

BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Landelin

Life, prayer and novena

Feast day: June 15

IN BRIEF

Saint Landelin

Converted bandit of the 7th century, hermit and founder of the abbeys of Lobbes, Aulne and Crespin.

Feast day	June 15
Born	c. 613, region of Bapaume (Pas-de-Calais)
Died	June 15, 686, Crespin Abbey (Nord)
Canonized	immemorial cult
Era	7th century

In this booklet

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Credits and sources

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LIFE

Saint Landelin

Saint Landelin was a 7th-century monk, born around 613 in the region of Bapaume, in today's Pas-de-Calais. As a young man he lived as a bandit before converting. Having become a priest, he founded several monasteries in Hainaut, including the abbeys of Lobbes, Aulne and Crespin, where he died on June 15, 686. His feast day is June 15.

Who was Saint Landelin?

Landelin is one of the great monastic founders of the region stretching from northern France to present-day Belgium. Coming from a noble Frankish family, he was baptized at about the age of ten. His godfather was Aubert, who would become bishop of Cambrai, and it was Aubert who formed him in the faith. But as a teenager he drifted away from his teacher and fell into banditry. His conversion, and then his work as a founder, made him a beloved figure of Hainaut. What we know of him comes from hagiographic accounts and from the traditions of the abbeys he founded; some dates remain approximate.

Key dates

- **c. 613**: Born in the region of Bapaume, into a noble Frankish family.
- **c. 623**: Baptized; his godfather is Aubert, future bishop of Cambrai.
- **Adolescence**: He leaves Aubert and lives as a bandit under the name Maurosus, notably near Lobbes.
- **c. 643**: After the sudden death of a companion, he converts, returns to Aubert and lives six years of penance.
- **c. 649**: He is admitted among the clergy; he will become a deacon and then a priest, after pilgrimages to Rome.

- **c. 654**: With his disciples Adelin and Domitian, he founds an oratory and cells at Lobbes, the origin of Lobbes Abbey.
- **c. 660**: He settles at Aulne, downstream from Lobbes, and founds a community there.
- **c. 665**: Founding of a monastery at Wallers, entrusted to Dodo.
- **670-673**: He settles at Crespin, where Aubert consecrates his church in 673.
- **June 15, 686**: Dies at the abbey of Crespin, where he is buried.

From banditry to penance

Landelin received a good Christian upbringing from Aubert. Yet as a teenager he left his teacher and joined a band of robbers. Under the name Maurosus, he plundered the region, particularly around Lobbes and Landelies, on the Sambre River.

One day, one of his companions died suddenly. The account adds that Landelin then had a vision of hell. Shaken, he changed his life. Around 643 he returned to Aubert, who welcomed him like a father. For six years he lived as a penitent, following the austere rule of Saint Columbanus. Around 649 he asked to enter the clergy.

The pilgrim to Rome

Landelin became a deacon, then a priest. He made several pilgrimages to Rome, to the tombs of the apostles. On his last journey, Pope Saint Martin I charged him with evangelizing and gave him relics. On the way, he visited great abbeys: Saint-Denis, Luxeuil and Monte Cassino. There he discovered the monastic life that he would in turn plant at home.

A founder of abbeys

Around 654, Landelin returned to the very places of his banditry. With his disciples Adelin and Domitian, he built an oratory and cells at Lobbes: this was the starting point of Lobbes Abbey, which would become one of the most important in the region, later made famous by Saint Ursmer. According to the historian Claude Demoulin, Landelin also acted as an envoy of Aubert and the Frankish court to establish monasteries.

Around 660, he settled at Aulne, on land that belonged to him, about six miles downstream from Lobbes. There he first followed the rule of Saint Columbanus, then adopted that of Saint Benedict, which was less harsh, for lack of novices sturdy enough. Around 665, he founded at Wallers a monastery dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul, which he entrusted to Dodo. In 670 he finally settled in the forest of Amblise, then at Crespin, on the Hogneau River. In 673, Aubert consecrated the church he had built there. The abbey followed the Benedictine rule.



The ruins of Aulne Abbey, founded by Saint Landelin.

Devotion and relics

Landelin died at Crespin on June 15, 686, and was buried there. His disciple Adelin succeeded him as abbot. In 836, to protect them from Viking raids, most of his relics were moved to Boke in Westphalia, now part of Delbrück, where the saint is still honored. The church of Crespin keeps his jawbone and an arm. There is also a Saint-Landelin fountain at Crespin. His feast day is June 15.

Why pray to Saint Landelin?

Landelin is the saint of new beginnings. He knew violence and theft, then rebuilt his life on the very spot where he had done wrong, building places of prayer there. His conversion was not a moment of emotion, but a long road of

penance, accompanied by a patient spiritual father. He reminds us that no one is lost to God. We can pray to him for people in prison, for those who want to leave a life of crime, and for all who long to change their lives.

Where to pray to Saint Landelin

- **Crespin** (Nord, France): the church that keeps relics of the saint, and the Saint-Landelin fountain.
- **Lobbes** (Hainaut, Belgium): the collegiate church of Saint-Ursmer, linked to the abbey he founded.
- **Aulne** (Thuin, Belgium): the ruins of Aulne Abbey, on the bank of the Sambre.
- **Boke** (Delbrück, Germany): where most of his relics were moved in 836.

