



St. Dymphna (Seventh Century)  
Patron Saint of Alzheimer's Disease, Other Forms  
of Dementia, and Mental Illness

Dymphna had a father who became mentally unstable after the death of his wife, so much so that he became convinced that Dymphna was her mother. To escape these attentions, Dymphna and her chaplain, Gerebernus, fled from her home in Ireland to what is now Gheel, Belgium. Her father hunted them down and killed them both.

When the remains of Sts. Dymphna and Gerebernus were discovered in the ninth century, many people who suffered from mental illness were healed after praying at the tomb. Gheel became a center of pilgrimage, as well as a place where the mentally ill were treated.

Feast Day: May 15

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