

# Anthelm of Belley

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*Saint Name:* St Anthelm of Belley

*Dates:* 1107 – June 26, 1178

*Location:* France

*Feast Day:* June 26

Anthelm of Belley was born near Chambery, France in 1107. Not much is known of his family or of the years before his dedication to God. At the age of thirty, Anthelm resigned his position a clergyman with an ecclesiastical benefice to become a Carthusian monk. Within two years, he was appointed abbot of Le Grande Chartreuse. This monastery was well known for its excellent wine, but was in shambles and in need of many major repairs. Anthelm engineered these repairs, along with a defensive wall and an aqueduct. He improved the crop yields and enlarged the sheep flock, increasing revenues, which he disbursed to all who needed help throughout the countryside. He was an effective administrator. As minister-general, Anthem also united the various charterhouses of the Orders, standardized rules of conduct and allowed women to enter the Carthusians in their own charterhouses. He held his office for the next twenty-four years, during which Anthelm spent a few years as a hermit, reflecting on God's good Grace. In 1152, he returned to defend Pope Alexander III against the antipope Victor IV and 11 years later Pope Alexander III appointed him as bishop of Belley, France. Again, Anthelm set out to reform the clergy and regulate affairs, going so far as to excommunicate a local noble, Count Humbert of Maurienne, who had taken one priest captive and murdered another for trying to free the first. Count Humbert appealed to Rome and won a reversal, so Anthelm left Belley in protest. He felt that Count Humbert had not repented for his sins. Pope Alexander III then requested Anthelm travel to England to mediate a dispute between King Henry II and St. Thomas Becket. Anthelm's health was such that he was unable to make the journey; so he then returned to Belley to care for the poor and sick where he remained until his death June 26, 1178 at the age of 72. On his deathbed, Anthelm received Count Humbert and recognized that at that time Humbert truly had repented.



St Anthelm of Belley was a highly principled priest but was not canonized – he was proclaimed a saint by early Christians. We celebrate his feast day on June 26, 1178.