

# Sankt Sigfrids Eremitage

## NEWSLETTER

*Lent 2026*



Dear Friends and Benefactors!

A year ago, on the feast day of Saint Sigfrid, 15 February 2025, I presented my project to you: Saint Sigfrid's Hermitage! My dream was to acquire my own hermitage, a place where I could fulfil my monastic and hermitic vocation according to a vision that I have carried deep in my heart for years like a burning fire. God willed that St Sigfrid's Hermitage should become a meeting place between what is most Catholic and what is most Swedish. A place where God is worshipped and where people find salvation and peace for their souls. A place where the traditional Catholic liturgy and Swedish culture meet in harmonious unity. A place where the radical message of the Gospel and the beauty of creation can bring people closer to God. Finally, a place dedicated to the glory of Mary, Queen of the North, and all the saints of Sweden. In other words: a place where 'the mighty stream, the holy stream of the crystal-clear waters of truth, which for centuries has flowed through the ancient land of legends' (Msgr. D. Assarsson) can burst forth into new life.

Let me be clear on one point in this regard: St Sigfrid's Hermitage is not about romantic reverie, but about the glory of God and the eternal salvation of souls!

Although I was firmly convinced that this calling came from God, I could never have imagined that He would bless St Sigfrid's Hermitage so abundantly. But the fact is that God always blesses our small sacrifices with an abundance of grace.

And now I am sitting here writing to you from this wonderfully beautiful place on Kinnekulle, right in the spiritual heart of Sweden. Who could have imagined this a year ago? Nothing is permanent here on earth, but the grace of being able to live at the place God has chosen for me fills my heart with gratitude. Yes, I am deeply happy here. However, as I said, this is not about me, but about God and the souls. In the short time I have lived here, I have already witnessed on several occasions how St Sigfrid's Hermitage is an instrument of God's grace in people's souls. My humble gratitude goes to God, but also to all of you. Without your support, this would not have been possible! St Sigfrid's Hermitage became a reality because you believed in it and were inspired by the same ideals, thanks to your fervent prayers and your support.

But our shared journey has only just begun. I would therefore like to humbly appeal to your generosity as we look to the future. St Sigfrid's Hermitage receives no financial support from the Church or the state and is entirely dependent on your contributions and the modest work that I myself can carry out here. Please find all the practical information on the last page of this Newsletter.



2.

There are many projects underway, but the priority is, of course, to give God the glory that is due to Him. The coming months will therefore be devoted entirely to the interior decoration of the future chapel.

We are currently fully occupied with the preparations (which you can also read about in this Letter), but I am looking forward to presenting the project to you after Easter. I can already reveal that it is looking really good!

Of course, there have also been many difficult trials over the past year. But this, too, is a fact: great works are never achieved without trials. The greatest work in history, namely the salvation of all humanity, came about solely through the death of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ on the Cross. And as I reflect in my heart on the events of the past year, I cannot shake off the impression of how much the Way of the Cross and the mystery of Easter are repeated in our lives.

I would therefore like to conclude with the words that Father Joseph Maria Nilsson OFM Conv. recently wrote to me. Father Joseph Maria has been my spiritual guide in recent years and has proved to be an immense support. He gave me permission to share these comforting words with you.

*”Dear Father Bengt!*

*I am convinced – and I have said this all along – that this hermitage and your calling to this life are God’s Will.*

*Everything will work out, but as I often say: the shadow of the Cross is present in everything that has to do with the Lord, but so too is the power of the Resurrection!*

*What is it that distinguishes a saint from someone who is not holy? Saints never give up! Neither should you.*

*It is God’s glory that is at stake here, and what you are doing now is for God’s glory. An altar server said recently: “We must strive to perform our service as perfectly as possible. God is worthy of it!”*

*Yes, dear brother, I bless you with these words: Do not give up – God is worthy of it!*

*In united prayer and with the wish for God’s blessing,*

*Fr. Joseph Maria”*

I wish you all a continued blessed Lent and, already now, a joyful Easter! With my grateful prayers,

Fr. Benedictus osb



## CHRONICLE

**14 December 2025, Gaudete Sunday:** From today, the Most Holy Sacrament is kept in the tabernacle of the chapel at St Sigfrid's Hermitage. To honour Our Lord in the Most Holy Sacrament and to thank Him for His coming, His 'Advent' on Kinnekulle, a time of adoration is held after Holy Mass, followed by the blessing with the Most Holy Sacrament.

