



logo©2004 by R Fulwiler

Seasoning the Seasons™

The Institute for Christian Formation, Inc.

Text©2013 by Sandra A. Chakeres. All rights reserved.

Saint James, Apostle

Saint James, Apostle

On July 25, the Church celebrates the Feast of St. James, Apostle. He was the brother of St. John, and the son of Zebedee. He is sometimes called St. James the Greater, to distinguish him from the other apostle named James, who was the son of Alphaeus. James and his brother John were fishermen, as were Simon (Peter) and his brother, Andrew. These four men were the first four of the apostles whom Jesus called to follow him.



Apostle James Zebedee
(Detail of Transfiguration)
Location: St Panteleimon, Nerezi

James was present at some of the most dramatic moments of Jesus' ministry, including the Transfiguration. James was also the first of the twelve apostles to be martyred. Acts 12:2 provides a record of his martyrdom. He was beheaded by a decree of King Herod Agrippa around the year 44.



Saint (James)
Carlo Crivelli,
circa 1480

According to Spanish tradition, the apostles took the body of James to Spain for burial. This city in northern Spain is called Santiago de Compostela, "Santiago" being the Spanish name for Saint James. The cathedral built at Santiago de Compostela has been a major pilgrim destination for well over a thousand years. Huge celebrations are held there each year on July 25 celebrating the Feast of Saint James.

A shell is one of the major symbols associated with St. James. One legend says the boat carrying St. James' body to Spain encountered a storm, and that the body was washed ashore, unharmed but covered with shells. Another legend has to do with St. James saving the life of a knight whose horse threw him into the sea. It is said the knight was saved, unharmed but covered in shells. Whatever the case may be, over the centuries the pilgrims following the Way of St. James to Santiago de Compostela have usually been distinguished by carrying a crooked staff with a shell attached, or by wearing a shell. The

pilgrimage, itself, has been marked by shells along the way. The shell is also a symbol of baptism, and served as a handy cup or dish for pilgrims to use to get a drink of water or eat some food. The grooves in the shell, coming together at one point, also attest to the different routes to Santiago de Compostela.

St. James is the Patron Saint of Spain, Guatemala, Nicaragua, pilgrims, scallops, and oysters! So if July 25th doesn't find you as a pilgrim at Santiago de Compostela, or at the annual Whitstable Oyster Festival always held in Britain near this Feast Day, at least enjoy a nice seafood dinner, perhaps some Coquille St. Jacques (a scallop recipe), named for St. James!

