

AFTER MASS. From the Writings of Saint Ambrose

Pierce my flesh with the nails of your fear. Psalm 118 : 120

O how divine is the mystery contained in the Cross, where weakness is held fast and strength released, where sin is nailed down and the sign of victory raised aloft! In this mystery lies the explanation of the psalmists's cry: *Pierce my flesh with the nails of your fear.* It is not a prayer for nails of iron, but a plea to be penetrated by the spirit of reverence and trust, because virtue is able to construct a stronger fabric than punishment can ever produce. It was faith that constrained Peter to follow our Lord into the courtyard of the high priest's palace; no one had arrested him. Nor could any torture sever the bonds of faith that held him fast to Christ. Later, when the Jewish authorities had bound Peter with chains, it was prayer that set him free. Once again, no sentence could hold him captive, because he had not renounced his Lord.

You also, then, must nail your sins to the Cross, so that you may die to sin. Anyone who dies to sin lives to God. May your life henceforth be lived for him who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to death in order to crucify our sinful passions in his Son's body. To make us living members of that body, Christ died for us and came to life again. It was not our life, therefore, but our guilt, that died in him. Scripture tells us that he bore our sins in his own body on the Cross, so that we might be released from our sins to live in holiness; by his wounds we have been healed.

And so, like a ship bearing us to safety, the wooden beam of the Cross offers us a passage to life, not to penal servitude. Unless we embark on this voyage to eternal salvation, we shall find no other way to be saved. But by seeking out death in this way, I do not feel it; by thinking little of hardship, I do not suffer; and by ignoring fear, I do not experience it.

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FESTA OCTOBRIS

8. S. Birgittæ, Viduæ



*Grant through her loving intercession,
that we thy servants may rejoice with gladness
when thine everlasting glory is revealed.*

2010

SAINT BRIDGET of SWEDEN, Widow
(1302-1373)

Saint Bridget was born into the Swedish royal family in the year 1302, the daughter of very virtuous Christian parents. More than one prophetic episode attended the birth of Bridget, “whose voice would be heard with admiration by the entire world,” according to a bishop of her country. Curiously, for three years she said not a word, then began to speak with facility and clarity, like persons of mature years. At the age of seven, after her mother had died, she beheld the Mother of God, who presented her with a beautiful crown. She became sober, modest, candid, humble, and peaceful. At the age of ten she saw Our Lord as He was on the Cross, and she began to meditate constantly on the mysteries of the Passion, while occupying herself exteriorly with needlework.

In obedience to her father, she was married to Prince Ulpho of Sweden. Saint Bridget became the mother of eight children, four boys and four girls, one of whom, Saint Catherine of Sweden, is honored as a Saint. Their four sons died young, two during one of the crusades. After some years she and her husband separated by mutual consent; he entered the Cistercian Order, where he died thirty years before his holy spouse. After his death, her life became still more austere; for her guide she had a celebrated Doctor of Theology, a Canon of the cathedral of Linköping. Severe for herself, Saint Bridget remained gentle for the poor and nourished twelve persons every day, serving them herself; she established hospices for the sick and the convalescent. She founded the Order of the Holy Saviour for sixty nuns, at the Abbey of Wastein or Wadstena in Sweden.

Saint Bridget received a series of sublime revelations, all of which she scrupulously submitted to the judgment of her confessor. During a famous pilgrimage which she made to Rome at the command of her Lord, He dictated to her the “Fifteen Prayers of Saint Bridget,” in honor of His Passion. Saint Bridget also went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land with her daughter, Saint Catherine, and amid the very scenes of the Passion was further instructed in the sacred mysteries. She died in Rome, after her return from this pilgrimage, in 1373.

Ps 44 : 8

Communion

KNEEL

Thou hast loved justice and hated iniquity : therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness, above thy fellows.

Comm. 4.
D I-le-xí- sti * justí- ti- am, et o-
dí- sti in-i-qui-tá- tem : pro-ptér- e-
a unxit te De- us, De- us tu- us.

Tonus VIII G

*Di-le- | xísti justítiam, et odísti iniqui- | tá-tem : *
proptérea únxit te Deus, Deus tuus oleo lætitiæ /
præ consor- | tí-bus tu-is.*

After reading the Communion Verse, the Priest returns to the center of the altar. As he begins the Dominus vobiscum, STAND.

Postcommunio

THou hast filled thy household, O Lord, with holy gifts : do thou cherish us always, through the intercession of her whose festival we are keeping. Through our Lord.

Conclusio

VIII
I - te mis- sa est.
R. De- o grá- ti- as.

After chanting Deo gratias, KNEEL for the Blessing.