**Christmas 2025:** The Nativity of the Lord is celebrated in all simplicity. A small group of the faithful gathers around the manger and, after singing Christmas Matins, Midnight Mass is celebrated, followed by a fraternal time around the Christmas table. After a short night's sleep, Dawn Mass is celebrated, at which we have the honour of welcoming the Hermitage's neighbour, Birgitta. From the very beginning, she proved to be a good friend and always willing to help.

**New Year's Eve, 31/12:** This night, I celebrate entirely alone with Our Lord. I begin with a time of adoration before the Most Holy Sacrament at 11.00 pm, followed by the Rosary, Matins, the Te Deum and the Blessing.

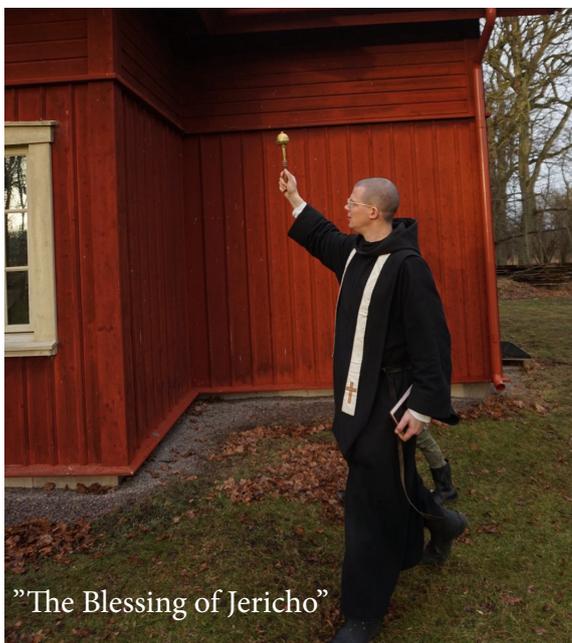
**January 2026:** This winter is particularly cold and there is a great deal of snow. The road up to the Hermitage is not cleared and I am snowed in for several weeks. My life is thus becoming even more hermitic. The few brave faithful who wish to attend Mass on Sunday make their way on foot through the deep snow to the Hermitage.

**Sunday 4 January:** If you recall, in the last Newsletter I spoke of the 'Blessing of Jericho' to ask for God's blessing upon the future chapel. The 'Blessing of Jericho' is not something found in the ritual... merely a pious invention... The Israelites conquered the city of Jericho (Joshua 6) through divine intervention rather than military superiority. They surrounded the city for seven days, and mar-



The sanctuary lamp shines in the dark night of Kinnekulle





”The Blessing of Jericho”



ched around it seven times on the seventh day. Then the city walls collapsed after the priests blew their trumpets and the people shouted. This marked the beginning of the conquest of Canaan. We therefore ask God to resolve all practical difficulties and obstacles concerning the future chapel, so that we may ‘take Jericho’, to the glory of Him, of Mary, and of all the saints of Sweden! Seven times in recent weeks I have blessed the house and walked around with holy water. Today it is time for the final, seventh blessing. For this occasion, a few faithful make their way all the way through the snow. Like the Israelites, we walk seven rounds on this final day. The procession is even accompanied by a friend who plays the trumpet whilst we walk round the house seven times, sing a hymn and sprinkle holy water. And of course, we don’t forget to shout either! We conclude with a prayer in front of the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary that was installed on the house.

**Sunday 11 January:** It gets so cold at night that the water in the pipes freezes. So for the next few days, I’ll have to fetch water in a bucket. Things we take for granted, like water coming out of the tap, are no longer a given here at the Hermitage. But these little trials allow us to grow in patience and trust.

**14 January:** After a long Epiphany blessing yesterday evening, the water came back this morning! In this life, one becomes so happy and grateful for very simple things!

**20 January:** After waiting for more than three months, I have finally received a reply today from the diocese regarding my application concerning my canonical situation. Unfortunately, the reply is not what I had hoped for. My monastic superiors wish that I should eventually become part of the diocese of Stockholm; but the diocese prefers that

I remain part of my monastic order. For my part, I simply wish to do God's will, and I pray that my superiors may find a solution.

**1 February:** Despite this uncertainty, my life continues calmly as usual. After several weeks' work, I finish a new bench for the chapel today.



**10 February, Saint Scholastica (Saint Benedict's twin sister):** The bishop invites me to the Diocesan Council so that I can explain my situation in more detail and answer questions. During the night, I make my way through the snow to the station and take the train to Stockholm, where I am to meet the Council in the afternoon. The Council stands by its decision. It is, however, a good opportunity to listen to the questions and concerns that have been raised. And this gives me the chance to think about a possible solution. The next day, I put forward a proposal that takes everyone's wishes into account and which everyone could agree to. Both the bishop and all my monastic superiors respond positively to my proposal. It will, however, take a little time to draw up and refine. But in principle, everyone has now approved it. Praise be to God! Thank you for continuing to pray for this intention!



