



St. John (Apostle & Evangelist)

Feast day: December 27th

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:16 is one of the most widely quoted and recognized bible verses.

Today, we celebrate St. John – an apostle, an evangelist, a brother and a missionary – who recalled this teaching of Jesus and wove it into his Gospel.

John and his brother James were among of the first disciples of Jesus. They were the sons of a fisherman in Galilee – Zebedee – and their mother Salome, who ministered to several disciples. Jesus referred to the two brothers as “sons of thunder.” Many believe this characterizes the brothers as zealous and animated. Both Mark 9:38 and Luke 9:54 share the story of John and James wanting to call down fire from heaven to punish the Samaritan towns that did not accept Jesus. They were truly passionate followers of Jesus.

Much like St. Andrew and his brother St. Peter: Jesus called, and John and James followed. Matthew 4:21-22 paints the scene where James and John “were in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him.”

John – also known as St. John the Divine – penned three letters in the New Testament and the fourth Gospel. He was a major player in developing and supporting the early Church, especially after the Resurrection. It is in John's Gospel where he and James are standing on the shores of the Sea of Tiberias when they see the risen Lord. John was with Peter when the first great miracle after the Resurrection took place—the cure of the man crippled from birth—which led to their spending the night in jail together.

John – like many missionaries – spread the Good News after Jesus' Ascension. He stood faithfully at the cross when Jesus made him the guardian of the Blessed Virgin Mary. After the Assumption of Mary, John went to Ephesus (in present day Turkey). He was later banished by the Roman authorities to the Greek Island of Patmos; this is where tradition says he wrote the Book of Revelation. St. John continues to be a missionary, through his Gospel and the witness he gives.

John is the patron saint of love, loyalty, friendships, and authors. His symbol is an eagle.

St. John, pray for us.