BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Morand

Life, prayer, novena and pilgrimage

Feast day: June 3

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IN BRIEF

Saint Morand

Benedictine monk of Cluny, prior at Altkirch, apostle of the Sundgau and patron of winegrowers (c. 1050 - 1115).

Feast day	June 3
Born	c. 1050 (or 1075 according to other sources), Rhineland, near Worms
Died	June 3, 1115, priory of Altkirch (Haut-Rhin)
Canonized	cult recognized in 1181 at the request of the bishop of Basel, according to tradition
Era	12th century
Patron saint of	Sundgau, winegrowers, vines and wine

In this booklet

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Credits and sources

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LIFE

Saint Morand

Saint Morand was a Benedictine monk of the abbey of Cluny, born in the Rhineland around 1050, who died on June 3, 1115, at the priory of Altkirch, in Alsace. A disciple of Saint Hugh of Cluny, he was sent to the Sundgau, of which he became the patron and "apostle". Since the Middle Ages he has also been invoked as the protector of winegrowers. His feast day is June 3.

Who was Saint Morand?

Morand (in Latin *Morandus*) lived at a time when the abbey of Cluny, in Burgundy, shone across all of Europe and reformed many monasteries. He was one of those Cluniac monks sent to found or restore communities. His life is known through his first biographers, taken up in the 17th century by the *Acta Sanctorum*. These accounts mix solid facts, such as his mission to Altkirch, with wondrous episodes. Historians hesitate on some points, such as the date and place of his birth. What is beyond doubt is the devotion his tomb aroused for centuries in southern Alsace.

Key dates in the life of Morand

- **c. 1050**: Born into a noble family of the Rhineland, near Worms (some traditions suggest 1075, or the region of Belfort).
- **Youth**: He studies at the cathedral school of Worms, where he is ordained a priest.
- **Shortly after**: On the way to Santiago de Compostela, he passes through Cluny; on his return, he receives the monastic habit there from Saint Hugh.
- **c. 1095**: He works for the Cluniac reform in Auvergne, notably at Mozac, which had been joined to Cluny.

- **July 3, 1105**: Count Frederick I of Ferrette gives the church of Saint Christopher at Altkirch to Cluny.
- **c. 1106**: Saint Hugh sends Morand to Altkirch, because he speaks the local language.
- **June 3, 1115**: He dies in his cell at the priory and is buried in the choir of the church.
- **1181**: According to tradition, his cult is recognized at the request of the bishop of Basel.
- **1428**: Archduke Frederick of Austria, count of Tyrol, gives the priory a head reliquary.
- **1886**: Consecration of the new church of Saint-Morand in Altkirch.

From pilgrim to monk of Cluny

According to his biographers, Morand came from a noble family and received a good education at Worms, an important episcopal city on the Rhine. Once a priest, he set out on pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint James at Compostela. On the way, he stopped at Cluny and was struck by the life of the monks and by the personality of Abbot Hugh. On his return, he asked to join the community. Hugh then sent him to Auvergne, where Cluny was extending its influence: Morand took part in the reform of several houses, notably the abbey of Mozac, where he helped restore the Rule of Saint Benedict.

The apostle of the Sundgau

In 1105, Count Frederick of Ferrette gave Cluny the church of Saint Christopher at Altkirch, in the Sundgau, in the south of Alsace. The first monks who came from Burgundy spoke the Romance language and did not understand the Alemannic speech of the inhabitants. Hugh then chose Morand, who knew both languages. At the priory, he became known for his fervor, his faithfulness to prayer and his gift for restoring peace between

people. His biographers describe him as very thin, white haired, gentle and modest. Healings are attributed to him, including that of Count Frederick, and the deliverance of troubled people. He died in his cell on June 3, 1115.

The protector of winegrowers

Several traditions made Morand the patron of the vine and of wine, in Alsace, but also in Burgundy, Champagne, Lorraine, the Rhineland and Franconia. It is said that he lived through a whole Lent on a single bunch of grapes. Another story says that one day, when the priory had no wine to receive guests, he made the Sign of the Cross over an empty barrel, which filled with excellent wine. One tradition even credits him with bringing the vine to Alsace, which belongs to legend. He is therefore shown as a monk, with a bunch of grapes in one hand and a pilgrim's staff in the other.

