

Saint Bridget

- Feastday: July 23
- Patron Saint of: Sweden
- Birth: 1303
- Death: July 23, 1373
- Canonized: by Pope Boniface IX in 1391
- Suggested further reading: *Revelations of St. Bridget: On the Life and Passion of Our Lord and the Life of His Blessed Mother*



"There is no sinner in the world, however much at enmity with God, who cannot recover God's grace by recourse to Mary, and by asking her assistance."



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Saint Bridget was born into a pious family in Sweden. From her youth, she was devoted to the Passion of Jesus. In one instance, she received a vision of Christ crucified and heard him say, "Look at me, my daughter." Distressed, she cried, "Who has treated you like this?" Jesus answered, "Those who despise me and refuse my love for them."

As was common in the Middle Ages, 14-year-old Bridget married an 18-year-old man named Ulf. The young couple both had set their sights on serving God, and they welcomed eight children during their marriage, one of whom would become St. Catherine of Sweden.

Bridget and Ulf were called to serve the Swedish court, and Bridget acted as the queen's personal maid. In this position, she always strived to help King Magnus and Queen Blanche lead better lives.

In the year 1344, Ulf became very ill and died soon after. Devastated, Bridget spent long hours in prayer by Ulf's grave. She is noted to have said of her late husband, "I loved him like my own body."

God continued to work through Bridget, and at 41 years old, He called her to form a new religious order. This group eventually expanded into an Order known as the Bridgetines.

In a vision, Christ appeared to her and asked her to go to Rome and wait there in prayer until she got the pope to return from France to Rome. So in 1350, a year of jubilee, Bridget braved a plague-stricken Europe to make a dangerous pilgrimage. She spent the rest of her life in suffering, living in Rome and speaking out for reform in the Church. She sent many messages to kings and popes, pleading with them to redirect their work toward the Church's teachings. After a long life of faithfully serving the Lord, Bridget died in Rome in July of 1373.