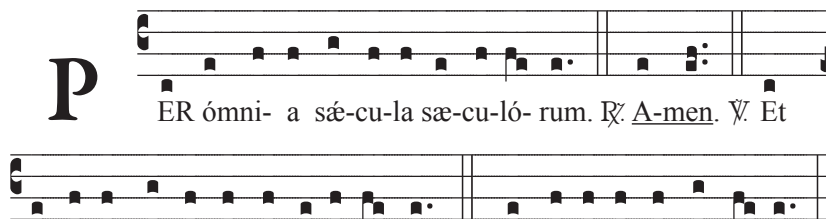
After the Blessing, STAND for the Last Gospel.

GENUFLECT with the Priest at the words, “et incarnatus est . . .”.

STAND as the Priest and ministers depart.

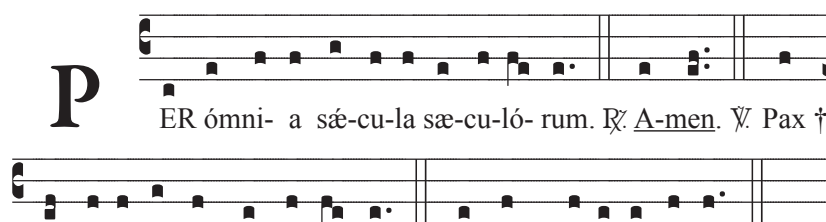
STAND

Ad Pater noster



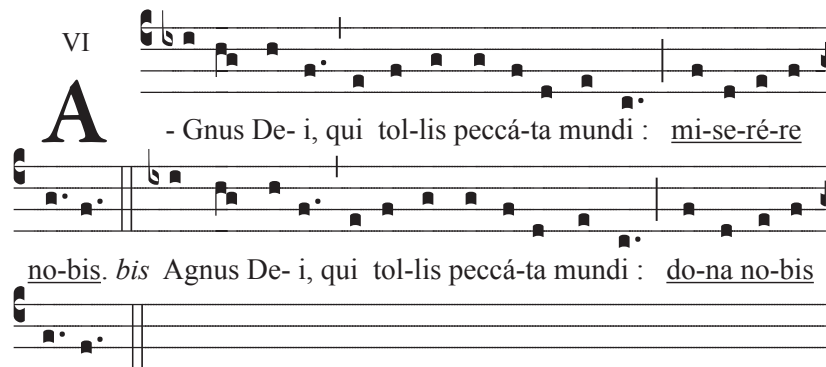
ne nos in-dú-cas in tenta-ti- ó- nem. R̃. Sed lí-be-ra nos a ma- lo.

Ante Agnus Dei



Dó-mi-ni sit semper vo-bis-cum. R̃. Et cum spí-ri- tu tu- o.

Agnus Dei



pa-cem. **KNEEL** at the conclusion of the *Agnus Dei*.

Domine, non sum dignus

Dómine, non sum dignus, / ut intres sub tectum meum : /
sed tantum dic verbo, / et sanábitur ánima mea.

S. Birgittæ, Viduæ

III classis

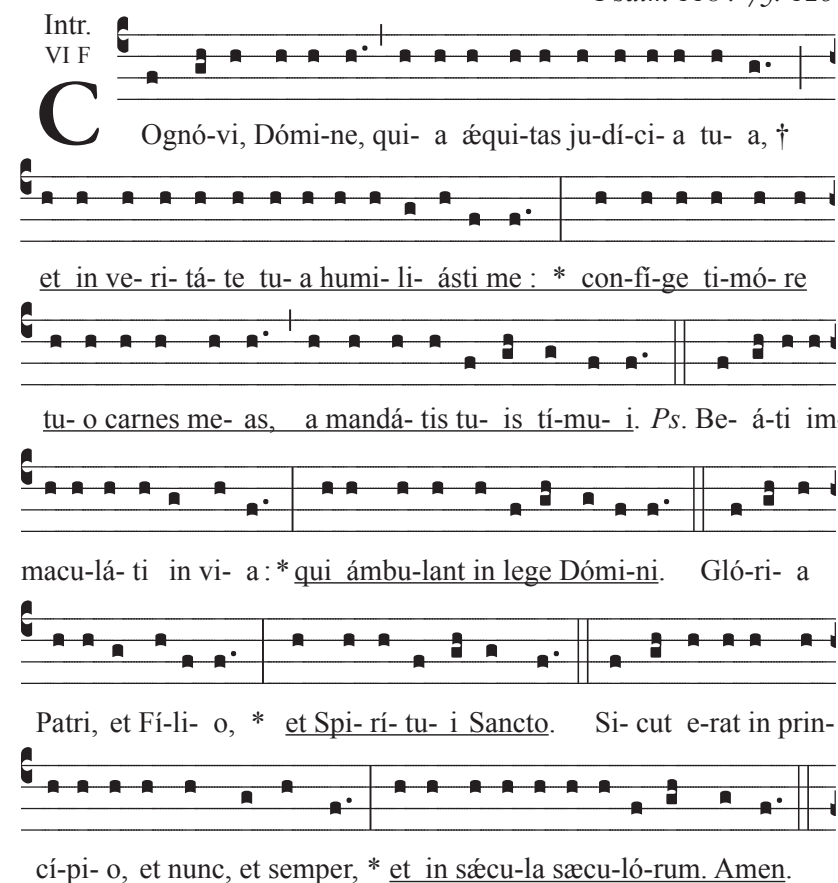
The widow is no longer attached to things earthly, she expects nothing more from the world, her care and longing is for the Lord. The Christian who is deeply rooted in things eternal receives the visitations of God with resignation. He knows that suffering and poverty are excellent means to tear one loose from the world. Salutary fear of God is the greatest protection from sin.

