

Sankt Sigfrids Ermitage

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2026



“It is God’s will that we should receive everything through Mary” (St Bernard of Clairvaux)

Dear Friends and Benefactors!

With all my heart, I wish you a **blessed Feast of the Assumption of Mary**, the oldest and most important of all Marian feasts. ‘Our Lady’s Day’ was a statutory public holiday in Sweden before the Reformation, and was marked by solemn Masses in the country’s churches and monasteries, by prayer and processions to honour Mary as Queen of Heaven. Close to St Sigfrid’s Hermitage lies Götene’s medieval church, which bears witness to the great devotion our people had for Mary. Her image, surrounded by sunstrays, adorns the church choir and serves as a constant reminder of her role as the Mediatrix of all graces. *“Nothing is given to us except through Mary, for God has ordained it so,”* writes Pope Leo XIII.

St Sigfrid’s Hermitage is Mary’s work. We have received everything from God through Mary’s merits and intercession. Everything belongs to her. Everything lies in her hands. We entrust to Mary and consecrate to her all the natural and supernatural goods of St Sigfrid’s Hermitage-past, present and future. In particular, we entrust to her the forthcoming works to be undertaken for



the **future chapel, dedicated to Mary, Queen of the North**, and to all the saints of Sweden. God willing, we hope to be able to begin the first phase of the works by the end of the year. We have already raised about half of the necessary funds, both through your generous donations and my own work in my art studio. At the moment, we are still short of around 500,000 SEK (45.500 euros) to be able to carry out the whole project. I would be very grateful if you would like to **contribute to this fantastic project**, either through a one-off donation or a monthly donation. Please do read more about the project on our website.

<https://www.sankt-sigfrids-eremitage.se/kapell/>



With this Newsletter, I would like to share the latest news from the Hermitage. I hope that in this way you too can share in my gratitude and joy at God’s ineffable goodness.

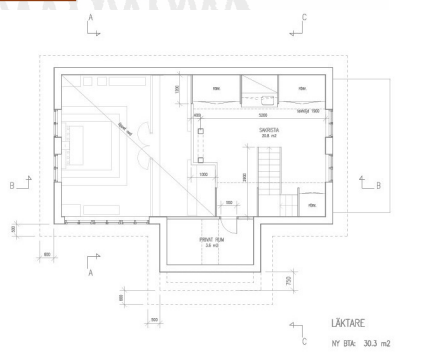
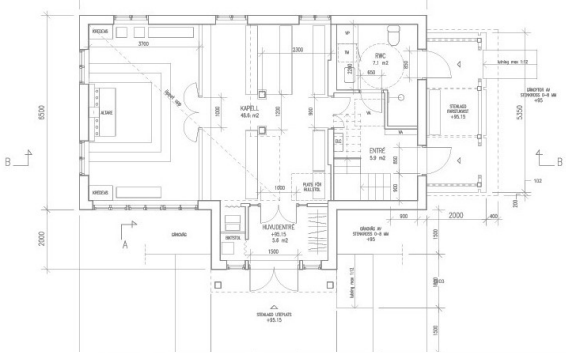
Through the Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary, Queen of the North, I offer my prayers before God’s throne and ask Him for His richest blessings upon all the Friends and Benefactors of St Sigfrid’s Hermitage.

With grateful regards,

Fr. Benedictus osb



HELP US BUILD
A CHAPEL
*In honour of God, Mary and all
the Saints of Sweden!*
<https://www.sankt-sigfrids-eremitage.se/kapell/>



CHRONICLE

Easter 2026 For the first time, we are celebrating the Easter Triduum at the Hermitage. Thanks to a small but very devoted group of young men, we are able to give these days a very special dignity, not least through the Tenebrae Officium, sung in its entirety.

The period after Easter and throughout spring is characterised by a wide variety of tasks in the garden. Here are just a few of the projects:

Winter is over, but we have run out of firewood, so it is wise to start preparing now for the coming winter. The Hermitage has received a large load of logs from Olle, ready to be sawn and split. A good new chainsaw was purchased for this purpose, which makes the work considerably easier. After a few weeks of hard work, most of the timber has been sawn into pieces. But another problem arises, namely a lack of space to store the firewood. So I'm starting to build a woodshed using old wooden planks. With a neat coat of Falun paint, it looks brilliant. The doors and roof of the workshop building are also being repainted, and a few missing wooden panels are being replaced.





