BOOKLET TO PRINT

Saint Trudpert

Life, prayer, novena and pilgrimage

Feast day: April 26

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IN BRIEF

Saint Trudpert

7th-century missionary hermit, from Ireland according to tradition, honored as a martyr in the Breisgau.

Feast day	April 26
Born	late 6th century, Ireland according to tradition (origin disputed)
Died	c. 607 or c. 644, depending on the sources, Münstertal, in the Breisgau (Baden-Württemberg, Germany)
Canonized	immemorial cult
Era	7th century

In this booklet

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Credits and sources

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LIFE

Saint Trudpert

Saint Trudpert was a missionary hermit of the 7th century, honored as a martyr in the Breisgau, in what is now southwestern Germany. Coming from Ireland according to the most widespread tradition, he settled in a valley of the Black Forest, south of Freiburg, where he was killed around 607 or around 644, depending on the sources. The Benedictine abbey of St. Trudpert, at Münstertal, keeps his memory alive. His feast day is April 26.

Who was Saint Trudpert?

Trudpert belongs to the generation of monks and hermits who, in the 6th and 7th centuries, brought the Gospel to the Alemanni, between the Rhine and Lake Constance. His name is Germanic, and historians disagree about his origins: many say he was Irish, others think he was a native of the region. What we know of his life rests on a Life written in the 9th century, at the time of the translation of his relics, then revised in the 10th and 13th centuries. This late account mixes real memories with legendary elements: it should be read as a witness to the veneration that surrounded him rather than as a precise biography.

Key dates in the life of Trudpert

- **Late 6th century**: Born, in Ireland according to the most common tradition; some authors believe he came from the land of the Alemanni.
- **Early 7th century**: According to his Life, he goes to Rome and receives from the pope the mission to proclaim the Gospel.
- **Shortly after**: He reaches the Breisgau, where a lord named Otbert gives him land in a valley south of Freiburg.

- **The following years**: He clears the land, builds a hermitage and a chapel, and lives in prayer and work.
- **c. 607 or c. 644**: He is killed with an axe by one of the servants placed at his service; Otbert buries him.
- **8th century**: A monastery is built on the place of his death.
- **815**: Translation of his relics and writing of his first Life.
- **10th and 13th centuries**: His Life is revised; his cult grows around the abbey that bears his name.

A hermit in the Black Forest

According to the account, Trudpert did not want to set out on his own initiative: he first went to Rome to receive his mission from the pope. This detail, common in the Lives of missionaries, stresses his attachment to the universal Church. Arriving among the Alemanni, in the Breisgau, he met a nobleman named Otbert, who gave him a piece of wooded land in a valley at the foot of the mountains, south of Freiburg.

There Trudpert lived the life of the first hermits: he cleared the forest, built a cell and a small chapel, and divided his days between prayer, manual work and asceticism. Otbert had given him a few servants to help with the hardest work. Around him, Christianity was slowly gaining ground in a region still marked by the old cults.

A violent death

The Life tells that one day, while Trudpert was resting under a fir tree, one of these servants, unhappy with the heavy tasks he was given, struck him dead with an axe. Otbert buried him with respect on the very spot. Strictly speaking, Trudpert was not put to death for refusing to deny his faith; but tradition

honored him as a martyr, because he gave his life in the service of the Gospel in a mission land. The sources do not agree on the date: some give 607, others 644.

Devotion and art

In the following century, a monastery rose on the place of his death. It became the Benedictine abbey of St. Trudpert, one of the oldest in the Black Forest. In 815, his relics were solemnly translated, and his first Life was written at that time. They rest in the abbey church; a portion was entrusted to the abbey of Ettenheimmünster, in Baden. The valley itself, Münstertal, takes its name from the monastery.

Saint Trudpert is celebrated on April 26. He is most often shown with the martyr's palm and an axe, the weapon of his murderer. He is venerated as one of the first apostles of the Breisgau, and his cult remains alive in the region of Freiburg.

What can we learn from Saint Trudpert?

Trudpert is a witness to the patience of beginnings. He did not found a great institution in his lifetime: he cleared a patch of forest, built a chapel and prayed. On that humble furrow others built after him an abbey that lasted more than a thousand years. His death, caused by the ingratitude of a man he provided for, also reminds us that serving others is not always repaid. You can pray to him for missionaries, for those who work the land and the forest, and for those who begin a work without seeing its fruit.

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

Where to pray to Saint Trudpert

- **St. Trudpert Abbey**, at Münstertal (Baden-Württemberg, Germany): built on the place of his death, it keeps his relics.
- **Ettenheimmünster** (Baden-Württemberg): the former abbey that received part of his relics.
- The churches of the Freiburg region that keep his memory.

PRAYER

Prayer to Saint Trudpert for Missionaries and All Who Sow

Saint Trudpert, a hermit who came from Ireland according to tradition, cleared a valley of the Black Forest to pray there and proclaim the Gospel, before being killed there in the 7th century. Prayer composed for Saintspedia, in the spirit of Church tradition. It entrusts to him missionaries, those who work the land, and all who begin a work without seeing its fruit.

Prayer to Saint Trudpert

Saint Trudpert,
you left your land to bring Christ
to peoples who did not know him.
Give me a willing heart,
ready to go where God sends me.

In the forest of the Breisgau
you cleared, built and prayed,
seeking neither glory nor success.
Teach me the patience of beginnings
and faithfulness in small things.

You who were struck down by the one you provided for,
keep me from resentment and bitterness,
and help me to serve without expecting a return.
Watch over missionaries,
over those who work the land and the forest,
and over all who sow for others.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When to pray to Saint Trudpert

- On his feast day, April 26.
- For missionaries and those who proclaim the Gospel far from home.
- For farmers, foresters and those who work with their hands.
- When you begin a work you will not see completed.
- When you suffer from the ingratitude or violence of someone you have helped.

