

Saint Wulfran • Saint stories

Imagine you are an altar server, helping the priest at Mass, and you drop the paten. (A *paten* is the little plate that holds the Eucharist.) Even worse, imagine Mass is on a boat and you drop it into the ocean. OOPS!

Fortunately for this young man (who was a deacon), the priest saying Mass was St. Wulfran. The saint told him to stretch out his arm over the spot on the waves where it dropped. Miraculously, it reappeared in the deacon's hand!

Wulfran lived long, long, long, *LOOOOOONG* ago in Europe. His father was in the military and for a while he was too. But Wulfran spent all his time thinking about God and had no cares about worldly things. So as soon as he was able to, he received the sacrament of Holy Orders.

In 682, the local archbishop died and the other clergy in the area along with the citizens chose Wulfran to become the new bishop. For two-and-a-half years he faithfully served as the bishop, but his heart longed to become a poor missionary priest. After much prayer and with the permission of his superiors, he resigned as bishop and became a poor missionary priest.

He traveled by boat to one area to preach. It was on this journey that the paten was dropped in the ocean. The miracle of it appearing back in the hands of the deacon was the first sign that this missionary trip would be successful. (Ever have a time when just everything felt right and you knew you were about to do a good job with the task you needed to do?) On this missionary trip, Wulfran converted many, many, *MANY* pagans (people who worshiped false gods) to Christianity. These pagans were ones who believed in human sacrifice. (This is where they choose someone to be killed to make their gods happy. The one true God never wants us to do this!) By

converting these pagans, he was helping to get rid of these horrible sacrifices. One of the converts was the son of King Radbod.

Unfortunately, there were still many pagans who refused to convert to Christianity. One day these pagans decided it was time to sacrifice a young boy to their god. When St. Wulfran heard about the boy that was about to be sacrificed, he begged for this not to happen. He even went to King Radbod and pleaded to save the boy's life.

"No," the king said. "The gods need to be made happy by us killing this boy!"

"But even your son is now a Christian. He doesn't want you to do it either," the saint argued.

It was decided that if St. Wulfran's God would save the boy, then he could live. But first, this boy was to be offered as a sacrifice to their god. The boy was hung with a rope. There he stayed for two hours before the rope broke.

Everyone assumed he had died. But when Wulfran checked on him, he was still breathing. The saint said to him, "Stand up," and he did. GOD HAD SAVED HIM! (When this boy grew up, he became a priest.)

Another time two children were to be sacrificed to the false gods. They were taken out into deep water to drown. After praying for guidance, Wulfram walked out on the water to where they were! He took both their hands and the three walked back to the shore and their joyful mother.

These events helped convince many of the pagans who had yet to convert to become Christian.

St. Wulfran died peacefully March 20, 720.

Feast day: March 20

St. Wulfran, pray for us!

Activity: Hangman

Ever play this game before? It's fun.

Pretend the person who thinks up the word is King Radbod and the person guessing the letters is Saint Wulfran. Is Saint Wulfran able to save the boy?

You need at least two players.

One person thinks of a word or phrase and puts a dash for each letter. The other person guesses letters. Each letter guessed is placed on the appropriate dashes. If the letter does not appear in the word or phrase at all, then it is written down on the side and a body part is drawn. The goal is to guess all the letters of the word or phrase before the whole body is drawn and the boy is "hung."

For even more fun, choose the words from the story of St. Wulfram.