

BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Dubricius (Dyfrig)

Life, prayer and novena

Feast day: November 14

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IN BRIEF

Saint Dubricius (Dyfrig)

Welsh bishop and abbot of the 6th century, one of the fathers of monasticism in Wales.

Feast day	November 14
Born	c. 465, according to tradition, Ergyng, near Madley (present-day Herefordshire), according to tradition
Died	c. 550, Bardsey Island (Ynys Enlli, Wales)
Canonized	immemorial cult
Era	6th century

In this booklet

Life

Prayer to Saint Dubricius for Teachers of the Faith

Novena to Saint Dubricius of Llandaff

Credits and sources

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LIFE

Saint Dubricius (Dyfrig)

Saint Dubricius, Dyfrig in Welsh and *Dubricius* in Latin, is one of the fathers of the Church in Wales. A bishop and abbot at the turn of the fifth and sixth centuries, he founded monasteries in the region of Ergyng, on today's border between England and Wales, trained many disciples and ordained Saint Samson. He ended his days as a hermit on Bardsey Island, around 550. Tradition makes him the first bishop of Llandaff. His feast day is November 14.

Who was Saint Dubricius?

Dubricius lived in an age that has left very few documents. The oldest and most reliable witness is the *Life of Saint Samson*, written around 700, which presents him as a venerable bishop, much older than Samson.

Most of his biography comes from a Life written in the 12th century for the *Book of Llandaff*, when his relics were moved to that cathedral. This text mixes ancient traditions with the concerns of its own time: historians regard as late, for example, the idea that he was archbishop of all southern Britain. So we must distinguish the little that is known from what tradition has told.

Key dates

- **c. 465**: Born in the kingdom of Ergyng, near Madley, according to tradition.
- **Late fifth century**: Founds a community at Hentland, where he teaches disciples who come from far away.
- **Early sixth century**: Founds a second monastery at Moccas (Mochros), near his birthplace.

- **Early sixth century**: According to the *Life of Saint Samson*, he ordains Samson deacon and priest, then consecrates him bishop.
- **c. 550**: Old and ill, he retires as a hermit to Bardsey Island, where he dies and is buried.
- **1120**: Bishop Urban has his relics moved from Bardsey to Llandaff Cathedral.

A legendary birth

The 12th-century Life tells of a dramatic birth. His mother, Efrddyl, was the daughter of Peibio, king of Ergyng. Furious to learn that she was expecting a child, the king is said to have tried to have her drowned, then burned, but she was saved. The name Dyfrig has sometimes been linked to the Welsh word for water.

Still according to the story, the newborn touched the face of his sick grandfather, who was healed and reconciled with his daughter. These episodes belong to legend, but they express the conviction of the Welsh: from his birth, Dubricius was a sign of God's mercy.

A teacher of monks

Dubricius was above all a formator. At Hentland (Hennllan in Welsh, "the old church"), he taught for years disciples who came from all over the region. He then founded Moccas, on the River Wye. Many churches in Herefordshire and southeast Wales still bear his name, which shows how far his influence reached.

The master of Saint Samson

His most famous disciple is Saint Samson, future bishop of Dol in Brittany. The *Life of Saint Samson* shows Dubricius coming to spend Lent in the monasteries and conferring holy orders on Samson. Through Samson, the Welsh monastic movement then passed into Armorica, today's Brittany.

The hermit of Bardsey

At the end of his life, weighed down by years and illness, Dubricius laid down his responsibilities and withdrew to Bardsey Island (Ynys Enlli), off the Llyn Peninsula in northwest Wales. This island, a refuge for monks and hermits, became a place of pilgrimage, nicknamed "the island of twenty thousand saints." He died there around 550 and was buried there.

Dubricius and King Arthur

In Arthurian literature, from Geoffrey of Monmouth in the 12th century onward, Dubricius becomes the archbishop who crowns King Arthur. This role belongs to legend, not to history.



Bardsey Island, where Saint Dubricius died as a hermit.

Devotion to Saint Dubricius

In 1120, Urban, bishop of Llandaff, obtained permission from the king of Gwynedd to move the relics of Dubricius from Bardsey to Llandaff, near Cardiff. From then on, Llandaff Cathedral honored him as its founder,

together with Saint Teilo and Saint Euddogwy. The Roman Martyrology mentions him on November 14 as a bishop and abbot who died on Bardsey Island.

Why pray to Saint Dubricius?

Dubricius sowed more than he reaped. He trained monks, founded communities and handed on the priesthood to disciples who went further than he did. Then he knew how to step aside and end his life in prayer. He is a model for those who teach and accompany others, and for those who must one day hand over to someone else. He has no official patronage, but Christians can pray to him:

- for teachers and formators;
- for priests and for vocations;
- for the Christians of Wales.

Symbols and how to recognize Saint Dubricius in art

He is shown as a bishop, with the miter and the crozier, in stained glass windows in Wales and England.

Where to pray to Saint Dubricius

- **Llandaff** (Cardiff, Wales): the cathedral that received his relics in 1120.
- **Bardsey Island** (Ynys Enlli, Gwynedd, Wales): the pilgrimage island where he died.
- **Hentland and Moccas** (Herefordshire, England): the churches that keep the memory of his monasteries.