A short invocation

> *Saint Trudpert, hermit and martyr,*
> *you who sowed the Gospel in the forest,*
> *pray for us. Amen.*

To prepare for his feast, you can pray the novena to Saint Trudpert from April 18 to April 26, and read the life of Saint Trudpert.

NOVENA

Novena to Saint Trudpert

This novena accompanies Saint Trudpert, a 7th-century missionary hermit who was killed in the Black Forest valley where he had built his hermitage. 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 26, begin on April 18. 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 Trudpert, pray for us." The act suggested each day helps you live the novena concretely. The episodes recalled come from his Life, written two centuries after his death, which mixes history and legend.

Day 1: Leaving one's country

According to tradition, Trudpert came from Ireland. Like Abraham, he left his land and his kin to go where God was calling him.

Prayer: Lord, give me the inner freedom to follow you, even when it costs me to leave my habits behind.

Act of the day: Pray for a missionary or for someone living far from their home country.

Day 2: Receiving a mission

His Life says that he first went to Rome to receive his mission from the pope. He did not want to proclaim the Gospel in his own name, but in the name of the Church.

Prayer: Lord, keep me united to your Church, and make me a faithful witness, not a preacher of myself.

Act of the day: Pray for the pope and for the bishop of your diocese.

Day 3: Welcomed by a benefactor

In the Breisgau, the lord Otbert gave him land. Without this benefactor, the hermitage would not have existed. Every mission needs generous hands.

Prayer: Lord, bless those who support the works of the Church with their goods and their time.

Act of the day: Make a gift, even a small one, to a missionary work.

Day 4: Clearing the ground

Trudpert began by clearing the forest. Before building, the ground must be cleared. In our lives too, we sometimes have to cut away what is choking us.

Prayer: Lord, help me to clear room for you within me, by giving up what clutters my life.

Act of the day: Tidy away or give away something you do not need, and offer this to God.

Day 5: Building a chapel

In the middle of the forest, he built a small chapel. On it, later, a great abbey was built.

Prayer: Lord, make my home a place where you are prayed to, and bless the small chapels where your name is called upon.

Act of the day: Go into a church or chapel and pray there for a few minutes.

Day 6: Praying and working

His days were shared between prayer, manual work and asceticism. The work of our hands can become a prayer.

Prayer: Lord, sanctify my work today, and help me to do it with care and for your glory.

Act of the day: Offer to God, at the start, a difficult task of your day.

Day 7: Serving without being repaid

Trudpert was killed by one of the servants who helped him, unhappy with his work. He knew ingratitude, like Christ betrayed by one of his own.

Prayer: Lord, heal the wounds caused by those I have helped, and give me the grace to forgive.

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

Day 8: The grain that falls to the ground

His death seemed to end his work. Yet a monastery was born on his tomb and lasted more than a thousand years. The grain that fell to the ground bore fruit.

Prayer: Lord, help me to sow with trust, even if I do not see the harvest.

Act of the day: Encourage someone who is losing heart in their commitment.

Day 9: A martyr of the mission

The Church honors Trudpert as a martyr, because he gave his life in the service of the Gospel. He is shown with the palm and the axe.

Prayer: Lord, through the intercession of Saint Trudpert, grant me the grace I ask in this novena, if it is your will, and keep me faithful to the end.

Act of the day: Attend Mass if you can, and pray for persecuted Christians.

Closing prayer

> *Saint Trudpert,*
> *hermit of the Black Forest and witness to the Gospel,*
> *you sowed with patience*
> *and gave your life in the service of God.*
> *Present to the Lord the intention I have entrusted to you.*
> *Keep me faithful in work and in prayer.*
> *Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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

PILGRIMAGE

St. Trudpert Abbey

The abbey of St. Trudpert stands at Münstertal, in the southern Black Forest (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), about twenty kilometers south of Freiburg im Breisgau. According to tradition, it rises on the spot where the hermit Trudpert lived and was killed in the 7th century. His relics rest in the abbey church.

A monastery born from a hermitage

According to his Life, Trudpert received from a lord named Otbert a piece of land in this valley. He cleared it and built a cell and a chapel there. After his violent death, Otbert buried him on the spot. In the following century, a monastery was founded on his tomb. In 815, his relics were solemnly translated and the first account of his life was written.

The monastery followed the Rule of Saint Benedict and became one of the oldest abbeys of the Black Forest. It gave its name to the valley, Münstertal, the "valley of the monastery". Over the centuries the abbey was destroyed and rebuilt several times, then secularized in the early 19th century, like most of the monasteries of Baden. In the 20th century, a congregation of sisters settled in the buildings, which became once again a place of consecrated life.

What you can see

The present complex dates mostly from the Baroque period. The abbey church, bright and richly decorated, is the heart of the site: it is there that the relics of Saint Trudpert are venerated. Visitors find the saint shown with his attributes, the martyr's palm and the axe. Around it, the convent buildings and the setting of the valley, between forests and pastures, help one understand the solitude the hermit was seeking.

Praying on site

Before you come, you can read the life of Saint Trudpert. In the church, entrust to him missionaries, those who work the land and the forest, and those who are beginning a difficult work, then say the prayer to Saint Trudpert. April 26, his feast day, is a special time for this pilgrimage. These suggestions are offered by Saintspedia.

Practical information

Münstertal can be reached by car from Freiburg im Breisgau or Staufen, and the valley is also good walking country. The abbey is home to a religious community: modest dress and silence are requested in the church and near the buildings. Opening hours and service times may vary: check with the community or the Münstertal tourist office before you come.

Credits and sources

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