



Saint Verena

Saint Verena is an early Christian saint and hermit associated with the Theban Legion.

She is especially venerated in Switzerland, where her cult is attested in Bad Zurzach, the reported place of her burial, from at least the 5th century. She is recognized as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church as well as in the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Oriental Orthodox Churches.



Saint Verena - 2

The oldest tradition of the life of Verena is found in the so-called *Vita prior* by [Hatto](#), the abbot of [Reichenau](#) (and later bishop of Mainz), written in c. 888. The younger *Vita posterior* was most likely written by a monk in Zurzach in the 11th century, the oldest extant copy dating to the 12th century.

According to Hatto's account, Verena was born in [Thebes](#) as the daughter of a notable Christian family. She was educated by a bishop named Chaeremon (*Vita prior*, ch. 3). A bishop Chaeremon of Nilopolis is mentioned by [Eusebius](#) as martyred in 250, which would place Verena's birth before that date.

After the death of Chaeremon, Verena travelled to Lower Egypt with a group of Christians, where the [Theban Legion](#) was being recruited. With the Theban Legion, she then travelled to [Milan](#) (*Vita prior* ch. 4).

While still in Milan, she heard of the martyrdom of the Theban Legion (an event of uncertain historicity, traditionally dated to 286, during the reign of [Maximian](#)) and travelled to [Agaunum](#) (modern-day [Saint-Maurice](#)). In later sources, she is said to have buried the martyred legionnaires.

She then moved on to Salodurum ([Sulothurn](#)) and joined [a hermitage](#), and spent her days in fasting and prayer, and working miracles. Hatto presents her as a prototype of the [consecrated virgin](#), telling that she attracted a following of young virgins. She was at one point imprisoned by a local governor, and Saint Maurice appeared to her in jail to console and strengthen her. After she was released from, she continued her good works. At the end of her natural days, she retired into a narrow cave.

The year of her death was calculated as 344 by Johannes Laurentius Huber (1812–1879), provost at Verenamünster in Zurzach.^[1] If her birth before 250 is accepted (based on the identification of her mentor, bishop Chaeremon), this would imply that she was more than 95 years old at the time of her death.

Saint Gall (Gallus)

According to hagiographic tradition Saint Gall (550-646) was a disciple and one of the traditional twelve companions of Saint Columbanus on his mission from Ireland to the continent. Saint Deicolus was the elder brother of Gall. The fragmentary oldest *Life* was recast in the 9th century by two monks of Reichenau, enlarged in 816–824 by Wettinus, and about 833–884 by Walafrid Strabo, who also revised a book of the miracles of the saint. Other works ascribed to Walafrid tell of Saint Gall in prose and verse. According to the 9th-century hagiographies, Gallus as a young man went to study under Comgall of Bangor Abbey.



St Gall - 2

He accompanied Columbanus on his voyage up the Rhine River to Bregenz but when in 612 Columbanus travelled on to Italy from Bregenz, Gall had to remain behind due to illness and was nursed at Arbon. He remained in Alemannia, where, with several companions, he led the life of a hermit in the forests southwest of Lake Constance, near the source of the river Steinach.



St Gall - 3

In the year 625, on the death of Eustasius, abbot of Luxeuil, a monastery founded by Saint Columbanus, members of that community were sent by the monks to request Saint Gall to undertake the government of the monastery. He refused to quit his life of solitude, and undertake any office of rank which might involve him in the cares of the world. He was then an old man.

He died at the age of ninety-five around 646–650 in Arbon.



St Gall - 4

The Carolingian-era monastery has existed since 719 and became an independent principality between 9th and 13th centuries. For many centuries it was one of the chief Benedictine abbeys in Europe. It was founded by Saint Othmar on the spot where Saint Gall had erected his hermitage.



St Germanus

Saint Germanus of Granfelden was born ca. 612 in Trier; † 675 near Moutier (today in canton of Bern, Switzerland). He was the first abbot of Moutier-Grandval Abbey.

