

Sankt Sigfrids Eremitage

NEWSLETTER

Advent 2025



"Nisi Dominus aedificaverit domum, in vanum laboraverunt, qui aedificant eam." (ps. 126,1)
"Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain."

Dear Friends and Benefactors!

St. Sigfrid's Hermitage is the Lord's work. In countless ways, He has shown us in recent years, months and days that this is His will. Of course, God also wants us to cooperate with His grace. He demands self-sacrifice, generosity, magnanimity, courage and perseverance from us. But in the end, everything comes from Him, through the maternal hands of Mary, She who is the Mediatrix of all grace. Therefore, trust is perhaps the most important virtue on our way to heaven. Especially when we are faced with adversity and trials, it is important not to give up, but to entrust ourselves with confidence to God's fatherly goodness and care. The trials have certainly not spared us, but the grace that followed was all the greater. All who have accompanied me on this journey have experienced how God has shown his loving closeness.

With a grateful heart, I would like to share with you in this Newsletter the events of the past few weeks and the establishment of St. Sigfrid's Hermitage on Kinnekulle. A historical event, certainly. But these days were also marked by great simplicity and joy, and during this Advent season, I cannot help but think of how the little Child Jesus was born, in the dark and silent night, far away from the noise of this

world. Mary and Joseph also look upon the birth of St. Sigfrid's Hermitage with joy, I imagine, and somewhere high up in the sky above Kinnekulle, an angel is singing: *'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.'* Merry Christmas to you all!



CHRONICLE

5 November: Early in the morning, the removal van arrives. Philip and Carl-Jesper have offered to help with the move. After Holy Mass, we load everything onto the van. At around 11 o'clock, we are ready to begin 'the great Exodus'. Our first stop is Götene, where a final and important meeting is planned with the real estate agent and the sellers. But first we visit Götene's medieval church, where St Helena's finger is venerated and where our good friend John Bogärde is buried in the cemetery. We ask for their prayers and help. Then it's time to complete the property purchase with the estate agent. Of course, there has to be a little excitement now too. At first, the estate agent can't get hold of the contact person at the bank, and when he finally does, there are suddenly technical problems with the banking system that is supposed to transfer



the money. But after a few exorcism prayers, a lot of patience and also many interesting conversations with the sellers, two hours later we finally receive the happy news that the operation has been successful. Thank God!
Together with the sellers, we then hurry to the new house, where they give me a quick tour and lots of practical information. Night falls quickly here and we have to hurry to unload everything.

But before we do that, it is of course appropriate to first thank the Lord and his Immaculate Mother: in the future chapel, we pray together. But then we must get to work. The most important thing is, of course, the altar, so that we can



celebrate the first Holy Mass the next day.
We end the day with a meal by candlelight and, with grateful hearts, we conclude this momentous but at the same time undramatic day.

6 November: The first Holy Mass is celebrated in the future chapel: *'Ecce nova facio omnia!'; 'Behold, I make all things new' (Rev. 21:5).*

7 November: I visit my neighbour, Birgitta. When she turns around and sees the silhouette of a black monk appear on the horizon in the light of the setting sun, she thinks she has ended up in a Bergman film and lets out a scream. But then she becomes very happy when she finds out that a monk is settling here. She says it is 'an answer to her prayer'. She and her husband are very devout and good people, and they will help me several times in the coming days.



Sunday 9/11: In Forshem's medieval church, we celebrate the first Sunday Mass on Kinnekulle. Forshem's church is, as far as we know, the only church in Scandinavia dedicated to the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Thanks to our good contacts with the Church of Sweden, we were allowed to borrow this fantastically beautiful church. Many friends are attending this Mass, and afterwards everyone is invited to the Hermitage for coffee and a guided tour. In the afternoon, we will have a short prayer in the Hermitage chapel. The statue of St. John the Baptist, which I received from John Bogårde before he passed away, is blessed. He wanted it to be placed in the future chapel of the hermitage. Thank you for this wonderful and grace-filled day!



10 November: Important work today. Before winter arrives, I must install the winter windows to insulate the cottage. This is done in the traditional way with cotton wool, rolled up in newspaper and decorated with everlasting flowers. Then the windows are sealed with



window strips dipped in milk.

12/11: Kjell-Agne arrives in the afternoon to help with an important task: removing all the autumn leaves from the roof and gutters. We carry out our work in pouring rain. At least this has the advantage that we can check whether the gutters are working properly...

17/11: I receive a very nice bicycle from the Wicks family, which is blessed after today's Mass.

18/11: Two visitors today: Lotte, who is an architect and wants to help with the building permit for the future chapel. This has to be reapplied for, as the previous owners did not renew it. And then the chimney sweep who checks the chimney and both the fireplace and the kitchen stove in the cottage: he does not unfortunately approve any of them.



That same evening, the electric boiler in the new house also stops working. And then it starts snowing!

19/11: The problem with the electric boiler is solved. And there is also good news about the stoves: Tor, who is a stove builder, comes to visit and gives me tips on how I can easily fix the stove so that it can be used without any problems. He explains how I can rebuild it next spring. According to him, it's a simple matter. We also take a tour together and he gives me lots of practical tips for maintenance and renovation.

