

Reading for the Feast of St Bridget of Sweden

23rd July 2026

First reading

Galatians 2:19-20

‘It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.’

Brothers and Sisters: Through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 34(33):2-3. 4-5. 6-7. 8-9. 10-11. R2a

I will bless the Lord at all times.

I will bless the Lord at all times, praise of him is always in my mouth.

In the Lord my soul shall make its boast; the humble shall hear and be glad.

Glorify the Lord with me; together let us praise his name.

I sought the Lord, and he answered me; from all my terrors he set me free.

Look towards him and be radiant; let your faces not be abashed.

This lowly one called; the Lord heard, and rescued him from all his distress.

The angel of the Lord is encamped around those who fear him, to rescue them.

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Blessed the man who seeks refuge in him.

Fear the Lord, you his holy ones.

They lack nothing, those who fear him.

The rich suffer want and go hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no blessing.

Gospel Acclamation

John 15:9b, 5b

Alleluia, alleluia.

Abide in my love, says the Lord.

Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit.

Alleluia.

Gospel

John 15:1-8

‘Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit.’

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, ‘I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine dresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch, and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.’

Short reflection on the reading for today

The Gospel reading from John's Gospel comes from Jesus' long discourse at the Last Supper. In the passage, Jesus speaks of himself as the True Vine. His Father is the vine grower and his disciples are the branches. Jesus, as the trunk of the vine, is the source of life for the branches. As long as the branches remain on the tree, they will produce fruit. Any branches which do not produce fruit will be cut off and burnt. Other branches will be pruned so that they will produce even more fruit.

The images clearly indicate the relationship that exists between Jesus the Son and his Father. They also show the relationship that should exist between Jesus and his followers. Jesus is the source of real life through the Vision of Life that he gives to us, as well as through the grace that he pours into receptive hearts.

And a test of our discipleship is that we bear fruit. We do not just live for ourselves; it is not just a question of being in 'a state of grace' and 'saving our souls'. We have to carry out Jesus' injunction to be the salt of the earth, the light of the world. Our lives are to be marked by a deep desire for the well-being of our brothers and sisters and a dedication to service for their needs.

This was the pattern of life which Bridget followed from her earliest years. Her deepest concern was for the moral uplift of people everywhere. Her life is perfectly expressed in the First Reading, a short passage from the Letter to the Galatians:

I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me...I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Like Paul, she is so close to Jesus that she finds it hard to distinguish between her own identity and that of Jesus. They have become one. That should be our goal too.