BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Dogfan

Life, prayer and novena

Feast day: July 13

IN BRIEF

Saint Dogfan

5th-century Welsh prince from Dyfed, martyr killed by pagans.

Feast day	July 13
Born	5th century, Wales (Dyfed according to tradition)
Died	5th century, Dyfed (southwest Wales)
Canonized	immemorial cult (local cult)

In this booklet

Life

Prayer to Saint Dogfan for Persecuted Christians

Novena to Saint Dogfan

Credits and sources

Booklet offered by Saintspedia, the directory of Catholic saints: lives of the saints, prayers, novenas and places of pilgrimage, at saintspedia.com. Texts written by Saintspedia, except traditional prayers marked as such. Original prayers and novenas are not official liturgical texts. Free booklet, to print and share for personal, family or parish use; please do not sell it.

LIFE

Saint Dogfan

Saint Dogfan (also Dofgan or Doewan) was a Welsh saint of the 5th century. Born into a princely family, he is said to have come from Dyfed, in southwest Wales, and died a martyr, killed by pagans. Welsh traditions link him to the large family of Brychan, king of Brycheiniog. He is celebrated locally on July 13.

Who was Saint Dogfan?

Saint Dogfan belongs to the world of the saints of early Wales, those men and women who rooted the Christian faith in the island of Britain after the end of Roman rule. What we know about him fits into a few lines: he was descended from a local petty king, he died for his faith at the hands of pagans, and his memory has been kept in the calendar of Welsh saints. No early Life tells of his existence in detail. The genealogies that make him a son of Brychan were written down centuries later and must be received with caution. We must therefore be careful not to say more than the sources: Saint Dogfan is first of all a witness, of whom only the sacrifice has come down through time.

Key dates in the life of Dogfan

- **5th century**: Born in Wales, into a princely family; Welsh tradition makes him one of the many children attributed to Brychan, king of Brycheiniog.
- **5th century**: He lives in Dyfed, the region of southwest Wales.
- **5th century**: He is killed by pagans and honored as a martyr.
- **Middle Ages**: His name remains attached to the church of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, in present-day Powys.
- **1588**: William Morgan, vicar of this parish, publishes the first complete translation of the Bible into Welsh.

- **Today**: He is celebrated locally on July 13, by Catholics and Orthodox alike.

A prince among the Welsh saints

In the 5th century, Wales was divided among small kingdoms. Christianity had been present since Roman times, but it still coexisted with pagan practices, and the coasts were exposed to raids from the sea. It was into this world that Dogfan was born, in a family of royal rank. Welsh tradition likes to link its saints to a few great lineages: that of Brychan, king of Brycheiniog, to whom dozens of children are attributed, is the most famous. Several of them are honored as saints, in Wales, in Cornwall and even in Brittany. Some lists count Dogfan among them.

The martyrdom

The sources say only that Dogfan was killed by pagans, in Dyfed. They specify neither the circumstances, nor the identity of his killers, nor the exact year. Yet the memory of a martyrdom is enough to explain why he was venerated: for the first Christians as for those of the early Middle Ages, the one who gives his life for Christ is the witness par excellence. The sober account of his death invites us to the same sobriety: Saint Dogfan is not a legendary hero, but a Christian who preferred faithfulness to his own life.

Cult and memory

Dogfan's name has remained attached to the parish church of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, in northern Powys, near the great waterfall of Pistyll Rhaeadr. It was in this parish that William Morgan, its vicar, completed the translation of the Bible into Welsh published in 1588, a monument of the Welsh language and faith. Saint Dogfan is celebrated locally on July 13. His cult, attested by Catholic and Orthodox calendars alike, remains discreet and local.

What can we learn from Saint Dogfan?

Saint Dogfan reminds us that holiness is not measured by the number of memories left behind. Almost nothing remains of him, except the witness of his death and a name borne by a church. But that little is enough to say the essential: a prince's son preferred Christ to everything. We can pray to him for persecuted Christians, for Wales and for all who must remain faithful without being noticed.

To pray with him, see the prayer to Saint Dogfan and the novena to Saint Dogfan.

Where to pray to Saint Dogfan

- **Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant** (Powys, Wales): the parish church dedicated to him.
- **Dyfed** (southwest Wales): the region where he lived and died a martyr.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Dogfan for Persecuted Christians

Saint Dogfan, or Dofgan, a 5th-century Welsh prince, died a martyr in Dyfed, killed by pagans. Almost nothing remains of him, except the memory of his faithfulness and a church bearing his name at Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant. Prayer composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It is not an official liturgical text. It entrusts to him persecuted Christians, Wales and those who serve God without being noticed.