On the same day, we contact the municipality regarding the building permit. They are aware of our situation and are proving to be cooperative. However, they are asking us not to use the new house until it has been approved. Lotte also contacts Lennart Jons-son, who was the Construction Inspector for the previous owner, and he wants to be our Inspector too. He will contact a Constructor who can help us.

20/11: Today, I am taking all the measurements in the new house and making drawings. It is important to know whether the existing house matches the drawings approved by the municipality. There are some deviations, but none of them are significant.

21/11: A flagpole is delivered today. It will be erected in the spring. This gives us enough time to find the right spot on the property.

First trip with the new bicycle to Götene. Very fitting with a bicycle brand called 'Eli-na'... The first stop is the medieval church in Götene, where I venerate St. Elin's finger.



However, the trip through the snow was much more difficult and longer than expected. Especially on the way back, I realise that I really do live on a mountain...

25/11: Kjell-Agne and Björn come on a 'work visit': we move the altar and all the other stuff into the cottage. Starting tomorrow, I will celebrate Mass here so that we can begin work on the new house soon. The attic is furnished as a sacristy after we have moved away a lot of beds and other furniture. Thank you for your help!



In the afternoon, we take a short trip to the highest point on Kinnekulle, where there is a beautiful view of Lake Vänern.

2/12: As of today, St. Sigfrid's Hermitage is on Google Maps. Hopefully, it will be easier to find us now: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/ef95nuT-Vi5ZUfXkJ9>



Today, I am also submitting two applications for cultural grants from the Regional Council for my artistic work at my atelier Sankt Eriks Konstverkstad. The chances of receiving such a grant are slim. But nothing ventured, nothing gained. And who knows, maybe our region will want to support my work... As for my workshop, I have now slowly started to work again. But there is so much work in other areas that there is not much time left. However, I hope to start some new projects soon, especially the interior design of the new chapel.



4.

5/12: Finally, our letterbox is hung up. But there is still a problem with the post, as it turns out that my official address is wrong and needs to be changed. The official address is now: "Fullösa Skogslund 1, 533 94 Hällekis".

6/12: A missing gutter on the cottage is installed. And we really need it now that it has stopped snowing but is raining so much. And it's Advent! 'Rorate coeli desuper et nubes pluant justum'.



7/12: After Sunday Mass, the new house is blessed and we take a tour around the new house (the first of 7 around our little 'Jericho') to ask God for help in all practical matters concerning building permits and construction.

8/12: Today, some good friends are driving long kilometres through the dark and rainy night to be able to attend a sung Holy Mass in the evening in honour of the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

Most days, however, I celebrate Holy Mass alone, without visitors.

It is important to understand that the whole Church, both in heaven, in purgatory and on earth, is present when a priest celebrates Mass. The Mass is the renewal of Christ's Sacrifice on the Cross, and there is no greater Sacrifice, no greater Prayer than the Son's Sacrifice to the Father.

Pope Paul VI writes to the Carthusians:

'True solitude (...) prepare in a very special way the soul of a priest to offer lovingly and fervently the Eucharistic sacrifice (...). And also when one considers that to the priesthood the monk adds that full gift of self whereby he is consecrated to God, it is clear that he is thereby most intimately configured with Christ the priest and the victim. (...) The universal intention present in every Eucharistic sacrifice becomes the proper intention of each monk as he celebrates Mass.'



And I think these words of Pope Pius XI to the Carthusians are also very important: *'It is easy to understand how they who assiduously fulfill the duty of prayer and penance contribute much more to the increase of the Church and the welfare of mankind than those who labor in tilling the Master's field; for unless the former drew down from heaven a shower of divine graces to water the field that is being tilled, the evangelical laborers would reap in truth from their toil a more scanty crop.'*

This chronicle of many small and large events does not allow us therefore to forget that my most important task is to pray, hidden from the eyes of the world, but close to the Hearts of God and Mary. Every night I get up to pray the Night Office and then seven more times during the day, according to the Rule of Saint Benedict. At the centre is the daily Mass. And of course also the daily rosary, interior prayer and Lectio Divina. In my heart, I carry all your intentions and all the holy intentions of this world. However, **without your help, I cannot fulfil this calling.** I am therefore grateful to everyone who supports me in prayer or helps me materially or financially.

Especially in the beginning and in this winter season, the maintenance costs are high. In addition, we hope to begin work on the future chapel soon. In the coming weeks, we will be making some drawings, which we hope to present in the next Newsletter. Thank you very much for considering a donation through one of the channels below.

With a heart full of gratitude for the past few weeks, I wish you all a blessed continuation of Advent and a peaceful and blessed Christmas.

I pray for you all and humbly ask you to pray for me as well,

Fr. Bengt osb

*My grateful prayers go
out to all of you!
Fr. Bengt osb*

Visit our website: <https://sankt-sigfrids-eremitage.se/>

Visit our workshop's website: <https://sankt-eriks-konstverkstad.se/>



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