Devotion and relics

Morand's tomb, covered with a slab and a recumbent effigy, soon became a place of pilgrimage. Sick people who suffered in the head or limbs would place them in the two hollows of the tomb slab. A confraternity of Saint Morand was founded by the end of the 13th century. The Habsburgs, lords of the region, made him a saint of their house: in 1360, Duke Rudolf IV had part of his skull taken to Saint Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, and in 1428, Archduke Frederick gave a head reliquary to the priory. At nearby Walheim, a chapel called the "Rest of Saint Morand" keeps the memory of a rock under which, according to legend, he sheltered during a storm.

What can we learn from Saint Morand?

Saint Morand put what he had received at the service of the Gospel: his learning, his knowledge of two languages, his experience as a monk. He knew how to make himself understood by a people that was not his own and to

build a community of prayer among them. You can pray to him for winegrowers and work on the land, for Alsace and the Sundgau, for monks and nuns, for those who must learn a new language or culture, and for pilgrims.

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

Where to pray to Saint Morand

- **Church of Saint-Morand** (Altkirch, Haut-Rhin): his recumbent effigy and head reliquary, on the site of the former priory.
- **Chapel of the Rest of Saint Morand** (Walheim, Haut-Rhin): the rock linked to a legend of his life.
- **Saint Stephen's Cathedral** (Vienna, Austria): part of his skull was placed there in the 14th century.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Morand, Patron of the Sundgau and of Winegrowers

Saint Morand, a monk of Cluny sent to the priory of Altkirch, is honored as the apostle of the Sundgau and the protector of winegrowers. He died on June 3, 1115. Prayer composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It is not an official liturgical text. It entrusts to him the work of the vineyard, Alsace and all who seek God.

Prayer to Saint Morand

Saint Morand,
pilgrim on the road to Compostela,
at Cluny you found the path of your life.
Help me to recognize God's call
at the turns of my own roads.

Humble and fervent monk,
you learned the language of a people
to speak to them of Christ.
Teach me to listen to others
and to draw close to those who are different.

Patron of winegrowers,
bless the work of the land and the fruit of the vine.
May the wine on our tables be a sign of feasting and sharing,
and remind us of the blood of Christ offered for us.
Watch over Alsace and the Sundgau.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When to pray to Saint Morand

- On his feast day, June 3.
- For winegrowers, harvests and the work of the vineyard.
- For the sick, especially those suffering in the head or limbs, as the pilgrims of Altkirch did.
- Before a pilgrimage or a long journey.
- When you must adapt to a new language or culture.

A short invocation

> *Saint Morand, apostle of the Sundgau,*
> *bless our vineyards and our families. Amen.*

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Morand from May 26 to June 3, and read the life of Saint Morand.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Morand

This novena is inspired by the life of Saint Morand, monk of Cluny and apostle of the Sundgau, who died at Altkirch in 1115. Novena composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It is not an official liturgical text. To finish it on his feast day, June 3, begin on May 26. 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 Morand, pray for us." The act suggested each day helps you live the novena concretely. Some episodes come from old traditions that mix history and legend.

Day 1: Forming the mind

As a young man, Morand studied at the cathedral school of Worms. He received a solid education, which he would later put at God's service.

Prayer: Lord, bless those who study and those who teach, and make our talents serve your glory.

Act of the day: Read a few pages of a book that nourishes your faith.

Day 2: On the road to Compostela

As a priest, Morand set out on pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint James. The whole Christian life is a journey.

Prayer: Lord, walk with me on the roads of my life and lead me to you.

Act of the day: Take a walk while praying, even a short one.

Day 3: The stop at Cluny

On the way, Morand stopped at Cluny. The prayer of the monks touched him. God was waiting for him where he only meant to pass through.

Prayer: Lord, make me attentive to the signs you place on my path.

Act of the day: Step for a few minutes into a church you pass by.

Day 4: Receiving the habit from Saint Hugh

Back from pilgrimage, Morand became a monk. He entrusted himself to a father, Abbot Hugh.

Prayer: Lord, give me the humility to let myself be guided, and give your Church good spiritual fathers.