Another major project is growing my own vegetables and herbs. I started sowing seeds in the greenhouse a while ago: turnips, onions, leeks, kale, red cabbage, peppers, chillies, chives, coriander, tomatoes, lettuce, carrots, basil... Now it's time to start preparing the vegetable patch. The existing small vegetable garden is being ploughed and weeded, and then expanded by removing a whole section of lawn. Then it's time to make raised beds. I'm building wooden frames and starting to dig, dig, dig (at least I can't say, like the steward in the Gospel: *'I am not strong enough to dig'* Luke 16:3...) and mix the soil with compost and garden waste. And finally, all that remains is to plant the little plants and, every day, water them and protect them with great care against pests and weeds.

Spring transforms the surroundings into a little paradise. As this is my first spring here, I discover new flowers and plants every day: marigold lilies, daylilies, columbines, wild roses, Lily of the Valley and St Peter's keys, and many other varieties of *'lilies and columbines, roses and salvias, sweet spearmint and heartsease!'* I find myself right in the middle of this famous Swedish springsong!

Even the birds are building their nests in the many bird boxes. Swallows, in particular, appreciate these luxurious little houses under the roof.

Once the thaw has set in, the farmer begins to sow and fertilise the large field next to the Hermitage, and the surrounding meadows are now filled with grazing cows. They all pop by to say hello to their new neighbour. Every morning and evening, I also get a visit from a hungry hare. He seems to particularly fancy my young cabbages and lettuce. But after a friendly chat, we agree that he can eat all the greenery, except for my vegetables. He sticks to this agreement, although I play it safe and protect my vegetables with crop cover...

With spring, of course, comes a whole host of other gardening tasks, such as mowing the lawn and weeding.



1 May: After the Mass in the evening, a long-awaited moment has finally arrived: the blessing of the flagpole and the Swedish flag, as well as the first flag-raising at the Hermitage. With great joy, we sing in unison the Swedish flag song: *'Blaze proudly against the dark clouds, like a glimmer of the summer sun!'*



18 May: Today we celebrate Saint Eric, Sweden's patron saint. He is also the patron saint of my art studio. And today, of all days, I receive some very surprising news. The Västra Götaland Region has contacted me to inform me that I have been awarded this year's Skaraborg Scholarship for my artistic work in <https://www.sankt-eriks-konstverkstad.se/> The Skaraborg Cultural Grant is a grant awarded by the Västra Götaland Region to reward, support and encourage initiatives in various fields of art and culture (visual artists, writers, dancers, actors, musicians, craftspeople, directors,...)

From among those nominated for the cultural grants (more than 1,000 candidates this year!), one person with links to Skaraborg is selected to receive a special grant from the Skaraborg Jubilee Fund. I must honestly admit that I was very surprised by this news. However, I am very grateful for this recognition from our region, as my connection to the cultural and religious heritage of Västra Götaland and Sweden has always been very important in my monastic life and artwork. In any case, it is an encouragement to continue with what I am doing and yet further proof that God is blessing St Sigfrid's Hermitage.



30 May: From the very beginning, I have consecrated the Hermitage to the Blessed Virgin Mary and entrusted everything to her motherly care. But I also wanted to make this public. After preparing ourselves with a novena, we conclude the Month of Mary at the Hermitage with a solemn Mass in honour of Mary, followed by a Marian procession and the Coronation of Mary. Finally, I recite the Consecration Prayer aloud, in which we consecrate all the Hermitage's material and immaterial goods to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Now it is done! Nothing can happen to us any longer: everything is in Mary's hands! She takes care of everything! What a sense of security, joy and peace it is not to have to worry about anything!