To pray with him at home, you can use the prayer to Saint Dubricius or the novena to Saint Dubricius.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Dubricius for Teachers of the Faith

Saint Dubricius, or Dyfrig, was a bishop and abbot in Wales around the year 500. He founded monasteries and trained many disciples, among them Saint Samson, then withdrew as a hermit to Bardsey Island, where he died around 550. This prayer is an original composition inspired by his life, not an official liturgical text. It entrusts to him those who form others in the faith, and those who must one day hand over to others.

Prayer to Saint Dubricius

Saint Dubricius,
father of the monks of Wales,
you gathered disciples to teach them
prayer, the Scriptures and life together,
and you passed on to others the fire of the Gospel.

Pray for those who teach and form others:
priests, catechists, parents and teachers.
May they help others grow
without trying to hold on to them.

You who left your duties for Bardsey Island,
teach us to step aside in good time,
to make room for others with trust
and to end our lives in prayer.

Bless Wales and its Christians,
and raise up new vocations in the Church.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When to pray to Saint Dubricius

- On his feast day, November 14.
- For a formator, a teacher or a spiritual director.
- For vocations to the priesthood and religious life.
- At retirement, or when you must hand over a responsibility.
- For the Christians of Wales and of the Celtic lands.

A prayer for handing on

Dubricius knew how to step aside when old age came. You can entrust a time of transition to him with this short prayer:

> *Saint Dubricius, teach me to hand on without regret*
> *what I have received and what I have built.*
> *May those who come after me go further. Amen.*

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Dubricius from November 6 to 14, and discover the life of Saint Dubricius.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Dubricius of Llandaff

This novena is an original composition by Saintspedia, inspired by the life of Saint Dubricius, or Dyfrig, bishop and abbot in Wales around the year 500. It is not an official liturgical text. To end it on his feast day, November 14, begin on November 6. It is suited to praying for those who form others, for vocations, or at a time of transition in life. You can pray it at any time of the year.

How to pray this novena

Each day, begin with the Sign of the Cross and present 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 Dubricius, pray for us." The small act proposed each day helps you live the novena concretely.

Day 1: A life saved

According to legend, the mother of Dubricius was threatened with death by her own father, before being saved. Every life, even one welcomed in difficulty, is precious in God's eyes.

Prayer: Lord, I entrust to you pregnant women in distress and children waiting to be born. Give them protection and welcome.

Today: Support, with a gift or a prayer, an organization that helps mothers in difficulty.

Day 2: Reconciliation in the family

Tradition says the child healed his grandfather, who was reconciled with his daughter. God can mend the bonds that anger has broken.

Prayer: Lord, heal the wounds of my family. Make me a peacemaker.

Today: Take a step toward a relative with whom things are difficult.

Day 3: Gathering disciples

At Hentland, Dubricius welcomed disciples who came from far away to learn to pray and to live the Gospel. Faith is passed on from person to person.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for those who formed me in faith. Make me able, in turn, to pass it on.

Today: Send a message of thanks to someone who taught you something essential.

Day 4: Building communities

Dubricius founded several monasteries. He knew that no one becomes a Christian alone, but in a community that prays and helps one another.

Prayer: Lord, bless my parish and the communities I belong to. Make them homes of prayer and brotherhood.

Today: Join a time of community prayer, or do a service for your parish.

Day 5: The season of Lent

The *Life of Saint Samson* shows Dubricius coming to spend Lent in the monasteries. He took time apart to be renewed in fasting and prayer.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to take times in the desert, so as to return to you with all my heart.

Today: Give yourself a time of silence today, without screens.

Day 6: Handing on the priesthood

Dubricius ordained Saint Samson, who became a great bishop in Brittany. A true teacher rejoices when his disciple goes further than he did.

Prayer: Lord, send laborers into your harvest. Bless seminarians and those who form them.

Today: Pray for a priest or a seminarian by name.

Day 7: Knowing when to step aside

Old and ill, Dubricius left his duties. He did not cling to his place. There is holiness in the art of handing over.

Prayer: Lord, free me from attachment to my roles and titles. May I know how to make room for others when the time comes.

Today: Entrust to someone a task you have kept to yourself, and trust them with it.

Day 8: The island of prayer

On Bardsey Island, Dubricius lived as a hermit. The last season of life can become a time of prayer and intercession for the whole Church.

Prayer: Lord, bless the elderly and the sick. May their prayer be a hidden strength for the world.

Today: Visit or call an elderly person.

Day 9: A lasting seed

Dubricius died around 550 and is still honored in Wales, where many churches bear his name. What he sowed continues to bear fruit.

Prayer: Lord, make what I have sown bear fruit, even if I do not see it. Through the intercession of Saint Dubricius, grant me the grace I ask in this novena, if it is your will.

Today: Pray for the Christians of Wales and of the Celtic lands.

Living the novena with Saint Dubricius

Saint Dubricius is a quiet saint, little known to history but never forgotten by the Welsh. His life has two movements: forming and handing on, then withdrawing into prayer. During these nine days, you can carry in prayer someone who formed you, a young person you accompany, or a transition you are living yourself, such as retirement or the end of a responsibility.

Closing prayer

> *Saint Dubricius,*
> *bishop and father of monks,*
> *you formed disciples and handed on the Gospel,*
> *then ended your life in prayer on Bardsey Island.*
> *Present to God the intention I have carried during these nine days.*
> *Teach me to hand on generously,*
> *to rejoice in the growth of others,*
> *and to place my life in the hands of God.*
> *Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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

Credits and sources

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