

Hungarian Saints

Saint Ladislaus (László) of the Árpád Dynasty (1040–1095)



László I, an early king of Hungary, was responsible for bringing peace and stability to his country in the eleventh century, laying the groundwork for Hungary's transformation to a great European power.

Assuming the throne in 1077, László attempted to restore order in the country, which had experienced political turmoil and economic chaos in previous decades, by instituting a strict code of law, consolidating royal power, and defending Hungary from invaders. He also expanded the country's holdings by claiming the throne of Croatia in 1091. One of his most notable accomplishments was providing political and financial support for the spread of Christianity in Hungary.

László was a legendary figure who was beloved by his subjects for his military prowess, diplomatic skill, religious devotion, and chivalric ideals. He had three daughters with his wife, Princess Adelaide of Rheinfelden. One of them, Prisca married John II Komnenos, heir to the Byzantine throne. In the orthodox religion, she is known as Saint Irina, and is held in high respect, even to the present day. He ordered the canonization of King Stephen, Prince Emery and Bishop Gerard.

László was stricken with an illness and died on July 29, 1095. In his nearly 20-year reign of Hungary, he had restored the political and economic integrity of the country, allowing the nation to not only survive, but launch a successful strategy of expansion. His fabled exploits in battle as well as his firm guidance of his subjects through civil and religious reforms secured him an honored place in Hungarian history.

His coronation in 1092 demonstrated the importance of László's role not only as a political leader, but as a champion of the growth of the Christian religion in Europe.

He was canonized in 1192, his feast celebrated at Jun 27.