MARC MAISON

120, rue des rosiers
93400 Saint Ouen
(France)
tel: +33.(0)6.60.62.61.90
contact@marcmaison.com



According to an old popular prayer, Hubert, prince of Aquitaine in the Frank Empire, who had left the path of Christian faith, had a vision while out hunting: he saw Jesus on a cross hanging between the antlers of a stag. This revelation inspired him to convert and pursue the holy life. Thus began the legend of the first bishop of Liège, patron of huntsmen, one of the most popular saints of the Catholic calendar.
Saint Hubert was born in Aquitaine in the 7th century. His father was named Bertrand and is said to have been the Duke of Aquitaine, descendant of Chlothar I, King of the Franks. Hubert lived quite freely in the court and gave himself up to the joys of hunting. Around 682, he married Floribanne, daughter of King Dagobert, count of Leuven, who gave him a son named Floribert. She died in childbirth and Hubert retreated from the court and withdrew into the forests of Ardennes. Before this, his contemporaries spoke of him as loving the « wild joys of a wordly life ». Then one day, by the grace of God and the advice of Saint Lambert, he set on the path to sainthood. Hubert became a disciple of Saint Lambert, renounced his military career and gave his birthright to the Aquitaine to his younger brother. He later became Bishop of Liège. He died May 30th, 717, in Tervuren near Brussels and was buried in the collegiate church of St. Peter, Liège, where he had been Bishop.
The cult of Saint Hubert – the huntsmen, was developed by huntsmen and nobles for who hunting with hounds was an occasion to show their valor and virtues : bravery, fearlessness, virtuosity in wielding weapons. Hunting thus played an important role in aristocratic culture, which explains the prominent role Saint Hubert played in their devotions. Very early on he was also seen as the healer of rage, essentially transmitted by dogs.



- photo 1 : miniature representing Saint Hubert’s vision.
- photo 2 : miniature representing Saint Hubert’s vision.

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