

Kilian

Born: 640 AD

Died: 689 AD

Feast Day:

8 July



**DERRY DIOCESAN
CATECHETICAL
CENTRE**

According to Irish sources, Kilian was born to noble parents in Cloughballybeg, near Mullagh in the south-east of what is now County Cavan in Ireland. Some records state that Kilian served as a monk in the celebrated monastery at Hy, (Iona) He began his education in Rosscarbery (the School of Ross), County Cork, and completed it in County Kerry.

In the summer of 686, Kilian, with eleven companions, travelled through Gaul to Rome to receive missionary faculties from the Pope, arriving in late autumn and meeting with Pope Conon. From there they travelled to the castle of Würzburg, which was inhabited by the East Frankish ruler, Duke Gozbert, who was, like his people, still pagan.

The original group moved onto other fields of missionary work, while Kilian with two companions, the priest Colmán (also called Colonan or Kolonat) and the deacon Totnan, remained in Würzburg.

Kilian made this town the base of his activity, which extended over an ever-increasing area in East Franconia and Thüringen (Thuringia).

His missionary endeavours were successful until he converted Gosbert, who had married Geilana, his brother's widow. According to legend, while Gosbert was away on a military expedition, Geilana is reputed to have had the three missionaries beheaded when she found that Gosbert was going to leave her after Kilian had told him the marriage was forbidden by the Church.

Kilian is patron of those who suffer from rheumatism. He is also the patron saint of the parish of Tuosist, near Kenmare in County Kerry, where he is believed to have resided before travelling to Germany.

A church and holy well are named after him and his feast day, July 8, is traditionally celebrated with a *pattern** (devotions) when crowds visit the well for prayers, followed by evening social events. {* corruption of patron} {(Irish: pátrún))

He is also the patron saint of Paderborn, Germany.