Act of the day: Pray for a priest or a guide who has helped you.

Day 5: Restoring monasteries

In Auvergne, Morand helped restore the Rule of Saint Benedict. He served wherever he was sent.

Prayer: Lord, make me available for the mission you entrust to me, even if it is not the one I would have chosen.

Act of the day: Willingly accept a task you are asked to do.

Day 6: Speaking the other's language

At Altkirch, the monks from Burgundy did not understand the local people. Morand, who spoke their language, was sent to join them.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to speak of you in words that others understand.

Act of the day: Take the time to truly listen to someone, without interrupting.

Day 7: A peacemaker

His biographers say he knew how to restore harmony. Peace is a fruit of prayer.

Prayer: Lord, make me a peacemaker in my family and around me.

Act of the day: Take a step toward reconciliation with someone.

Day 8: The fruit of the vine

Tradition makes Morand the patron of winegrowers. Wine, fruit of the earth and of human labor, becomes at Mass the blood of Christ.

Prayer: Lord, bless the work of winegrowers and farmers, and teach us to give thanks for the gifts of the earth.

Act of the day: Say grace attentively before your meal.

Day 9: Dying in his cell

On June 3, 1115, Morand died in his cell at the priory. His tomb became a place where people came to ask for healing.

Prayer: Lord, through the intercession of Saint Morand, grant me the grace I ask in this novena, if it is your will, and give health to the sick I entrust to you.

Act of the day: Pray for a sick person and, if possible, attend Mass.

Closing prayer

Saint Morand,
monk of Cluny and apostle of the Sundgau,
you served God in prayer and gentleness.
Present to the Lord the intention I have entrusted to you.
Bless the vineyards and those who work them,
and keep me faithful on the way.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

PILGRIMAGE

Church of Saint-Morand, Altkirch

The church of Saint-Morand is in Altkirch, in the Haut-Rhin, at the heart of the Sundgau, about one kilometer from the town center. It stands on the site of the former Cluniac priory where Saint Morand lived and died in 1115. His recumbent effigy and head reliquary are still venerated there. It is the main place of pilgrimage linked to the apostle of the Sundgau.

From Cluniac priory to today's church

In the 11th century, a church dedicated to Saint Christopher, served by a few canons, belonged to the counts of Ferrette. On July 3, 1105, Count Frederick I gave it to Abbot Hugh of Cluny, and a Cluniac priory settled there. Morand was sent there shortly afterward, and his tomb, in the choir of the church, soon drew crowds. The priory took his name. It then had a troubled history, marked by the greed of local lords, before passing to the Jesuits in 1621.

After the Revolution, the damaged priory church was returned to worship. At the end of the 19th century, judged too small, it was replaced by the present building, built by the architect Charles Winkler in a neo-Romanesque style inspired by Worms and Cluny, and consecrated in 1886. The buildings of the former priory are now part of the Saint-Morand hospital. The saint's funerary monument has been listed as a historic monument since 1937.

What you can see

The church houses the recumbent effigy of Saint Morand, which once covered his tomb. Pilgrims who suffered in the head or limbs used to place them in the hollows of the tomb slab to ask for healing. You can also see the head reliquary given in 1428 by Archduke Frederick of Austria, count of Tyrol, which contains part of the saint's skull. The interior was restored in 1979.

Praying on site

Before you come, you can read the life of Saint Morand. Before his effigy, entrust to him the sick, winegrowers and the Sundgau, then say the prayer to Saint Morand. These suggestions are offered by Saintspedia.

Other places of Saint Morand

- **Chapel of the Rest of Saint Morand** (Walheim, Haut-Rhin): a rock under which, according to legend, he sheltered from a storm.
- **Abbey of Cluny** (Saône-et-Loire): the monastery where he became a monk.
- **Saint Stephen's Cathedral** (Vienna, Austria): part of his skull was placed there in the 14th century.

Practical information

Altkirch can be reached by car or by train from Mulhouse. The church stands at the end of the Rue Saint-Morand, near the hospital. It is a place of worship: modest dress and silence are requested. Opening hours and Mass times may vary: check with the parish or the Sundgau tourist office before you come.

Credits and sources

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