

= Peter of Canterbury =

Peter of Canterbury or Petrus (died c . 607 or after 614) was the first abbot of the monastery of SS . Peter and Paul in Canterbury (later St Augustine 's Abbey) and a companion of Augustine in the Gregorian mission to Kent . Augustine sent Peter as an emissary to Rome around 600 to convey news of the mission to Pope Gregory I. Peter 's death has traditionally been dated to around 607 , but evidence suggests that he was present at a church council in Paris in 614 , so he probably died after that date .

= = Life = =

It is presumed that Peter was a native of Italy , like the other members of the Gregorian mission . This mission was dispatched by Pope Gregory the Great in 596 to Christianize the Anglo @-@ Saxons from their native Anglo @-@ Saxon paganism . It landed in Kent in 597 , and soon converted King Æthelberht of Kent , who gave Augustine the land on which he founded the abbey that later became St Augustine 's , Canterbury .

The medieval chronicler Bede records that sometime after the mission 's arrival in England , probably in late 600 , Peter , along with fellow @-@ missionary Laurence , was sent back to Gregory . This deputation was to relay the news of Augustine 's successes in Kent , and to request more missionaries . They also conveyed to the pope a number of inquiries from Augustine about how to proceed with the mission , and when they returned in 601 , they brought back Gregory 's replies to Augustine .

Peter became the abbot of the monastery that Æthelberht founded in Canterbury , originally dedicated to the saints Peter and Paul , but later rededicated as St Augustine 's , after the leader of the mission . Bede describes Peter as both abbot and presbyter , a word usually translated as priest .

= = Death and veneration = =

Peter drowned while crossing the English Channel on the way to Gaul , at a place called Ambleteuse , near Boulogne . At first he was buried hastily nearby , but Bede reports that after a light illuminated the grave every night , the locals realised Peter was a saint and exhumed him and re @-@ interred him in Boulogne . The actual date of death is unknown , and since his feast day was celebrated on two different days , 30 December or 6 January , that information does not clear up the mystery . The date of his death is reported to have been 1 year , 7 months and 3 weeks after Augustine 's , by Thomas of Elmham , a 15th @-@ century chronicler . If this is true , this would give a year of death between 605 and 611 . This information , however , is contradicted by the fact that Peter was present at the Council of Paris in 614 , convened by Chlothar II . It is possible that he died during his return from the Council of Paris .

Peter is considered a saint , with a feast day on 6 January . His cult was confirmed in 1915 . A Vita Petri , or Life of Peter , written by Eadmer in the 12th century , exists in manuscript form , but it is unreliable . There is evidence that Peter was the object of veneration in Boulogne in the 15th century , and a church in that town was associated with Peter , although probably not from the start of his cult .