

BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Romaric

Life, prayer, novena and pilgrimage

Feast day: December 10

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IN BRIEF

Saint Romaric

Austrasian nobleman turned monk, co-founder with Saint Amé of the monastery of Remiremont in the 7th century.

Feast day	December 10
Born	late 6th century, Austrasia (eastern Frankish kingdom)
Died	December 8, 653, Saint-Mont monastery, Remiremont (Vosges, France)
Canonized	time-immemorial veneration; relics raised in 1049 by Leo IX
Era	7th century
Patron saint of	Remiremont

In this booklet

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Credits and sources

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LIFE

Saint Romaric

Saint Romaric was a Frankish nobleman of Austrasia, a former courtier, who gave up his goods to become a monk at Luxeuil, in the great family of Saint Columbanus. Around 620, with Saint Amé, he founded a monastery on a hill in the Vosges, the Saint-Mont, which gave its name to the town of Remiremont. He was its abbot until his death in 653. His feast day is December 10 (the Roman Martyrology mentions him on December 8).

Who was Saint Romaric?

Romaric was born at the end of the 6th century into a family of the high aristocracy of Austrasia, the eastern Frankish kingdom, around Metz. His father, Romulf, fell victim to the bloody struggles that tore apart the Merovingian royal family in the time of Queen Brunhild: he lost his life, and his goods were confiscated. The young Romaric grew up in this insecurity, then recovered his place at court and his estates.

His life is known to us from a *Life* written in the 7th century by a monk of Remiremont, shortly after his death, and from the Life of his companion Saint Amé. These accounts, close to the events, are valuable, even if they sometimes embellish things, as was the custom of saints' biographies of the time.

Key dates

- **Late 6th century**: Born in Austrasia, into a noble family.
- **Early 7th century**: His father Romulf is killed in the struggles between the Merovingian kings; Romaric later becomes a courtier and a friend of Arnulf, the future bishop of Metz.
- **c. 613-614**: He meets Amé, a monk of Luxeuil, and decides to leave everything.

- **c. 614**: He frees his slaves, gives away his goods and enters the abbey of Luxeuil, then led by Saint Eustace.
- **c. 620**: With Amé, he founds a monastery on his estate of the Habend, the hill now called Saint-Mont.
- **c. 627-629**: At Amé's death, he becomes abbot of the monastery.
- **653**: He goes to Metz to try to calm the kingdom's political troubles, then returns to die at the Saint-Mont, on December 8.
- **1049**: Pope Saint Leo IX, a former bishop of Toul, raises his relics at Remiremont.

The nobleman who left everything

Romaric was a man who had everything: rich, powerful, a friend of the kingdom's great. One day he heard the preaching of Amé, a monk of Luxeuil. According to his *Life*, this meeting overwhelmed him: through the monk, he heard the Gospel's call to sell what he owned in order to follow Christ.

Romaric took these words literally. He freed his slaves, distributed a large part of his goods and entered the abbey of Luxeuil, founded a few years earlier by Saint Columbanus, as a simple monk. There the former lord learned obedience, work and prayer.

The founding of the Saint-Mont

Around 620, Romaric and Amé founded a new monastery on an estate he had kept, a fortified hill called the Habend, above the meeting of the Moselle and the Moselotte. The communities there followed the Rule of Saint Columbanus. The monastery welcomed mostly women, who took turns day and night to sing God's praises without interruption, in the custom called *laus perennis*, perpetual praise.

The place took the name "mount of Romaric," *Romarici Mons*, from which the name Remiremont comes. Later, the community came down into the valley, and the abbey of Remiremont became one of the most famous in Lorraine.

The abbot and the friend of Arnulf

At Amé's death, Romaric became abbot. He led the community for nearly thirty years. His friend Arnulf, bishop of Metz, also gave up his office around 629 and withdrew as a hermit near Remiremont, where he died. The two friends from court thus met again in the life of prayer.

In 653, already old, Romaric left his mountain one last time. Worried by the intrigues threatening the kingdom, he went to Metz to make the voice of peace heard before the powerful. He returned to the Saint-Mont and died there soon after, on December 8, 653.

