



ST. JAMES THE GREAT

FEAST DAY - JULY 25

James was the brother of John the Evangelist; and the Gospels tell us that the two brothers left their father, Zebedee, and followed Jesus as soon as He called out to them. (Matthew 4:18-22)



James was one of the three apostles who were particularly close to the Lord. He was there with the Lord and his brother, John, and Peter at the Transfiguration and in the Garden of Gethsemane.



When James was beheaded by order of King Herod of Agrippa (Acts 12:1-2), he became the first apostle to shed his blood for Christ. He was martyred in A.D. 44 in Jerusalem.



He is known as James "the Greater" to distinguish him from the other apostle by the same name. The title has little to do with his function or the people's regard for him. Rather, it was a term indicating that he was the elder of the two.



He is the patron saint of Spain and of pilgrims. In northwestern Spain, he is venerated at Santiago de Compostela, a mediaeval pilgrimage site that is still very popular today.

The coveted scallop seashell is a symbol unique to the pilgrimage of St. James. The scallop shell was greatly treasured and worn proudly on the breast or hat; and it became the equivalent of a passport identifying travelers as pilgrims. Homes along the route would invite shell-wearing pilgrims to stay overnight; and to this day, pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela, Spain, identify themselves with a seashell.

Our Patron Saint