Germanus hailed from a family of senators in Trier. He became a monk in Remiremont monastery near Metz, later in Luxeuil Abbey. When around 640 the monastery of Moutier-Grandval was founded, Abbot Waldebert of Luxeuil put him in charge of the monastery in which Germanus served for 35 years.

According to legend, Duke Eticho wanted to subdue in 675 the area around Delémont. Germanus and Randoald met him for negotiations near Courtételle (southwest of Delémont). After discussions Germanus and Randoald were slain on their way back by supporters of the Duke.

His day is 21 February. His crosier, one of the oldest remaining, is kept at *Musée jurassien d'art et d'histoire* in Delémont.

Saint Wiborada

There are two biographies of Wiborada: one by Hartmann, a monk of St. Gall, written between 993 and 1047 ([BHL 8866](#)); and another written between 1072 and 1076 by the monk Herimannus ([BHL 8867](#)).

Wiborada was born to a wealthy noble family in Swabia. When they invited the sick and poor into their home, Wiborada proved a capable nurse. Her brother Hatto became a priest. A pilgrimage to Rome influenced Hatto to decide to become a monk at the Abbey of Saint Gall, a decision which Wiborada supported. After the death of their parents, Wiborada joined Hatto and became a Benedictine at the Abbey of Saint Gall.



Saint Wiborada - 2

Wiborada was charged with some type of serious, and was subjected to the medieval practice of ordeal by fire to prove her innocence. Although she was exonerated, the embarrassment probably influenced her next decision: withdrawing from the world and becoming an ascetic.

When she petitioned to become an anchoress, Solomon III, Bishop of Konstanz, arranged for her to stay in a cell next to the church of Saint George near the monastery, where she remained for four years before relocating to a cell adjoining the church of Magnus of Füssen in 891.

She became renowned for her austerity, and was said to have a gift of prophecy, both of which drew admirers and hopeful students. One of these, a woman named Rachildis, whom Wiborada had cured of a disease, joined her as an anchoress. A young student at St. Gall, Ulrich, is said to have visited Wiborada often. She supposedly prophesied his elevation to the episcopate of Augsburg.



Saint Wiborada - 3

In 925, she predicted a [Hungarian invasion](#) of her region. Her warning allowed the priests and religious of St. Gall and St. Magnus to hide the books and wine and escape into caves in nearby hills. The most precious manuscripts were transferred to the monastery at [Reichenau Island](#). However, the main refuge castle for the monks and the abbot was the Waldburg in the Sitterwood. Her abbot, [Engilbert](#), urged Wiborada to escape to safety, but she refused to leave her cell.

In 926 the [Magyar marauders](#) reached St. Gall. They burned down St. Magnus and broke into the roof of Wiborada's cell. Upon finding her kneeling in prayer, they [clove](#) her skull with a *fokos* ([shepherd's axe](#)). Her companion Rachildis was not killed, and lived another 21 years, during which her disease returned.

Saint Wiborada was formally canonized by the Holy See, by [Pope Clement II](#) in 1047.



Ulrich of Augsburg

Ulrich of Augsburg (893 – 4 July 973), sometimes spelled **Uodalric** or **Odalrici**, was Bishop of Augsburg in Germany. He was the first saint to be canonized not by a local authority but by the Pope.

Much of the information concerning Ulrich is derived from the *Life of St Ulrich* written by Gerhard of Augsburg sometime between 982 and 993. Ulrich was born in 890 at Kyburg, Zurich in present-day Switzerland.

Ulrich of Augsburg

Through the influence of his maternal uncle, Burchard II, Duke of Swabia, and other relatives, Ulrich was appointed bishop of Augsburg by Henry I of Germany, and was consecrated on 28 December 923. He sought to improve the low moral and social condition of the clergy. The See of Augsburg reached the period of its greatest splendor under Ulrich.