

St. Rupert of Salzburg, Bishop

d. 718

Feast Days: March 27 (in the Roman calendar), September 24 (in Austria)

Patron saint of salt miners and the Diocese of Salzburg



St. Rupert was the first abbot of Salzburg, from 696 to his death in 718. He is variously considered to be Frankish or Irish, but developed a reputation for holiness while preaching in Worms. Theodo, Duke of Bavaria, sent a request to Rupert to come to Bavaria to instruct him in the faith. Rupert accepted, and baptized Theodo and his entire entourage in the town of Regensburg, where the Duke had traveled in his excitement to meet Rupert.

In the following years, under the patronage of Theodo and his son Theodobert, Rupert spread the Gospel message throughout Bavaria, and succeeded in converting or re-converting whole regions. Rupert asked Theodo for the right to build a church among the ruins of the ancient Roman town of Juvavia. This Theodo granted, and Rupert founded St. Peter's Church and Abbey and the Nonnburg convent, the oldest continuing monastery and convent in the German-speaking world. Around the Benedictine monks and nuns who accepted Rupert's call grew the town of Salzburg. To this day, September 24 is marked throughout Austria with a St. Rupert's Day country fair, *Ruperti Kirtag*.

St. Rupert's remains are interred in a crypt in St. Peter's Church (at right). If you ever get to Salzburg -- a more charming setting for a city is difficult to imagine -- stop by St. Peter's and ask St. Rupert for his blessing. This I did, and, not wanting to be one to beg and run, I have since invoked St. Rupert often.



Saint Rupert, shepherd of the Lord's flock, pray for us!