Introitus

STAND

I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are just, and in thy truth thou hast humbled me : pierce thou my flesh with thy fear : indeed do I dread thy judgments. Ps. Blessed are the undefiled in the way : who walk in the law of the Lord. Glory be. I know, O Lord.

Psalm 118 : 75. 120



The antiphon is repeated recto tono by all :

Cognóvi, Dómine, quia æquitas judícia tua, / et in veritáte tua humi-
líasti me : / confíge tímóre tuo carnes meas, / a mandátis tuis tí-mu-i.

STAND

Kyrie

VIII
K Y-ri- e * e- lé- i- son. *ij.* Christe e- lé- i-
 son. *ij.* Ky-ri- e e- lé- i- son. *ij.* Ky-ri- e
 * e- le- i- son.

STAND

Gloria

While chanting the words in italics, make a bow of the head.

IV
G Ló-ri- a in excél-sis De- o. Et in terra pax homí-
 ni-bus bo-næ vo-luntá-tis. Laudámus te. Be-ne-dí-cimus te.
A-do-rá-mus te. Glo-ri- fi-cá-mus te. Grá-ti- as á- gi-mus ti- bi,
 propter magnam gló-ri- am tu- am. Dómi-ne De- us, Rex cæléstis,
 De- us Pa-ter omní-po- tens. Dómi-ne Fi- li u-ni-gé-ni- te, Ie- su

Præfatio

STAND

P er ómni- a sæcu- la sæcu- ló- rum. R. Amen. V. Dó- minus
 vo- bíscum. R. Et cum spí- ri- tu tu- o. V. Sursum corda. R. Ha- bé-
mus ad Dó- mi- num. V. Grá- ti- as a- gá- mus Dó- mi- no De- o
 nostro. V. Dignum et iu- stum est.

IT is truly meet and just, right and for our salvation, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee, holy Lord, Father Almighty, everlasting God: through Christ our Lord: through Whom Angels praise Thy Majesty, Dominations worship, Powers stand in awe. The heavens and the hosts of heaven with blessed Seraphim unite, exult and celebrate; and we entreat that Thou wouldst bid our voices too be heard with theirs, singing with lowly praise:

IV
S Anctus, * San- ctus, San- ctus Dóminus De- us Sába- oth.
 Ple- ni sunt cæ- li et terra gló- ri- a tu- a. Ho- sánna in excélsis. Be-
 ne- díctus qui ve- nit in nómine Dómi- ni. Ho- sánna in excélsis.

Immediately after the chanting of the Sanctus, KNEEL for the entire Canon.

The Gospel has pointed out the reason for St. Bridget's greatness and her spiritual beauty; it is the "hidden treasure," i.e., her love for Christ. To us also does the Holy Mass give direction and aid, both to find the treasure and zealously to perform our round of duties. The Holy Mass keeps the fire of love for Christ aglow and it strengthens us to carry this fire abroad in the world. The Church's wedding hymn (Ps 44) forms part of the chants today. Its theme is the espousal of Christ to the Church. Does not St. Bridget typify the Church, who is both Mother and Virgin? Children should reflect on their Mother's features.

SIT after the Priest chants "Oremus." Offertory

Ps 44 : 3

Grace is poured abroad in thy lips : therefore hath God blessed thee for ever.

Offert. 8.

D If-fu- sa est * gra- ti- a in
la- bi- is tu- is : proptér- e-
a be- ne-dí- xit te De- us in ae-
tér- num, et in saé- cu- lum saé-
cu-li.

