



Saint Bridget of Sweden

(1303 - 1373)

Bridget was married to a nobleman and had eight children. At the age of 30 she was summoned to the court of the King of Sweden, where she served as lady-in-waiting to the queen. She tried without much success to moderate the riotous and indecent life of the royal court.

After a pilgrimage to the shrine of St James at Compostela in Spain, Bridget and her husband Ulf decided to spend the rest of their lives in monasteries. Ulf died in 1344, but Bridget went on to found a double monastery (for men and women in separate but adjacent institutions) as the start of a new monastic order.

In 1350 she travelled to Rome for the Holy Year, and spent the rest of her life there caring for the poor and the sick, denouncing the excesses of the aristocracy, and robustly telling the Pope to return to Rome from Avignon.

She had many mystical visions, which alarmed her because she feared that they might be the work of the Devil; but a learned Cistercian monk reassured her, and she subsequently dictated and published the revelations she received, which were partially devotional and partly prophetic.