BOOKLET TO PRINT

# Saint Goran

*Life, prayer and novena*

Feast day: April 7

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IN BRIEF

## Saint Goran

*6th-century priest and hermit of Cornwall, identified by tradition with the hermit Guron of Bodmin.*

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| **Feast day** | April 7 |
| **Died** | 6th century, Cornwall (England) |
| **Canonized** | immemorial cult |
| **Patron saint of** | Gorran (Cornwall) |

## In this booklet

Life

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Novena to Saint Goran, Hermit of Cornwall

Credits and sources

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LIFE

# Saint Goran

Saint Goran was a priest and hermit of Cornwall, in the south-west of present-day England, who lived in the 6th century. Tradition identifies him with Guron, the hermit of Bodmin who, according to the Life of Saint Petroc, gave up his cell to Petroc. Several churches were dedicated to him in the following centuries. His feast day is April 7.

## Who was Saint Goran?

Goran is one of the many saints of Cornwall known mainly by a name, attached to villages, churches and springs. The documents about him are very few. The French calendar site Nominis, run by the French bishops' conference, presents him as a priest and hermit of Cornwall in the 6th century, to whom several churches were dedicated between the 6th and 9th centuries. An old tradition links him with Guron, a hermit settled at Bodmin, who is mentioned in the Life of Saint Petroc. It must be honestly admitted that this identification is not certain and that the details of his life escape us. This page is therefore short: it keeps to what can be said without embellishment.

## Key dates in the life of Goran

- **6th century**: A priest, he lives as a hermit in Cornwall.
- **6th century**: According to the tradition that identifies him with Guron, he lives in a hermitage at Bodmin, in the heart of the moors.
- **Later**: According to the Life of Saint Petroc, the hermit Guron gives up his cell to Petroc, who has come to settle at Bodmin.
- **Afterwards**: According to tradition, he withdraws further south, to the area that still bears his name.
- **6th to 9th century**: Several churches are dedicated to him in Cornwall.

- **Today**: He is celebrated on April 7.

## The hermit who gave up his place

The only episode tradition connects with Goran shows him in an act of self-effacement. According to the Life of Saint Petroc, when this great missionary monk sought, toward the end of his life, a deeper solitude inland, he found at Bodmin a hermit named Guron, who gave up his place to him. If we follow the tradition that recognizes Goran in this Guron, he would then have moved to another place of retreat, further south. The account is brief, but it says a great deal: a man of prayer who does not cling to his hermitage, and who lets another servant of God carry on the work begun.

## The cult of Saint Goran

The memory of Goran has been kept above all through places. In Cornwall, the parish of Gorran, on the south coast, bears his name, as does the small harbor of Gorran Haven. At Bodmin, a spring near the church of Saint Petroc is traditionally associated with the hermit Guron. These churches and springs are the sign of an ancient local cult, handed down from generation to generation. His feast day is April 7.

## What can we learn from Saint Goran?

Little remains of Saint Goran: a name, churches, a spring, and the memory of a hermit who knew how to give up his place. His is a discreet holiness, that of a man who prayed far from the world and did not seek to leave a mark. You can pray to him to learn detachment, for those who must hand over to others, and for the faith in Cornwall and in Britain.

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

## Where to pray to Saint Goran

- **Gorran** (Cornwall, England): the church of the parish that bears his name.
- **Bodmin** (Cornwall): the spring traditionally associated with the hermit Guron, near the church of Saint Petroc.

PRAYER

# Prayer to Saint Goran for a Free and Detached Heart

Saint Goran, a priest and hermit of Cornwall in the 6th century, is identified by tradition with the hermit Guron, who gave up his cell at Bodmin to Saint Petroc. Prayer composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It entrusts to him detachment, those who must hand over to others, and the faith of the Celtic lands.

