

Babette's Feast: Art, Grace and the Eucharistic Metaphor

Barbara Harrington, PhD – St. Stephen's Mystagogy



Baroness **Karen Christenze von Blixen-Finecke (Dinesen)** ("Isak Dinesen") 1885 -1962



"He who laughs."

- From a prominent Danish family; father a Member of Parliament
- Her father committed suicide when Karen was 9.
- She was raised in the staunch Unitarian tradition.
- She married her paternal cousin Baron Blixen'Finecke (but she loved his twin brother)



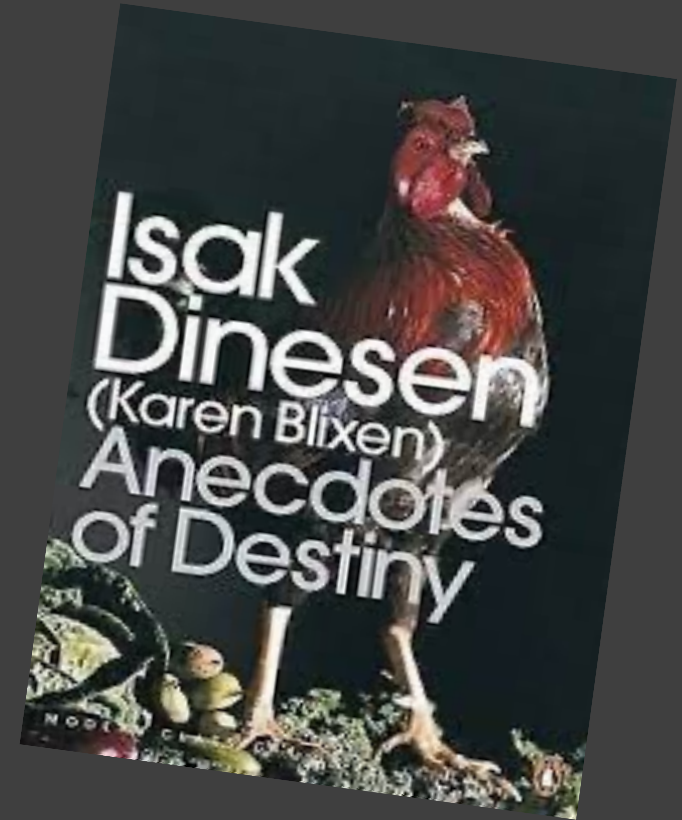
- The young couple moved to Kenya in 1913 to start a coffee farm;
- Her husband gave her syphilis for which she was treated with mercury causing a life-long debilitating illness

1925- Her husband divorced her;
1926 –She falls for Dennys Finch Hatton
1931 – Dennys dies in a plane crash





1943: “We should be proud to be Danes, as long as we have Germans in the garden and Jews inside the house”



- She was the most celebrated European writer in the 1950's but never won the Nobel Prize because of fears of favoritism;
- She died of malnutrition in 1962.

