

Parish Praise and Glory to God

Parish: St. Bridget **Location: Las Vegas, Nevada**
Chapel: Our Heavenly Father

St. Bridget Church is located in one of the poorest areas of what is called downtown Las Vegas. The rumor was that it would eventually go the way of many other small, poor parishes and close down completely, but that did not happen.



When the new pastor, Father James Swenson, was assigned, the first thing he did was consecrate the church and parish to The Sacred Heart of Jesus and The Immaculate Heart of Mary. Then the praying for guidance began. The rosary was, and still is, recited four times a day by the pastor, his parishioners and visitors.

Even though this was a small parish, Father Swenson wanted his parishioners to have Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration, and in a short time a priest speaker from the Missionaries of the Blessed Sacrament came to talk to the people of St. Bridget and the surrounding parishes. The call to adoration was very successful. The chapel was dedicated in 1985, and adoration began. That was eighteen years ago. When the numbers of adorers and interest started to decline about eight years ago, Father Robert Goedert, was invited to speak at the weekend Masses. His Eucharistic sermon stirred the people, increased the number of adorers and blessed the resolve of the faithful.

The chapel is small, peaceful and inviting. The door is never locked so no one is ever turned away from a visit with Jesus. The hours from midnight to six a.m. are secured by committed adorers some who stay for two and others for three hours.

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They have never failed to have someone with the Lord every moment of the twenty-four hours, seven days a week. And from this rich spring of devotion many blessings have flowed:

- Vocations: a Carmelite Cloistered nun, a Benedictine Monk, an Augustinian Monk and an active Lay Carmelite Group.
- Conversions: entire families have returned to the faith.
- Grateful responses: hundreds of visitors from many denominations one of whom is an Islamic man who has been a steady adorer for several years.
- Devotions: *The Two Hearts Prayer Group* and *The Eight Days of Prayer to God Our Father* (the last Sunday in July to the first Sunday in August).
- Donations: there are many. Recently an adorer left a gift of one million dollars to Father Swenson to build a new church for the poor, (soon to be constructed).
- Prayers Answered: of every nature, but Father Swenson's prayer of many years for a new St. Bridget church and mission center for the poor was answered. The site, the property, the money are all a reality. St. Bridget church will not close down, but thrive.

Father Swenson can relate to St. John Vianney, the Curé of Ars, and he has a message for his brother priests who are reluctant to attempt Eucharistic adoration outside of the Mass. When people from the surrounding countryside parishes flocked to Father Vianney's services that were daily and long, the other pastors complained to him. He told them to make a Holy Hour every week and their people would return. The people did return to those who made the Holy Hour. Father Swenson understands the fears that many pastors have about having adoration outside of the Mass. To them he repeats the advice of the Curé of Ars, "Have a Holy Hour every week. Start praying. Pray for guidance and trust in God."



Prayer is Answered

"And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

Luke 11:9

Thank you, Lord, for:

- Remission from cancer.
- Rebuilding our damaged church.
- Lessons learned from long suffering.
- Courage to carry on alone, but with you.
- Finally released from debt.