

INAUGURATION OF THE BRIDGETTINE CONVENT IN TILLER / TRONDHEIM
2nd April, 2011

ADDRESS OF REV.MOTHER
M. TEKLA FAMIGLIETTI, O.S.S.S. ABBESS GENERAL

Your Excellency, Bishop Bernt M. Eidsvig,
Dear Priests and Religious,
Members of the Authority and all Friends, Catholics and Lutherans,

I feel it is my duty to raise words of gratitude and praise to God because "this is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it! "

On my behalf and on behalf of all the daughters of Saint Bridget, I would like to give a warm and fraternal welcome to you all, here present for this important celebration in Tiller. Several years' expectation is being realised today with the inauguration of this wonderful new Bridgettine Centre.

To date, the Order, which was founded 100 years ago by Blessed Mother Elizabeth Hesselblad to reinvigorate and renew the charisma of Saint Bridget, has tried with all its energies and in communion with the Church, to create centres to help rebuild "the internal fabric of man" and bring to all mankind the Good News of Jesus, our Divine Saviour, Crucified and Risen from the Dead.

It is difficult to express the feelings that I harbour in the depths of my heart for all that has been accomplished here. The Lord has called us to promote continuity and vitality to the memory of the Bridgettine Order, present even here in Norway around the year 1425 with a monastery of monks and nuns in "Munkeliv" in the vicinity of Bergen. Even Saint Bridget, on her first great pilgrimage outside Sweden, visited Norway in 1339 with her husband Ulf to venerate the relics of St. King Olaf at Nidaros Cathedral, in today's Trondheim.

We came to Norway in June 1998, on the invitation of the former Bishop Reverend Georg Müller, to whom I extend my gratitude and heartfelt thanks for all that he has done for us since our arrival in this land. For 11 years our small Community has lived in nearby Heimdal and only at the end of August 2009 could the Sisters move here, while work was still going on to build the church, which henceforth will be a major focal point for the faithful of Tiller and for those who seek moments of rest and prayer.

This new House, with the annexed premises destined for apostolic work, is intended to be a Centre of spirituality, of culture, of ecumenical spirituality and charity. Here, special attention will be given to the "elevation of the soul." In fact, only by living spiritual values based on a Christian faith, can a new humanism and a new society founded on solidarity be made possible for the growth of a civilization of love.

Although the construction of this large complex has cost dearly to our Order, I did not spare myself to bring the daughters of Saint Bridget and Blessed Mother Elizabeth Hesselbad back in Norway. With our prayerful presence in this place, we wish to confirm our commitment to strengthen the bonds of communion with and among everybody, offering our Bridgettine charisma and our monastic service for the human and spiritual progress of the local people. And it is our specific

intent to help this dear and noble people of Norway and our Churches so that we may walk together on the path of unity through dialogue, friendship and solidarity. With the service typical of our Bridgettine charisma and with the intensity of our daily prayers, we wish to bring to realisation the heartfelt desire of Jesus: "Father, that all may be one that the world may believe".

"Birgitta Klosteret" in Tiller is your House where you can find Sisters ready to welcome you and to be with you and pray for you, having dedicated their life as a burnt offering to God. Here you will find the friends of Jesus, "Mary and Martha," whose only desire is to help you find and enjoy the beauty of life and of unity, with the richness of hospitality that is typically evangelical and Bridgettine.

Let me now express my deep gratitude to all those who have made it possible for us to live this day of grace and joy.

I would like to thank in a special way our benefactors, who were for us God's Providence, starting, in the first place, with His Holiness Benedict XVI who has sent us donations through the Secretary of State and the "Papal Foundation" of Philadelphia, a clear sign of his deep interest in this foundation started in this noble country of the North. My gratitude also goes to a meritorious Institution, the Bonifatiuswerk of the German Catholics, through the services of the late Secretary-General, the beloved Bishop Kathke, and later through the dear Bishop Georg Austen. My thanks also to the "Diaspora-Kommissariat" of the German Bishopric and to the Diocese of Paderborn; to the St. Ansgarwerk Society; to "Fidentia" (the Society for the management of grants and subsidies); to the Archdiocese of Munich, the Diocese of Limburg and that of Rottenburg-Stuttgart, as well as to all other German Benefactors who have helped us with their support.

I also express my deep gratitude to the Italian Episcopal Conference, especially His Excellence Reverend Monsignor Vacchelli and Reverend Monsignor Gandolfo. Our gratitude also goes to the Prelature of Trondheim, for collaborating with our Order in the creation of this wonderful Centre, and to the very dear Kari Hauge who, from the very start, was close to our community with her discreet and affectionate friendship.

My gratitude and thanks go to the Architects Vigdis Meland and Lars Hartmann, to the building constructors Frost and the workers, to our friends from Rome who have supervised the work: Engineer Paolo Castelli and the Architect Marco Silvestri, and, last but not least, to all who have contributed for the realisation of this marvellous work that we are officially inaugurating today with the blessing of Bishop Eidsvig.

I really do apologize if somebody has been left out of the list, but I want to express to each and every one my sincere gratitude and that of all our Holy Order. I extend my warm welcome to all in this House of God and of the Virgin Mary. Through the intercession of Saint Bridget and the Blessed Mother Elizabeth, may the Lord bless you all and shower on you in abundance His spiritual graces.