**15 February:** Today marks the first anniversary of St Sigfrid's Hermitage. It is absolutely wonderful to be able to celebrate this first birthday on Kinnekulle, so close to Husaby, where St Sigfrid baptised Sweden's first Christian king.

**18 February:** Today we have a very important meeting with everyone responsible for the building permit and interior design of the





future chapel: two officials from the local Council, a building inspector, a structural engineer and our architect. We were a little worried that there might be major structural problems, but the meeting is going much better than expected. Everyone is proving to be very cooperative and accommodating. It doesn't seem there are any problems with converting the house into a chapel. There are a few challenges, but everything can be resolved. Thank God once again!



**2 March:** On the Hermitage grounds there is an old earth cellar that is even older than the cottage (from the 1850s) and is likely to have been built

sometime in the early 1800s. I'd never been inside before because the entrance was completely blocked by stones and earth. But today I'm going on a 'treasure hunt' and start by clearing the entrance. It's really exciting! Behind the entrance door is a small hallway, followed by a second door leading into a beautiful room, built from six large stone blocks. The entrances are carved entirely out of the stone blocks, and it is reminiscent of an ancient burial chamber. I am surprised by the good condition of the earth cellar. It is perfect for storing vegetables, fruit and other items. I reinstall the air pipe and ask the spiders and bats, kindly but firmly, to find themselves another home...



**3 March:** Now the earth cellar must be filled too! So I begin preparing to grow vegetables and potatoes. Although I realise it will be a lot of extra work on top of everything else I have to do, I decide to go ahead with it anyway. As a monk, it is important to be down-to-earth and, moreover, to be able to live off the work of one's hands. After all, even a monk is a son of Adam...

**4 March:** Due to melting snow and rain, the road up to the Hermitage has turned into a sort of huge mud puddle and it is almost impossible to drive up by car. So I set about a major 'Gulag-style' task, breaking large stones into small pieces which I place in the biggest potholes. Then I fetch gravel with the wheelbarrow and spread it over the road. It is only a tem-



porary solution, but for the time being it at least allows cars to drive up to the Hermitage again.

**5 March:** Another important task in the garden is pruning the trees and felling some of them. The previous owners left behind an old chainsaw, which allows me to get started on this work. But after a while, the chainsaw gives up. Unfortunately, it has broken down. I'll carry on using a hand saw and an axe. But then, a friend lends me his own chainsaw so that I can finish the job a little bit faster... But I will need to buy a new chainsaw. Thank you if you can contribute!

**5 March:** Late in the evening, I am visited by a group of young people who have come all the way from Stockholm on a 'pilgrimage for Sweden's conversion'. With devotion, they take part in Mass and the Office. Their hard work in the garden is also greatly appreciated! Together we chop wood for next winter.

One of the boys digs a hole in the ground for the foundation of the future flagpole. But after a few centimetres, he hits a rock. The hole is made bigger, but the rock keeps getting bigger too! Rather than a rock, it is probably the very bedrock on which the Hermitage stands. Kinnekulle has, of course, been known since ancient times for its fine rock types: slate, sandstone, limestone, etc., and there are many quarries here. The Hermitage is situated just outside Gössäter, which previously had a limestone quarry.

In any case, it is certainly a good thing that the Hermitage was not built on sand, but on the rock (Matt.7:24)!

**14 March:** Our friend Kristian is coming all the way from Skåne to carry out a 3D scan of the house, so that we have all the measurements, both inside and out. This is a great help to our architect, Lotte, who has now started work on the plans for the future chapel.

More on this soon!



# HELP

## SANKT SIGFRIDS EREMITAGE

*And contribute to Sweden's Catholic revival!*

*Foundation Sankt Sigfrids Eremitage*

*Stiftelse Sankt Sigfrids Eremitage is a registered Foundation (Org. No.: 802482-8199) and was established to support Father Bengt and the Hermitage's activities. Neither the Hermitage nor Father Bengt receive financial support and are entirely dependent on Father Bengt's manual work and your contributions.*

*The foundation works specifically to complete, maintain and preserve the Hermitage's chapel and house. The foundation uses donations exclusively for this purpose. You can support St. Sigfrid's Hermitage through a one-time donation or by becoming a monthly donor. Every gift, no matter how small, is greatly appreciated and is a sustainable investment in the Catholic renaissance in Sweden!*



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**Become a monthly donor:** <https://www.sankt-sigfrids-eremitage.se/stod/>

*Thank you to all our Benefactors,  
both known and unknown!*