## Prayer to Saint Goran

*Saint Goran,*
*priest and hermit of Cornwall,*
*you sought God in silence*
*far from noise and honors.*
*Teach me to find time for him*
*and to listen to him in secret.*

*You who knew how to give up your place*
*to another servant of God,*
*free me from attachment to my own works.*
*Help those who must hand over to others*
*to do so in peace and trust.*

*Watch over the churches that bear your name*
*and over those who still pray in them.*
*Keep the faith alive in Cornwall*
*and in all the lands of the Celtic saints.*
*Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## When to pray to Saint Goran

- On his feast day, April 7.
- When leaving a responsibility or handing over to someone else.
- To rediscover a taste for silence and personal prayer.
- For hermits, monks and those who live alone.
- For the Christians of Cornwall and Britain.

## A short invocation

> *Lord, give me a free heart that knows how to make room for others.*
> *Saint Goran, pray for us. Amen.*

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Goran from March 30 to April 7, and read the life of Saint Goran.

NOVENA

# Novena to Saint Goran, Hermit of Cornwall

This novena is inspired by the figure of Saint Goran, a priest and hermit of Cornwall in the 6th century. Novena composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It is not an official liturgical text. To finish it on his feast day, April 7, begin on March 30. 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 Goran, pray for us." The act of the day helps you live the novena concretely. Very little is known of Saint Goran: these meditations start from the little that tradition has kept of him.

## Day 1: An almost unknown saint

Of Goran, almost nothing remains but his name. Many saints have lived like this, known to God alone.

**Prayer:** Lord, teach me to do good without seeking to be seen.

**Act of the day:** Do someone a service in secret, without telling anyone.

## Day 2: A priest for his people

Goran was a priest. Even in solitude, he remained at the service of God's people through his prayer.

**Prayer:** Lord, bless priests and give them joy in their ministry.

**Act of the day:** Pray for a priest who has mattered in your life.

## Day 3: Choosing the desert

Goran chose the life of a hermit. He wanted to stand before God, without distraction.

**Prayer:** Lord, teach me to be silent so that I may hear you.

**Act of the day:** Take a quarter of an hour of silence and prayer, without screens.

## Day 4: The moors of Bodmin

According to tradition, he lived at Bodmin, in the middle of the moors. God lets himself be found in poor and bare places.

**Prayer:** Lord, make me love simplicity and sobriety.

**Act of the day:** Give up an unnecessary comfort today.

## Day 5: Welcoming another servant

When Saint Petroc arrived at Bodmin, the hermit Guron welcomed him. Welcoming others is already an act of faith.

**Prayer:** Lord, open my heart to those who knock at my door.

**Act of the day:** Welcome attentively someone new around you.

## Day 6: Giving up one's place

According to the Life of Saint Petroc, Guron gave him his cell. He did not regard his hermitage as his property.

**Prayer:** Lord, free me from the desire to take up all the room.

**Act of the day:** Give someone else a place, a turn or a responsibility.

## Day 7: Starting again elsewhere

According to tradition, Goran moved to another place, further south. Starting again elsewhere takes courage and trust.

**Prayer:** Lord, be with those who must start all over again in a new place.

**Act of the day:** Pray for someone who has just moved or changed their life.

## Day 8: Churches and springs

Churches and a spring keep the name of Goran. Places of prayer hand on the memory of the saints.

**Prayer:** Lord, bless the churches of our villages and those who keep them alive.

**Act of the day:** Visit a nearby church or chapel and pray there.

## Day 9: The faith of the Celtic lands

Goran belongs to the great family of Celtic saints who sowed the Gospel in Cornwall, Brittany, Wales and Ireland.

**Prayer:** Lord, rekindle the faith in the lands evangelized by the Celtic saints. Through the intercession of Saint Goran, grant me the grace I ask in this novena, if it is your will.

**Act of the day:** Attend Mass and pray for Christian unity.

## Living the novena with Saint Goran

Saint Goran left neither writings nor great stories, but the example of a hidden life and a detached heart. During these nine days, you can carry priests, those who live alone, those who must hand over to others, and the Christians of Britain.

## Closing prayer

*Saint Goran,*
*priest and hermit of Cornwall,*
*you prayed in silence*
*and knew how to give up your place.*
*Present to the Lord the intention I have entrusted to you.*
*Give me a simple and free heart,*
*and keep me in the peace of Christ.*
*Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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

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