9 June: Today, the presentation of my cultural scholarship takes place in Gothenburg. We are treated to speeches, music and refreshments. I feel a little out of my depth amongst all these artists and politicians, but I've been able to make contacts that will hopefully open up new opportunities for my art studio. The Culture Committee's citation was actually very lovely and moving:

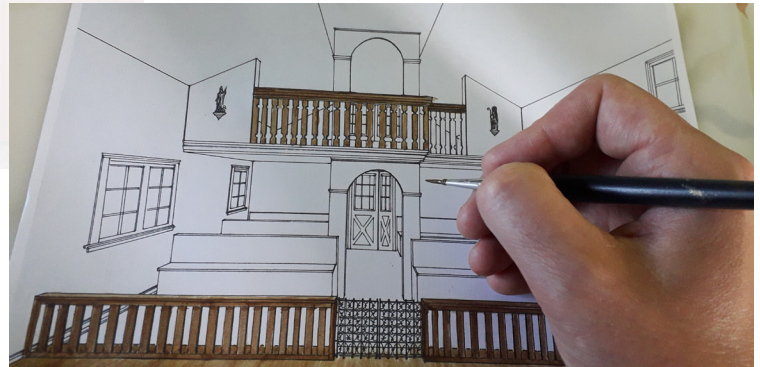
'In (fr. Bengt's) distinctive artistic practice, craftsmanship, historical roots and vivid storytelling come together. Drawing inspiration from, amongst other things, Västergötland's rich cultural heritage, he preserves and revitalises a visual language that would otherwise risk being lost, creating works that embody both history and the present. His work builds bridges between the past and the present and demonstrates how tradition can be a source of ongoing creativity.'

I am currently working on several new projects, including a wooden home altar featuring a Birgitta cross, a wooden relief to be mounted above the front door of the cottage, and a wooden coat of arms.



12 June: On the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, it is with great joy that I present our future project: Nordens Drottningens kapell, a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of the North, and all the saints of Sweden! At present, I am saying the Office and celebrating Mass in the living room. But now we wish to complete and furnish the chapel at St Sigfrid's Hermitage, so that I may have a place where I can offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and pray the Office with dignity, and where it is also possible to receive visitors.

Over the past few weeks, there has been a great deal of work involved in preparing our application for planning permission. In particular, I must mention Lotte, who is a qualified architect and has devoted a great deal of time to producing the architectural drawings. My thanks also go to Ernesto, a fire safety engineer, who has drawn up a fire safety specification. There were also many others involved: the building contractor, the structural engineer, the local council's building committee, the building inspector, and others. I myself have made a few drawings to give an idea of what the chapel will look like. I also painted the first sketches for the future murals. Our project plan can be found on our website: <https://www.sankt-sigfrids-eremitage.se/kapell/> or on our fundraising page: <https://gofund.me/e808ae696>. Thank you for all your support!



25 July: Today we're holding our first Work Day! Around ten volunteers are coming to help with various tasks at the Hermitage: gardening, picking berries, sewing, but above all a major summer project: preparing the cottage for painting. Using ladders and brushes, all the old paint is being stripped away and the window frames are being sanded down. The day is also filled with communal prayer and pleasant socialising in the evening. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who helped out!



August: The summer work continues with repairs to the cottage's door and all the windows. A number of missing façade panels and window frames also need to be re-carpentered and fitted. Then it's time to paint everything: the façades with traditional light red distemper, and the door and windows with wheat-grey or oxide-green linseed oil paint.

In July and August, it's also time to start harvesting. The first growing season at the Hermitage has gone surprisingly well. I started with turnips, cherries, lettuce and various herbs. Then came the gooseberries and blackcurrants. The new potato patch has also produced a very good harvest. In August, I harvest the onions and the first tomatoes. There are peppers too, but they're proving to be a bit more tricky.

In any case, it is with great gratitude that, in keeping with tradition, we can offer and bless the first harvest to the Lord on the Feast of the Assumption of Mary.

I would like to conclude by once again expressing my gratitude to everyone who has helped me over the past few months, whether through prayer or through practical or financial support. God is truly good, and we do everything for His glory.

With warm fraternal greetings and my prayers for each and every one of you,

Fr. Benedictus osb



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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S Sigfrids Eremitage



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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!*