BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Ragnebert (Saint Rambert)

Life, prayer, novena and pilgrimage

Feast day: June 13

Saintspedia · saintspedia.com

IN BRIEF

Saint Ragnebert (Saint Rambert)

Frankish nobleman exiled to the Bugey and murdered in 680 on the orders of Ebroin, honored as a martyr.

Feast day	June 13
Born	7th century, Frankish kingdom (Neustria)
Died	June 13, 680, Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey (Ain)
Canonized	immemorial cult
Era	7th century
Patron saint of	Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey

In this booklet

Life

Prayer to Saint Ragnebert (Saint Rambert) in the Face of Injustice

Novena to Saint Ragnebert (Saint Rambert)

Abbey of Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey

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 Ragnebert (Saint Rambert)

Saint Ragnebert, better known in France as Saint Rambert, was a Frankish nobleman of the 7th century, murdered in 680 in the Bugey on the orders of Ebroin, mayor of the palace of Neustria. Honored as a martyr, he gave his name to the town of Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey, in the Ain, which grew up around his tomb. His feast day is June 13.

Who was Saint Ragnebert?

Ragnebert (*Ragnebertus* in Latin) belonged to the high aristocracy of the Frankish kingdom in Merovingian times. His story is like that of several saints of that age: men of power caught in the violent struggles of the court, whose unjust death the faithful received as a martyrdom. The main elements of his life come from the hagiographical tradition gathered by historians of the diocese of Belley, especially Jean-Irénée Depéry in the 19th century. Some details should therefore be received with caution, but the setting is clearly historical: Neustria dominated by Ebroin, exile in the Bugey, a violent death and a cult that arose at once around his tomb.

Key dates in the life of Ragnebert

- **7th century**: Born into an illustrious Frankish family; his father, Duke Radebert, governs the lands between the Seine and the Loire.
- **c. 658**: Ebroin becomes mayor of the palace of Neustria; the young Ragnebert already arouses his jealousy.
- **662**: Ragnebert signs, in third place, a charter of the abbey of Saint-Denis, a sign of his high rank.
- **Afterwards**: Accused of plotting, he is sentenced to death; thanks to Saint Ouen, archbishop of Rouen, the sentence is changed to exile in the Bugey.

- **June 13, 680**: Two men sent by Ebroin run him through with a lance near the monastery founded by Saint Domitian, while he prays on his knees.
- **Shortly after**: The monks bury him in their cloister; his tomb becomes a place of pilgrimage, and the town of Saint-Rambert grows up around the abbey.
- **12th century**: His cult spreads to Lyon and the Forez, where part of his relics is moved.
- **1793**: His relics, still kept at Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey, are placed in a gilded wooden reliquary.

A great lord facing Ebroin

Ragnebert grew up in a powerful milieu. His father, Duke Radebert, was one of the great men of Neustria. Very young, he stood out both for his skill with arms and for his love of study. A charter of the abbey of Saint-Denis, dated 662, bears his signature in third place, which shows his standing at court.

This success worried Ebroin, who had become mayor of the palace of Neustria around 658, a man known to be violent and autocratic. Rumors spread of a plot by several great lords, including Ragnebert, to overthrow him. Ebroin wanted him put to death. Saint Ouen, archbishop of Rouen, intervened on his behalf and obtained that the sentence be changed to exile. Ragnebert was sent to the Bugey, at the foot of the Jura, under the guard of a local lord named Theodefrid.

Death in the Bugey

Ebroin had not given up his plan. He sent two henchmen to kill the exile. They caught up with him near the monastery founded long before by Saint Domitian on the banks of the Brevon. Ragnebert asked to be allowed to pray

one last time in a nearby chapel. They refused. Then, on his knees, he commended his soul to God, and one of them ran him through with a lance. According to tradition, it was June 13, 680.

Devotion and art

The monks gathered his body and buried it in their cloister, then moved it near the altar of their church. According to tradition, wonders multiplied at his tomb, and pilgrims flocked there. A town grew up under the protection of the abbey and took the martyr's name: Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey. In the 12th century, devotion to him reached the monastery of Île-Barbe, in Lyon, where the church of Saint-Rambert-l'Île-Barbe stands, then the Forez: a count named Gillinus obtained part of his relics for the priory of Saint-André, near Montbrison, the origin of Saint-Rambert-sur-Loire. Saint-Rambert-d'Albon, in the Drôme, also bears his name.

At Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey, the abbey was secularized in 1788 and its church destroyed in 1793. The saint's relics, however, were saved: that year they were placed in a gilded wooden reliquary topped with a crown, and they are still kept in the town. He is often shown at the moment of his martyrdom, kneeling and struck by a lance, as in the stained-glass window of the church of Saint-Antoine at Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey.

What can we learn from Saint Ragnebert?

Ragnebert had everything needed to succeed in the world: birth, talent, a place at court. He lost it all through the jealousy of a powerful man. Exiled, then killed, he made his death a prayer, asking only to be able to turn to God. His story speaks to those who suffer injustice, slander or the rivalries of power. You can pray to him for victims of political violence, for exiles, and for the grace to forgive those who hurt us.

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

Where to pray to Saint Ragnebert

- **Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey** (Ain): his relics, and the old abbey with its Romanesque crypt of Saint-Domitien.
- **Saint-Rambert-l'Île-Barbe** (Lyon): the church that bears his name, near the old monastery of Île-Barbe.
- **Saint-Rambert-sur-Loire** (Saint-Just-Saint-Rambert, Loire): the old priory that received part of his relics.
- **Saint-Rambert-d'Albon** (Drôme): the church of the town that bears his name.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Ragnebert (Saint Rambert) in the Face of Injustice

Saint Ragnebert, or Saint Rambert, a great Frankish lord exiled to the Bugey by the jealousy of Ebroin, was killed by a lance in 680 while he prayed on his knees. Prayer composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It entrusts to him those who suffer injustice, exiles and those who find it hard to forgive.

Prayer to Saint Ragnebert

Saint Ragnebert,
you who had received birth, talent and honors,
you lost everything through the jealousy of the powerful.
Teach me not to set my heart
on what the world can take from me.

Exiled far from your own,
you found your true home in prayer.
Watch over those who must leave their country,
over the victims of slander and violence,
and over those persecuted for the truth.

You who died on your knees,
commending your soul to God,
obtain for me peace of heart in trial,
and the grace to forgive those who wound me.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When to pray to Saint Ragnebert

- On his feast day, June 13.
- When you are the victim of injustice, rivalry or slander.
- For exiles and political refugees.
- For those who hold power, that they may resist jealousy and violence.
- When forgiveness seems impossible.

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Ragnebert from June 5 to 13, and read the life of Saint Ragnebert.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Ragnebert (Saint Rambert)

This novena accompanies Saint Ragnebert, or Saint Rambert, a Frankish nobleman exiled to the Bugey and murdered in 680. 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 13, begin on June 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 Ragnebert, pray for us." The act of the day helps you live the novena concretely.

Day 1: An illustrious birth

Ragnebert was born into one of the great families of the Frankish kingdom. He had received much: a name, wealth, an education.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for all I have received. Teach me to use it for you and for others.

Act of the day: List three gifts you have received from God and thank him for them.

Day 2: Talent and study

As a young man, he stood out for his skill and his love of study. Talents are a treasure, but they can also attract envy.

Prayer: Lord, keep me from pride when I succeed, and from jealousy when others succeed.

Act of the day: Rejoice sincerely in someone else's success and tell them so.

Day 3: The jealousy of a powerful man

Ebroin, mayor of the palace, saw him as a rival. Jealousy leads to slander, then to violence.

Prayer: Lord, free our hearts from jealousy and protect those who suffer from it.

Act of the day: Give up all criticism and gossip today.

Day 4: A friend who intercedes

Saint Ouen, archbishop of Rouen, stepped in to save his life. There are friends who take risks to defend the innocent.

Prayer: Lord, give me the courage to defend those who are unjustly accused.

Act of the day: Speak up for someone who is being badly spoken of.

Day 5: Exile

Ragnebert was sent far from home, into the mountains of the Bugey. He lost his place, his loved ones and his bearings.

Prayer: Lord, be the refuge of exiles and refugees, and give them a brotherly welcome.

Act of the day: Pray for refugees, or support an organization that welcomes them.

Day 6: The threat returns

Ebroin had not given up. He sent two men to kill him. Injustice sometimes seems never to end.