Tonus VIII G

*Dif-fu- | sa est grátia in lábiis- | tu-is, *
proptérea benedíxit te Deus in ætérnum, /
et in saé- | cu-lum saé-cu-li.*

Secreta

The **Orate, fratres** and **Suscipiat** are said quietly by the Priest and servers only.

SIT

MAY this sacrifice of thy dedicated people be accepted by thee, O Lord, in honor of thy Saints : to whose merits we attribute the help afforded us in tribulation. Through our Lord.

Christe. Dómi-ne De- us, Agnus De- i, Fí- li- us Patris. Qui
tol-lis peccá- ta mundi, mi-se-ré-re nobis. Qui tol-lis peccá- ta
mundi, súsci-pe depreca- ti- ónem nostram. Qui sedes ad dexte-ram
Patris, mi-se-ré-re no-bis. Quó-ni- am tu so-lus sanctus. Tu so-lus
Dómi- nus. Tu so-lus Altíssimus, *Ie-su Chri- ste.* Cum Sancto
Spí- ri- tu, in gló- ri- a De- i Pa- tris. A- men.

The Collect is proper to today's feast. It ends with a positive formulation of the parousia theme : At the revelation of your eternal glory, may we rejoice and be glad.

Collecta

STAND

O Lord our God, who through thine only-begotten Son didst unveil heavenly secrets to blessed Bridget : grant through her loving intercession, that we thy servants may rejoice with gladness when thine everlasting glory is unveiled. Through our Lord.

In the Epistle, we hear a description of the true widow: . . . one who is alone in this world, places her trust in God and passes her nights and days in prayer and supplication. But one who surrenders to the lust of the world is a living corpse. Paul's words aptly describe the Church as such, for toward the world she shows a widow's attitude by longing constantly for her heavenly Spouse.

L Ecti- o Epistolæ be-á-ti Pauli A-pósto-li ad Thesso-loni-censes

SIT *From the First Letter of Blessed Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians*

Concerning holy widows and the honor due to them.

Honor widows, that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children, or grandchildren, let her learn first to govern her own house, and to make a return of duty to her parents: for this is acceptable before God. But she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, let her trust in God, and continue in supplications and prayers night and day. For she that liveth in pleasures, is dead while she is living. And this give in charge, that they may be blameless. But if any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. Let a widow be chosen of no less than threescore years of age, who hath been the wife of one husband. Having testimony for her good works, if she have brought up children, if she have received to harbour, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have ministered to them that suffer tribulation, if she have diligently followed every good work.

SIT **Gradual**

Grace is poured abroad in thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. V. Because of truth, and meekness, and justice: and thy right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully.

Ps 44: 3. 5

Grad.
II D
D I-fusa est gráti- a in lá-bi- is tu- is: *proptère-a benedixit
te De-us in æ-térnum. V. Propter ve-ri-tá-tem et mansu-e-tú-dinem,
et jus-tí- ti- am: * et dedú-cet te mi-rabí- li-ter dexte-ra tu- a.

II D
A Lle-lu-ia. Alle-lu-ia. V. Spé-ci- e tu- a et

pulchri-tú-di-ne tu- a, * inténde, próspe-ra procéde, et regna. (R.)

V. With thy comeliness and thy beauty set out, proceed prosperously, and reign.

Gospel

STAND

D Omi-nus vo-bíscum. R. Et cum spí- ri- tu tu- o.

Sequénti- a sancti Evangé- li- i secúndum Matthé- um. R. Gló-ri- a

ti- bi, Dó-mi-ne.

In today's Gospel we accord attention to a parable that is often overlooked, the parable of the net. The explanation is given by Christ himself: So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. This is the dark side of the Lord's Second Advent. We ought to apply the parable to ourselves. The net with the fish is our workaday world with all our needs; these deeds will be put to the test at death; some will be worthless for heaven and some will occasion reward. Frequently activities that appear laudable to the world are "bad fish" not worth the weighing; often the unnoticed and unpretentious deeds are the "good fish" gathered in vessels for heaven. With the parousia in mind, let us imitate St. Bridget in her zeal for "every good work."

THE kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field. Which a man having found, hid it, and for joy thereof goeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again the kingdom of heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls. Who when he had found one pearl of great price, went his way, and sold all that he had, and bought it. Again the kingdom of heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kind of fishes. Which, when it was filled, they drew out, and sitting by the shore, they chose out the good into vessels, but the bad they cast forth. So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Have ye understood all these things? They say to him: Yes. He said unto them: Therefore every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven, is like to a man that is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure new things and old.