



Saint Landry of Paris, A Breviary dedicated to him and used in Paris, 1414. Courtesy Archives Nationales, Paris, France.

The Parish Church of St. Landry in Paris was a small church under the jurisdiction of St. Germain l'Auxerrois and dedicated to Saint Landry; however, by 1160, it had become its own independent church parish. The church was originally a small chapel near Saint Landry's home. He was accustomed to praying in the chapel daily.

In 1792, St. Landry Church was sold and it became a manufacturing building producing dyes. In 1828, the building was torn down. It is interesting to note that when the Parish Church of St. Landry was sold in 1792 to a manufacturing family, the church in Opelousas changed its name from the Parish Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Post of Opelousas to the Parish Church of St. Landry. When the old building in Paris was torn down in 1828, it was the same year the first brick church of St. Landry was dedicated in Opelousas (built in 1827).

One of the last remaining objects from St. Landry's Church in Paris is the original baptismal font. It was hidden prior to the French Revolution and was later returned to the Church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, where it is on display today.

Original baptismal font from St. Landry's Church in Paris. Courtesy of L'église de Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris.



There are three chapels dedicated to Saint Landry in Paris: a chapel at Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois (where his tomb is located); a chapel at the Cathédrale de Notre-Dame de Paris; and, a small, modern chapel at the Hôtel-Dieu de Paris.

In addition, Saint Landry is depicted in stained-glass windows, small statues, and sculptures in Paris. One is prominently placed above the main door at the Church of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois. Also, at his tomb at Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, there is a statue and several paintings. Another commanding statue of Saint Landry is in the Chapel of St. Landry at the Cathédrale de Notre Dame. There is also a small statue of Saint Landry behind the high altar of St. Landry's Church in Opelousas as well as a stained-glass window in the rear of the church. A life-size bronze sculpture of the Bishop-Saint sits prominently on the courthouse square in downtown Opelousas.

Saint Landry is both the patron saint of Opelousas and the civil parish of St. Landry. His feast day, June 10, is celebrated each year in Paris and in Opelousas.



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WHO WAS SAINT LANDRY?

A HISTORY OF SAINT LANDRY, BISHOP OF PARIS



ST. LANDRY CATHOLIC CHURCH
OPELOUSAS, LOUISIANA

WHO WAS SAINT LANDRY?



The Charity of Saint Landry, Jacobus de Varagine, 1470. Courtesy Archives Nationales, Paris, France.

St. Landry Catholic Church in Opelousas, Louisiana, honors the Bishop-Saint Landry of Paris, France. He is the patron saint of the church in Opelousas.

There were actually four Saint Landrys. However, the church in Opelousas takes its name from Saint Landry, Bishop of Paris, serving 650 - 661 A.D., also known as Saint Landry the Confessor.

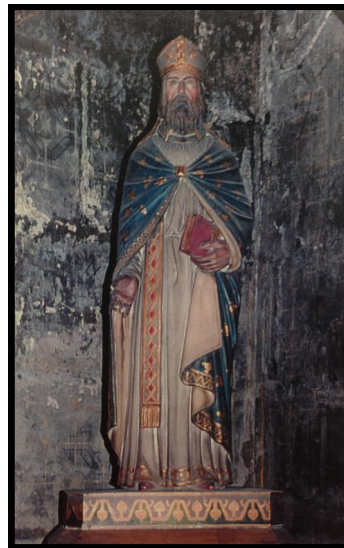
In 650, during the reign of Clovis II, Saint Landry, or *Saint Landri*, (*Sancte Landericus* in Latin) succeeded Audobertus as Bishop of Paris. Prior to serving as bishop, Saint Landry was the chief clerk at the Royal Chancellery.

During a famine in 651, Saint Landry sold all of his personal possessions, as well as some of the furniture and sacred vessels of the church, to feed the poor. Later that same year, Saint Landry founded a hospi-

The cover: Statue of Saint Landry. Courtesy of Cathédrale Notre Dame de Paris.

tal, dedicated to St. Christopher, near the Cathédrale de Notre Dame (which later developed into the Hôtel-Dieu de Paris. It is Paris' oldest public hospital).

In 653, at the Council of Clichy, Saint Landry and 23 other bishops signed the foundation charter granted by King Clovis II, for the newly established Abbey of St. Denis, a Benedictine monastery, which was to be exempt from episcopal jurisdiction. After Clovis' death in 657, Balthild, wife of Clovis II and later regent, founded monasteries and supported the reform of old monasteries, including St. Denis, along new principles, including that of independence from the local bishop. The new privilege of St. Denis ensured that the bishop of Paris would no longer be able to exact payment for his liturgical duties or use the monastic funds when he needed;



Tomb of Saint Landry. Courtesy L'église de Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, Paris.

Saint Landry acquiesced, saying, "the request of the king is for us like a command which it is extremely difficult to resist."

It is believed that Saint Landry built the original church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, which became the church parish of the kings of France in the 7th century.

It was rebuilt several times, giving it mixtures of several architectural styles such as Roman, Gothic and Renaissance.

During the French Wars of Religion, the sounding of St. Germain l'Auxerrois' bell on the night of August 23, 1572, marked the beginning of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, when thousands of Huguenots were murdered.

Bishop Landry was very keen when it came to administrative matters. He asked his servant, a monk named Marculf, to draw up a formulary of documents for use in legal and administrative matters, resulting in *Marculf's Formulas*, which were dedicated by the author to Saint Landry.



Saint Landry stained-glass window, St. Landry Catholic Church, Opelousas.

Saint Landry served as Bishop of Paris until his death, which occurred in 661. According to a manuscript found in St. Germain l'Auxerrois' archives by Bishop Pierre d'Orgemont in 1408, Saint Landry's body was buried there by Bishop Maurice de Sully in 1171.

Bishop Pierre d'Orgemont gave two of Saint Landry's bones to the Parish Church of St. Landry in 1408; however, they were destroyed, along with other saints' and martyrs' relics, prior to the French Revolution, and were scattered in and around the Church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés.