

Saints at the Nativity 25 December

Many saints have described visions of the Nativity as if they had personally witnessed the event. Two of the most influential visionaries were Bridget of Sweden and Veronica of Binasco.

Bridget believed that the Blessed Mother took her on a pilgrimage to Bethlehem, allowing her to witness the birth of Christ. Influenced by Bridget's report of her vision, artists began portraying the Christ Child lying naked on the ground as his mother knelt before Him, wrapping Him in swaddling clothes.

Veronica of Binasco influenced the Renaissance portrayals of the Three Kings. The Gospels tell us that they came from the east bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, but they do not specify the exact number of kings. By Veronica's time, it was accepted that there were three. According to one of Veronica's visions, as the kings approached the Christ Child, they began to argue about who would adore him first. The youngest, most impulsive king approached first, and kissed the Infant's feet, then aged before the eyes of the other two kings, until he was as old as them. The sight of the Child had matured the young king.

The Genius of the Saints at the Nativity:

The testaments of saints like Bridget and Veronica are considered "private revelations: and not Church dogma, but they have had a great influence on how we picture the Nativity today.

Reflection:

"And there were in the same country shepherds watching, and keeping the night watches over their flock. And behold an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round about them; and they feared with a great fear. And the angel said to them: fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people. For this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you. You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God, saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace to men of good will.'"

Luke 2.8-14 (Douay-Rheims edition)

Gallick, Sarah: [The Big Book of Women Saints](#), p. 385