Veneration and remembrance

Romaric was venerated from his death at the Saint-Mont. In 1049, Pope Saint Leo IX, a native of Alsace and former bishop of Toul, raised his relics at Remiremont, the equivalent of a canonization at that time. He is entered in the Roman Martyrology on December 8; in France, he is often celebrated on December 10, since December 8 is the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. He is shown as an abbot, with a crosier.

What to remember about Saint Romaric

Romaric received everything: nobility, wealth, the friendship of kings. He also knew violence, since his father was killed by the powerful. He could have sought revenge; he chose the Gospel. He freed his slaves, gave away his goods and devoted his life to the praise of God. His last journey to Metz shows that

he had not forgotten the world: he prayed for it and wanted peace. You can pray to him to learn detachment, to know how to forgive, and for peace among leaders.

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

Where to pray to Saint Romaric

- **Remiremont** (Vosges): the Saint-Mont, site of the monastery he founded with Saint Amé.
- **Remiremont**: the former abbey church, heart of the abbey that inherited his foundation.
- **Luxeuil-les-Bains** (Haute-Saône): the Basilica of Saint Peter, on the site of the abbey where he became a monk.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Romaric to Let Go and to Forgive

Saint Romaric was a powerful nobleman of the court of Austrasia. His father had been killed in the struggles of the kingdom; he chose the Gospel, freed his slaves, gave away his goods and became a monk at Luxeuil, before founding the Saint-Mont monastery at Remiremont with Saint Amé. This prayer is an original composition inspired by his life, not an official liturgical text. It asks for the grace of detachment, forgiveness and praise.

Prayer to Saint Romaric

Saint Romaric,
you had wealth, rank and the friendship of kings,
and you left it all
to follow the poor Christ.

Wounded by the violence of the powerful,
you did not seek revenge.
You freed those who served you
and you made of your hill
a place of praise that stopped neither day nor night.

Teach us to hold our possessions with a light hand,
to forgive the wounds of the past,
and to give God the first place.
Pray for those who govern,
that they may seek peace and justice.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When to pray to Saint Romaric

- On his feast day, December 10, or on December 8 according to the Roman Martyrology.
- When money, status or career takes up too much room in your life.
- When a family wound pushes you toward resentment.
- For a person discerning a religious vocation.
- For peace among political leaders.

A prayer of praise

At the Saint-Mont, the nuns sang God's praises without interruption. You can join in that prayer with these few words:

> *Lord, may my life be a praise to you,*
> *by day as by night.*
> *Saint Romaric, pray for us. Amen.*

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Romaric from December 2 to December 10, and read the life of Saint Romaric.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Romaric

This novena is an original composition by Saintspedia, inspired by the life of Saint Romaric, an Austrasian nobleman turned monk, who founded the monastery of the Saint-Mont at Remiremont with Saint Amé and died in 653. It is not an official liturgical text. To finish it on his feast day, December 10, begin on December 2: it then accompanies the beginning of Advent. It can be prayed at any 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. Finish with: "Saint Romaric, pray for us." The act of the day helps you live the novena in a concrete way.

Day 1: A wounded childhood

Romaric lost his father, killed in the struggles between the Frankish kings. His goods were confiscated. Many people carry wounds from their childhood in this way. God does not erase them, but he can heal them.

Prayer: Lord, I bring you the wounds of my past. Heal what needs to be healed in me.

Today: Entrust a painful memory to God in silence.

Day 2: Refusing revenge

Romaric could have sought to avenge his father. He chose another path. Forgiveness does not deny the injustice, it refuses to make it the law of one's life.

Prayer: Lord, give me the strength to forgive those who have wronged me.

Today: Pray for a person toward whom you hold a grudge.

Day 3: Meeting Amé

The preaching of a monk of Luxeuil upended Romaric's life. God often comes through a word, an encounter, a witness who dares to speak the Gospel.

Prayer: Lord, make me attentive to your word when it reaches me through others.

Today: Read the Gospel of the rich young man (Matthew 19:16-22).

Day 4: Freeing others

Before entering the monastery, Romaric freed his slaves. His conversion had concrete consequences for those who depended on him. Following Christ changes the way we treat others.

Prayer: Lord, show me where I must give back their freedom and dignity to those who depend on me.

Today: Pray for the victims of modern slavery, or support an organization that helps them.

Day 5: Giving away his goods

Romaric gave away a large part of his wealth. We are not all called to leave everything, but all of us are called to hold our possessions with a light hand.