Prayer to Saint Dogfan

Saint Dogfan,
son of a princely family,
you preferred Christ to your rank
and to your own life.
Teach me to put God above everything.

You died at the hands of pagans,
and history has kept of you only your faithfulness.
Pray for the Christians who suffer for their faith today,
and for those who serve the Lord
in obscurity and in silence.

Watch over Wales and its Churches,
over the parish that bears your name,
and over all who seek to remain faithful.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When to pray to Saint Dogfan

- On his feast day, July 13.
- For persecuted Christians throughout the world.
- For Wales and for the unity of Christians in Britain.
- When you feel forgotten or useless.
- For those who have family or social responsibilities and want to live them according to the Gospel.

An invocation for the martyrs

> *Lord, you who give strength to the martyrs,*
> *keep me faithful in small and great trials.*
> *Saint Dogfan, pray for us. Amen.*

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Dogfan from July 5 to 13, and discover the life of Saint Dogfan.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Dogfan

This novena is inspired by the witness of Saint Dogfan, or Dofgan, a 5th-century Welsh prince who died a martyr in Dyfed. Novena composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It is not an official liturgical text. To finish it on his feast day, July 13, begin on July 5. You can also pray it at any other time of the year.

How to pray this novena

Each day, begin with the Sign of the Cross and entrust your intention to God. Read the meditation, say the prayer of the day, then an Our Father, a Hail Mary and a Glory Be. End with: "Saint Dogfan, pray for us." The act suggested each day helps you live the novena concretely. We know very little about Saint Dogfan: these meditations start from the few facts handed down and extend them in prayer.

Day 1: A faith received

Dogfan was born in a Wales where the Christian faith had been present since Roman times. He received the Gospel from those who had gone before him.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for all those who have handed on the faith down to me, since the first centuries.

Act of the day: Pray for the person who made Christ known to you.

Day 2: A prince's son

Dogfan came from a royal family. He could have sought power and glory. He chose to serve Christ.

Prayer: Lord, keep me from the ambition that forgets God and others.

Act of the day: Do a humble service that no one will notice.

Day 3: A great family of saints

Welsh tradition links Dogfan to the descendants of Brychan, among whom are many saints. Holiness can flourish within the same family.

Prayer: Lord, bless my family. Make us witnesses of your love to one another.

Act of the day: Pray for each member of your family, naming them one by one.

Day 4: Living the faith among pagans

In the 5th century, the Christians of Wales lived among populations that were still pagan. Faith demanded courage.

Prayer: Lord, give me the courage to live my faith where it is not understood.

Act of the day: Make the Sign of the Cross before your meal, even in public.

Day 5: The price of faithfulness

Dogfan was killed by pagans. He preferred to die rather than deny Christ. The martyr is the witness par excellence.

Prayer: Lord, let nothing separate me from your love, neither fear nor suffering.

Act of the day: Meditate for a few minutes before a crucifix.

Day 6: Persecuted Christians

Even today, Christians are killed because of their faith. Dogfan is their brother in martyrdom.

Prayer: Lord, uphold persecuted Christians, comfort their families and convert the hearts of their persecutors.

Act of the day: Support through prayer or a gift an organization that helps persecuted Christians.

Day 7: An almost forgotten saint

Of Dogfan, history has kept only a few lines. But God forgets none of those who are faithful to him.

Prayer: Lord, when I feel forgotten, remind me that you know me by name.

Act of the day: Visit or call someone who is alone.

Day 8: A church bearing his name

At Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant, a church bears his name. It was there, in the 16th century, that the Bible was translated into Welsh. The martyr's witness prepared the spread of the Word.

Prayer: Lord, may your Word be proclaimed in every language and received in every heart.

Act of the day: Read a chapter of the Gospel.

Day 9: The martyrs' crown

Dogfan received the crown promised to those who remain faithful unto death. With all the saints, he intercedes for us.

Prayer: Lord, keep me faithful to the end. Through the intercession of Saint Dogfan, grant me the grace I ask of you in this novena, if it is your will.

Act of the day: Attend Mass if possible, praying for Wales.

Living the novena with Saint Dogfan

Saint Dogfan teaches us that the value of a life does not depend on the place it takes in books. During these nine days, you can carry in prayer persecuted Christians, Wales, your family and all those who serve God in obscurity.

Closing prayer

> *Saint Dogfan,*
> *prince of Wales and martyr of Christ,*
> *you gave your life to remain faithful.*
> *Present to the Lord the intention I have entrusted to you.*
> *Keep me faithful in trial*
> *and humble in service.*
> *Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

You can also pray at any time the prayer to Saint Dogfan, and discover the life of Saint Dogfan.

Credits and sources

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