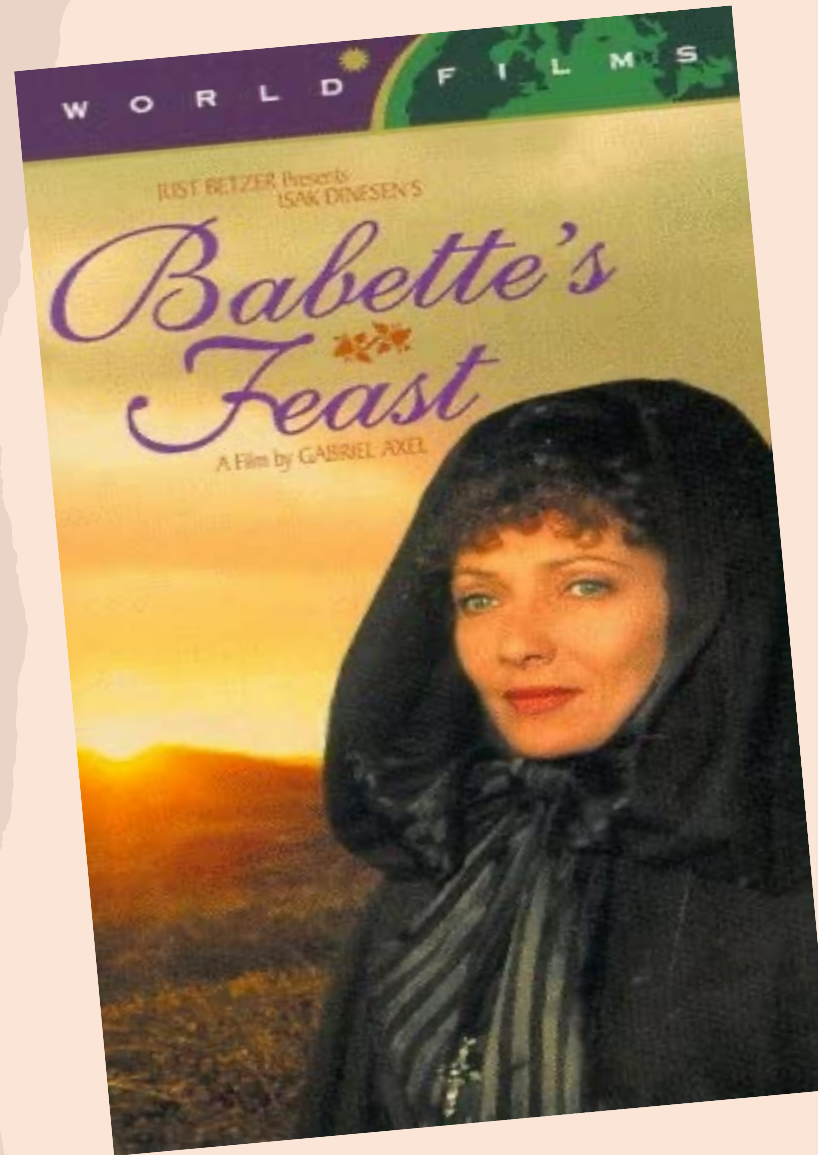


“a spectacular artist and
a person so wise that it
almost hurts.”

Hakon Stangerup

All is Grace, *Boulder Weekly*

Babette's Feast is, first and foremost, a delightful masterpiece. Director Gabriel Axel deviates from Blixen's story only slightly, mostly rounding off her hard edges while retaining the spirit underneath. A spirit bolstered by cinematographer Henning Kristiansen, who turns every image into a Vermeer painting. If good art borrows while the best art steals, then the greatest art transforms.



AMORIS LÆTITIA



THE JOY OF LOVE POPE FRANCIS



APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION ON LOVE IN THE FAMILY

“The most intense joys in life arise when we are able to elicit joy in others, as a foretaste of heaven. We can think of the lovely scene in the film *Babette’s Feast*, when the generous cook receives a grateful hug and praise: ‘Ah, how you will delight the angels!’ It is a joy and a great consolation to bring delight to others, to see them enjoying themselves. This joy, the fruit of fraternal love, is not that of the vain and self-centred, but of lovers who delight in the good of those whom they love, who give freely to them and thus bear good fruit” (AL, 129).

“A town
between two
mountains”

Spiritual and
sensuous
beauty





“Its members renounced the pleasures of [2] this world, for the earth and all that it held to them was but a kind of illusion, and the true reality was the New Jerusalem toward which they were longing. They swore not at all, but their communication was yea yea and nay nay, and they called one another Brother and Sister.”



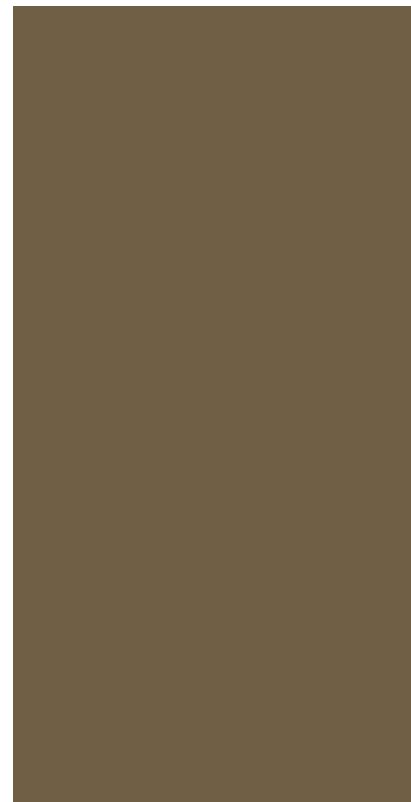
For the old Dean's daughters spent their time and their small income in works of charity; no sorrowful or distressed creature knocked on their door in vain. “







An artist is never poor.



“He set up His tent among us.”



Babette's Feast (1987)

1987s

Youtube: 1987s

1987s
  



To make lutefisk you dry cod for a couple of months until it as crispy as bacon, then you put it in lye after soaking it for some days.




Sometimes small schisms would erupt among the congregation.



**“What have
we agreed to!?
Dangerous
pleasure!”**



A still from a film showing two women in black head coverings. The woman on the left is looking towards the right with a serious expression. The woman on the right is looking down at a small, dark book she is holding in her hands. The background is a simple, light-colored wall with a window visible in the upper center.

“How can this man give
us His flesh to drink?”



It's Clos de Vougeot 1845.



It must be some kind of lemonade.

Cailles en sarcophagi

This chef, he said, had the ability to transform a dinner into a love affair – one that made no distinction between bodily appetite and spiritual appetite. Quails in a coffin is a remarkable dish, with the quail part de-boned and then stuffed with foie gras and sliced truffle, then put in a pastry case. The head is placed in, too, and this is to be crunched and the tiny brain sucked out.



“Bread of Angels”















Martine and Philippa stood for a long time on the stone steps outside the house. They did not feel the cold. 'The stars have come nearer,' said Philippa.

'They will come every night,' said Martine quietly. 'Quite possibly it will never snow again.'





‘We tremble before making our choice in life, and after having made it again tremble in fear of having chosen wrong. But the moment comes when our eyes are opened, and we see and realize that grace is infinite. Grace, my friends, demands nothing from us but that we shall await it with confidence and acknowledge it in gratitude. Grace, brothers, makes no conditions and singles out none of us in particular; grace takes us all to its bosom and proclaims general amnesty. See! that which we have chosen is given us, and that which we have refused is, also and at the same time, granted us.’



Babette sat on the chopping block, surrounded by more black and greasy pots and pans than her mistresses had ever seen in their life. She was as white and as deadly exhausted as on the night when she first appeared and had fainted on their doorstep.

