was later to be made a Cardinal, perhaps partly as a means for the Church to redress the treatment of Galileo. It was also in Florence that he was drawn to the Catholic Church. Again, it might be said, by observation. A corpus Christi procession forced him to question whether the faith of so many people was real or illusory. Eventually Steno's faith was to result in his Ordination as a Priest and then Bishop. His years in protestant Northern Germany form a story of endurance and trial. His asceticism seems severe to modern eyes. He died November 25, 1686. His body was sent back to Florence where it rests in the Church of St. Lawrence. In 1988 he was beatified. He is the only scientist to be beatified. The faithful pray for his canonization. I found myself fascinated by both books. They are both intended for the general reader but both of them contain material which leads to deep thought about the relation of philosophy, science and religion. A good read.

Alan Cutler, *The Seashell on the Mountaintop*, New York, 2003
Hans Kermit, *Niels Stensen 1638-1686*, Leominster, 2003

MORE ABOUT BIRGITTA

1903 (or 1902) marked the six hundredth anniversary of the birth of Saint Birgitta. A number of celebrations were held this year and a number of books were published or republished. I have read three books and I also reread a book which deals with Birgitta from a surprising angle. I will discuss them in the order I (re) read them.

Birger Bergh is a noted Swedish Latinist and scholar. He was one of the scholars who prepared the critical edition of Birgitta's revelations which has now been completed and pub-

lished. All of the people who contributed to this edition are to be highly praised. He has now turned his attention to an interesting question, If at a revival meeting, someone were suddenly to say "I see God" it would not be noteworthy. But if someone were to say this on the checkout line at a super market, what would be the general reaction? Would it be that that person was not quite sane? Even more remarkable would it be if someone in parliament were to stand and say that it was revealed to him that a certain policy should be followed.

As we read Birgitta, or many of the medieval saints, we have to raise that question of credibility and meaning in the modern age. In the middle ages the question usually asked was whether this was an inspiration from a good or an evil spirit.

In reading the miracles of medieval saints, one is often tempted to think that there is a repetition of a *topos* which the author thinks will enliven our interest, whether it is factually true or not. Some of the miracles of the child Birgitta seem to fall in that pattern.

For many of Birgitta's revelations, Bergh finds a natural explanation. When she is doubting whether she can make the trip to Jerusalem, she has a revelation from God that she must go. Bergh comments on this scene: "After this trial of strength between Birgitta's natural ego and her ideal ego, she gives in." Birgitta spends her days in Rome visiting churches and in spiritual exercises that please her. Mary reminds Birgitta that she should be mending her daughter's clothes (why could not Catherine sew for herself?). Bergh comments Mary, who functions as a projection of Birgitta's ideal ego, knows very well that Birgitta's longing for Christ belongs to the life she enjoys ...and reminds her that there is also a life of duties."

I think Bergh may be doing something important if by this means he introduces secular minds to the life of a saint. On the other hand, it is always dangerous to project our modern secularized values on the lives of saints. I

spend a reasonable amount of time in discussions of medieval saints and a certain phenomenologist attitude seems wise. Is the saint's acceptance of the influence of supernatural beings any stranger than trying to impose an immanent explanation on the text? We are reminded of the way the deists rewrote the Bible. Cui bono, as we once said.

Helge Nordahl, *Den Heliga Birgitta* is a biography which seeks to present an up to date picture of the Saint. Nordahl is the leader of the Norwegian Academy and is a long time Birgitta researcher. It is the product of a stay in Vadstena where he discussed his subject with many of the locals including Sisters and our old friend Göran Grevbäck, once the Swedish Seaman's pastor in New York and later the pastor of the State Church in Vadstena. But he has obviously read and reflected on the *Revelaciones celestes*, the documents used for Birgitta's canonization and the early lives of the Saint. Because it reproduces her voice so exactly, here is Sr. Patricia speaking about the meaning of her pilgrimage to Santiago (I apologize that it is translated from Swedish into Norwegian and then into English. Something, of course, is lost):

"The trip across Europe was crucial for Birgitta. Out there in the big world she discovered that the Church was in terrible shape. Home in Sweden, priestly immorality was an exception, but now she saw monks who lived together with mistresses and their children. Monks who had promised God a life of chastity, poverty and obedience in their convent, neglected their duties and set a poor example for others. They broke their promise! Birgitta's entire life had been lived with men involved with the law, and she had imbibed the ideal of faithfulness and had learned to reject deceit. She was deeply shocked. Her whole being was wounded. How could anyone break a promise given to God?"

In brief, this is a book that will orient the beginner into the life and teaching of the Saint. It is written with admirable simplicity. I understand why it was translated from Norwegian

into Swedish and hope that it will also appear in English. Long sections of Birgitta's own writing appear and also we hear some of the Vadstena locals speaking and interpreting Birgitta for us. The book might seem less exceptional were it not for the fact that Birgitta has had a hard time with her biographers. Some of them have been maudlin in their sentimentality, others have been rather cold and distant. Some of them have simply not known enough to have attempted to write the story of her life. At long last, here is the right book.

A friend who visited Sweden last summer was overwhelmed by the number of newly published books on Birgitta. She felt she could not afford even those which had special interest for her (textiles). The third, and very expensive book, that I bought was *Birgitta of Vadstena* edited by Per Beskow and Annette Landon. The book is divided into a number of sections: Birgitta's Revelations, Birgitta's world of ideas, Birgitta as a pilgrim etc. There are also sections dealing with the Bridgettine Sisters. It is beautifully illustrated.