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

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Landelin for Conversion

Saint Landelin was a bandit in his youth, before he converted, did penance and became a priest. In the 7th century he founded the abbeys of Lobbes, Aulne and Crespin, on the very ground where he had done wrong. This prayer is an original composition inspired by his life; it is not an official liturgical text. It entrusts to him all who long to change their lives.

Prayer to Saint Landelin

Saint Landelin,
you had received the faith in childhood,
and you strayed from it to follow violence and theft.
But God did not abandon you:
he called you back through the death of a friend,
and you returned, humble, to the one who had baptized you.

Through long penance,
you let God remake your heart.
Where you had plundered, you built houses of prayer.

Pray for those who have gone astray,
for prisoners and those who live in violence,
for young people tempted by easy money.
Pray for me, that I may never despair of God's mercy,
and that I may know how to begin again with him.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When to pray to Saint Landelin

- On his feast day, June 15.
- Before receiving the sacrament of reconciliation.
- For a loved one who has drifted from God or who lives a life of crime.
- For people in prison and those who accompany them.
- When you long to make a fresh start.

A prayer of return

You can end with this short prayer:

> *Lord, I return to you.*
> *Take what I have been and make something beautiful of it.*
> *Saint Landelin, pray for me. Amen.*

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Landelin from June 7 to June 15, or read the life of Saint Landelin.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Landelin

This novena is an original composition by Saintspedia, inspired by the life of Saint Landelin, a bandit who converted in the 7th century, became a priest and founded the abbeys of Lobbes, Aulne and Crespin. It is not an official liturgical text. To end it on his feast day, June 15, begin on June 7. It is suited to anyone who longs to be converted or who prays for the conversion of a loved one, and 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 Landelin, pray for us." The act of the day helps you live the novena concretely.

Day 1: The baptism of a child

Landelin was baptized at about the age of ten, and his godfather Aubert taught him the faith. That seed was never lost, even when he strayed from it.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for those who passed the faith on to me. Make grow in me all that they planted.

Today: Pray for your godfather, godmother or godchildren.

Day 2: The road of wandering

As a teenager, Landelin left his teacher and became a bandit. We all know moments when we choose the wrong path. Yet God keeps searching for us.

Prayer: Lord, come and find me where I have strayed. Do not leave me far from you.

Today: Make an honest examination of conscience before going to sleep.

Day 3: The call of death

The sudden death of a companion opened Landelin's eyes. He understood that life is short and that he had to change without delay.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to number my days, that my heart may grow wise.

Today: Pray for someone who has died, and for those who will die today.

Day 4: Returning to the father

Landelin went back to Aubert, as the prodigal son returns to his father. He was not rejected but welcomed. God's mercy always awaits our return.

Prayer: Father, I return to you. Welcome me in your mercy.

Today: Receive the sacrament of reconciliation, or prepare for it.

Day 5: Six years of penance

Landelin's conversion was not a moment of emotion. He lived six years of penance. Changing one's life takes time, perseverance and humility.

Prayer: Lord, give me perseverance on the road of conversion.

Today: Choose a small penance and keep it until the end of the novena.

Day 6: Pilgrim to Rome

Having become a priest, Landelin went to pray at the tombs of the apostles, and the pope sent him to evangelize. The forgiven sinner became a messenger of the Gospel.

Prayer: Lord, make me a witness of your mercy to others.

Today: Pray for the pope and for missionaries.

Day 7: Building where one has destroyed

Landelin founded the abbey of Lobbes on the very places of his banditry. He repaired the harm where he had done it.

Prayer: Lord, show me how to repair the harm I have done.

Today: Make a gesture of reparation toward someone you have hurt.

Day 8: A father to his brothers

Landelin founded several communities and knew how to adapt the rule to the weakness of his novices. One who has received mercy becomes patient with others.

Prayer: Lord, make me gentle and patient with those who are weak.

Today: Encourage someone who is struggling on their way.

Day 9: A peaceful death at Crespin

Landelin died at Crespin on June 15, 686, surrounded by his disciples. The former bandit had become a father of monks. God can transform everything.

Prayer: Lord, through the intercession of Saint Landelin, grant me the grace I ask in this novena, if it is your will.

Today: Give thanks for a change God has already worked in your life.

Living the novena with Saint Landelin

Saint Landelin is a precious companion for all who think their past keeps them from going to God. You can pray this novena for yourself, or for a loved one who has drifted away, who lives in violence or who is in prison. If you can, receive the sacrament of reconciliation during these nine days: it is the heart of Landelin's journey. And do not forget the role of Aubert, his godfather: pray also for those who accompany others on the road of conversion.

Closing prayer

Saint Landelin,
forgiven bandit and father of monks,
present to the Lord the intention I have carried during these nine days.
Obtain for me the grace of a true conversion,
the strength to repair the harm I have done
and the confidence never to despair of mercy.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

CREDITS

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