Prayer: Lord, support those who live in fear, threatened or persecuted.

Act of the day: Pray for victims of political violence around the world.

Day 7: Asking to pray

Facing his murderers, he asked only to pray one last time in a chapel. They refused. He prayed where he was.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to turn to you in every circumstance, even when all seems lost.

Act of the day: Take a moment of prayer wherever you are, in the middle of your day.

Day 8: Dying on his knees

On his knees, commending his soul to God, he was run through with a lance. His unjust death became a witness.

Prayer: Lord, help me place my life in your hands with trust.

Act of the day: Pray for someone who has hurt you.

Day 9: A town born from a tomb

Pilgrims came to his tomb, and a town was born: Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey. Ebroin's violence did not have the last word.

Prayer: Lord, through the intercession of Saint Ragnebert, grant me the grace I ask in this novena, if it is your will, and give me peace of heart.

Act of the day: Attend Mass if you can, and entrust to God a situation of injustice you know of.

Living the novena with Saint Ragnebert

Saint Ragnebert did not choose to die: he was killed by the jealousy of a man of power. But he lived that death turned toward God, and the faithful recognized him as a martyr. During these nine days, you can carry victims of injustice, exiles, and those who must forgive a deep wound. If you can, go to Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey.

Closing prayer

> *Saint Ragnebert,*
> *exile and martyr of the Bugey,*
> *you gave your life to God under the blows of violence.*
> *Present to the Lord the intention I have entrusted to you.*
> *Keep me from jealousy and hatred,*
> *and give me a heart that forgives.*
> *Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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

PILGRIMAGE

Abbey of Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey

The old abbey of Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey stands in the Ain, on a plateau overlooking the town, about a hundred meters from the Brevon stream. It was near this monastery that Saint Ragnebert, or Saint Rambert, was murdered in 680, and it was here that the monks buried him. Around his tomb grew the town that bears his name.

From Saint Domitian's monastery to the abbey of Saint-Rambert

According to tradition, the monastery was founded in the 5th century by Saint Domitian, a hermit who settled with disciples above the spring of the Brevon. In the 7th century, Ragnebert, a Frankish nobleman exiled to the Bugey by Ebroin, mayor of the palace, was killed on the way to the abbey. The religious gathered his body and buried it in their cloister. Pilgrims soon came to pray at his tomb, and the monastery took the martyr's name.

Around 807, the abbey was restored by Leidrad, archbishop of Lyon, and entrusted to Benedictine monks. It reached its peak in the 12th century: answering directly to the Holy See, it owned lands as far as Savoy. Secularized in 1788, it was sold during the Revolution; its church was destroyed in 1793. In 1838, a landslide made it possible to rediscover the crypt, which had been thought lost. Since 1949, sisters of Our Lady of the Missions have lived in the buildings.

What you can see

Only a few buildings of the abbey remain, including the prior's house, which is more recent, and above all the Romanesque crypt of Saint-Domitien, dated to the 9th and 10th centuries, with an apse and two side apses. It has been a listed

historic monument since 1945. Capitals and carved fragments from the abbey have been reused in the church of Saint-Antoine, in the town, which also keeps a stained-glass window showing the martyrdom of Saint Rambert. The saint's relics, saved from the Revolution and placed in 1793 in a gilded wooden reliquary, are still kept at Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey.

Praying on site

Before you come, you can read the life of Saint Ragnebert. In the crypt or in the church, entrust to him victims of injustice, exiles and those who find it hard to forgive, then say the prayer to Saint Ragnebert. These suggestions are offered by Saintspedia.

Practical information

Saint-Rambert-en-Bugey lies in the Albarine valley, between Ambérieu-en-Bugey and Tenay, and can be reached by car or train. The abbey buildings are home to a religious community: the conditions and times for visiting the crypt may vary. Check with the abbey, the parish or the tourist office before you come. Please respect the quiet of the place.

Credits and sources

Texts: Saintspedia (saintspedia.com). The sources cited in each part are those of the corresponding page of the website. Biographical data partly from Wikidata (CC0). Font: EB Garamond (SIL Open Font License).



More free booklets

Lives of the saints, prayers, novenas and places of pilgrimage: find all the booklets to print at

saintspedia.com