I found very interesting the sections on the history of the editions of the Revelations and the manuscripts of the book. Only a few pages remain, written in Birgitta's own hand. In 1377 a text was prepared for Birgitta's canonization. The first printed edition dates to 1492. The Ghotan edition continued to be published to 1680. Errors continued to multiply, I have a copy of this older edition and find it interesting to compare it with the urtext edition which has been being published in Sweden and now is complete. One of the finest manuscripts is in the Morgan Library in New York. The Sisters are sponsoring a new translation of the complete Revelations into English.

Tore Nyberg writes of Birgitta as a politician. Birgitta was a member of the aristocracy, that is of a family which had risen from the "bond" class at some point and now vied for power with the royal family. The new nobil-

ity thought that they represented the common people. Her relations with King Magnus are complicated. After she was in Rome his reign was toppled. He would be the last native Swedish king (his son held part of Sweden for a time) before the dread Gustav Vasa. (Of whom more next year). In international relationships, she worked to end the war between France and England to bring the Pope back to Rome from Avignon.

The book ends with a strange chapter: "Birgitta, a saint of the Swedish Church" written by Martin Lind, State Church Bishop of Linköping. Lind points out that Birgitta is certainly a Swedish woman and part of the Swedish religious history. "Her prayers are prayed by the faithful in Sweden belonging to widely differing confessions." Lind says that today Birgitta is an ecumenical inspiration, she is a pioneer in her views of men and women. She may be compared to Dag Hammarskjöld who was both a mystic and a political figure. Birgitta as a Lutheran. Of course Luther considered her crazy and the reformers did all they could to erase her memory from the land.

On the other hand in the twentieth century Birgitta was the great inspiration of the Swedish high church movement. Vadstena was also the center of interest for medievalists. Nathan Söderblom first claimed her for the Swedish Church but with more enthusiasm than knowledge. On the other hand his son-in-law Yngve Brilioth discussed the heritage from Birgitta with real understanding.

This brings us to the last book about Birgitta we will discuss. When I was in Lutheran Seminary a sainted Professor, Carl Anderson, suggested that I read J. Lindblom's book on Old Testament Prophecy. In 1962 he published a more important treatment of that subject in English, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*. I recommend the book for its insights into the Prophets but it is also of interest for a section in which he compares Birgitta to the Prophets

and especially for his consideration of what he calls the literature of revelation. I found it interesting that Per Beskow also refers to this book in his essay on Birgitta. Lindblom is interested in the descriptions of how Birgitta received her revelations. They illuminate for him the way the Old Testament figures received their visions. Birgitta also seems to equate intellectual inspirations with spiritual visions. She did not use drugs to enter into a trance. Some of her visions are less interesting than others and she exhibits at times the "prurigo loquendi" (itch to talk). Bishop Wadsworth wrote that she exhibits a moral sense like the Old Testament prophets. Lindgren writes "there are few who have so great an affinity with the prophets of the Old Testament as Birgitta of Sweden."

Birger Bergh, *Heliga Birgitta*, Lund, 2002

Per Beskow and Annette Landen (ed.), *Birgitta of Vadstena*, Stockholm, 2003.

Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, 1967.

Helge Nordahl, *Den Heliga Birgitta*, Malmö, 2003.

Gunnel Vallquist

"What are we really waiting for?" was the impatient and provocative title on the small in size but rich in content book that was published this year. The author: Gunnel Vallquist who for decades has been a strong and independent Catholic voice in Sweden/ The book contains essays and speeches on Christian Unity given between 1968 and 2002. It speaks of the sin of disunity in which we live.

It was Vallquist who introduced many Swedes to Vatican II. In four books she portrayed its Twentieth Century background and the activities at the Council. She had lived through the pre-council time and had been engaged with contemporary theological development.

STATISTICS FOR SCANDINAVIA

	Denmark	Finland	Iceland	Oslo	Tromsö	Trondheim	Stockholm
Population	5,471,210	5,194,901	288,201	3,191,800	462,711	637,400	8,940,788
Catholics	35,048	8,274	5,211	38,739	1,651	3,228	144,000
Protestants	4,532,635	4,431,539	270,000	2,900,000	420,615	600,000	7,630,800
Orthodox	926	56,184	205	1,000		150	134,800
Jewish	3,000	1,170	20	800		156	10,923
Mohammedan	160,000	2,104	165	50,000	200	200	100,000
Bishops	2	1	1	2	1	1	3
Priests	80	17	11	46	8	5	155
Secular Priests	33	7	6	19	2	4	77
Religious Priests	47	10	5	27	6	1	78
Deacons	4	1	0	4		1	21
Brothers and Male Religious	4	1	0	31	8	1	15
Religious Orders of Men	6	1	4	7	1	1	12
Sisters and Female Religious	231	36	37	187	24	21	222
Religious Orders of Women	19	4	5	10	3	4	20
Parishes	51	7	4	20	7	5	41
Churches and Chapels	65	10	13	51	16	10	74
Catholic Schools	24	0	1	3	0	0	6
Students (Catholic)	1368	0	30	900	0	0	943
Baptisms	644	159	120	611	25	37	1,078
Confirmations	449	116	59	415	11*	28	565
Marriages	123	39	23	11	8	10	290
Ordinations to the Priest- hood		0	1	1	0	1	5
Deaths	307	26	7	116	3	8	

*Includes five conversions.

Statistics for Denmark are old, as no material was provided this year.

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 people 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 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.

-Father Titus Cranny, S.A., National Director of Unity Apostolate,
Graymoor (with permission of superiors)



NIELS STENSEN

The Scientist who was Beatified



Hans Kermit

Cover of Hans Kermit's study on Niels Stensen, reviewed on page 36. Reproduced courtesy of Gracewing.

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