Prayer: Lord, free my heart from attachment to money and things.

Today: Make a generous gift to a charity.

Day 6: Becoming a simple monk

At Luxeuil, the former lord became a brother among the others. He learned obedience and work. Humility is the door to every spiritual life.

Prayer: Lord, teach me humility. May I not think myself above others.

Today: Do a humble task that you usually leave to others.

Day 7: Perpetual praise

At the Saint-Mont, the nuns sang God's praises day and night, taking turns. The Church's prayer never stops: at every hour, somewhere, someone is praising God.

Prayer: Lord, let my life become praise. I join all who are praying to you at this moment.

Today: Pray Lauds or Vespers, or a psalm of praise.

Day 8: A faithful friendship

Arnulf, Romaric's friend from court, became bishop of Metz, then also withdrew near Remiremont. The two friends met again in prayer. A true friendship grows with God.

Prayer: Lord, bless my friends. Grant that we may help each other to follow you.

Today: Check in on an old friend.

Day 9: A last journey for peace

Shortly before his death, Romaric came down from his mountain to go to Metz and speak of peace to the powerful. The monk had not forgotten the world. Then he returned to die among his own.

Prayer: Lord, give peace to our world and wisdom to those who govern. Through the intercession of Saint Romaric, grant me the grace I ask in this novena, if it is your will.

Today: Pray for the political leaders of your country.

Living the novena with Saint Romaric

This novena falls at the beginning of Advent, a time of preparation and stripping away. Saint Romaric invites you to make room for God: in your schedule, in your possessions, in a heart cluttered with grudges. During these nine days, you can choose a concrete renunciation, an act of sharing and a daily time of prayer. And if an old wound dwells in you, entrust it to this saint who knew how to turn an injustice suffered into a path of holiness.

Closing prayer

Saint Romaric,
nobleman who became poor, monk and founder of the Saint-Mont,
you chose Christ over wealth and revenge.
Present to God the intention I have carried during these nine days.
Teach me to forgive,
to share what I have received,
and to make my life a praise.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

PILGRIMAGE

The Saint-Mont of Remiremont

The Saint-Mont is a wooded hill in the Vosges that overlooks Remiremont and the meeting of the Moselle and the Moselotte. It was here that Saint Romaric and Saint Amé founded a monastery around 620, on an ancient fortified site called the Habend. The place gave its name to the town, Remiremont, the "mount of Romaric."

The cradle of the abbey of Remiremont

The Saint-Mont monastery was one of the first rural monasteries of Lorraine. Communities there followed the Rule of Saint Columbanus and sang God's praises without interruption. Saint Amé and Saint Romaric died there, and were first venerated there.

Later, the community of women settled in the valley, where the famous abbey of Remiremont developed. The Saint-Mont remained a place of prayer and pilgrimage. A chapel, built in the 18th century, stands at the summit today, and archaeological digs have uncovered remains of the site's ancient occupation.



The Saint-Mont, the hill where Saint Romaric and Saint Amé founded their monastery.

Visiting the Saint-Mont

The Saint-Mont rises north of Remiremont, above the commune of Saint-Amé. It is reached on foot by forest paths, among the fir trees. At the summit, the chapel and the remains invite silence. The climb itself is a small pilgrim's walk. On the slopes, the chapel of Vieux Saint-Amé, near a cave, recalls the memory of Saint Amé.

Praying on site

Before your visit, you can read the life of Saint Romaric. At the summit, entrust to him what you find hard to let go of, a wound you want to forgive and the peace of the world, then recite the prayer to Saint Romaric. These suggestions are offered by Saintspedia.

Other places of Saint Romaric

- **Remiremont**: the former abbey church, in the heart of the town, heir to the monastery he founded.
- **Luxeuil-les-Bains**: the Basilica of Saint Peter, on the site of Saint Columbanus's abbey where he became a monk.
- **Metz**: the city where he made his last journey, and where his friend Saint Arnulf was bishop.

Practical information

The Saint-Mont is visited on foot; bring good shoes, water and clothing suited to the weather in the Vosges. The site is in the midst of nature: please stay on the marked paths. For access conditions, any guided tours and celebrations, check with the parish or the Remiremont tourist office before you come.

CREDITS

Credits and sources

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