



St Dyfrig

St. Dyfrig, was one of the founders of Orthodox monasticism in Wales and a builder of many monastic communities.

According to tradition, when Dyfrig was once preaching on the isle of Ynys Eurddil, an angel appeared before him and instructed him to find a white sow with piglets and to build a monastery in honour of the Holy Trinity on that site. On the following day Dyfrig, indeed saw a sow in the bushes. The saint fulfilled the will of God and built on that spot a monastery, which was called "Moch-Ross", that is, "the hogs' place". The location was perfect for a monastery with woods and an abundant water supply nearby. According to his life, Dyfrig was a man of holiness, wisdom, eloquence, love and prudence and his fame spread all over Wales. Not only the uneducated, but also the learned came to him for instruction.

Later medieval traditions refer to Dyfrig as bishop of Caerleon and even archbishop of the entire Welsh Church. This saint is mentioned in the life of St. Samson of Dol, written around 600 AD. Most likely Dyfrig ordained Samson a deacon, priest, consecrated him a bishop and appointed him abbot of a monastery in the holy island of Caldey off the Pembrokeshire coast. It was said that during the consecration both Sts. Dyfrig and Illtyd saw the Holy Spirit descending on St. Samson in the form of a dove.

Occasionally Dyfrig himself liked to retreat to Caldey for prayer in solitude, especially during the Lenten Fast. Dyfrig was a close friend of such famous saints as [Illtyd](#) and [Cadoc](#). Near the monastery of St. Cadoc, St. Dyfrig even built a tiny cell for himself.

Wherever he went, he laid his hands on the sick and the possessed, and many people were delivered from their sufferings. One day a wealthy man came to Dyfrig, fell on his knees before the saint and with tears implored him to heal his possessed daughter. A demon tormented the poor girl so badly that the relatives had to have her arms and legs tied, otherwise the evil spirit would have forced her to drown herself, or jump in the fire, or bite everyone she met. Dyfrig prayed with all his heart to God, St. Peter and all the saints for the girl, and a miracle occurred: The demon left the girl immediately, and she, grateful to the Lord and St. Dyfrig, devoted all her life to the service of the Lord in a convent.

He lived as a hermit on the island of Bardsey in Wales, for the final years of his life.

On May 23, 1120, the precious relics of St. Dyfrig were translated to Llandaff Cathedral near the Welsh capital of Cardiff.