

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time



**Feast of St. James: Patron of our Parish**

Today, July 25, our Parish community celebrates the Feast of St. James the Greater, one of our Parish's Patron Saints. St. James the Greater was, with his brother John, one of the original twelve Apostles selected by Jesus during his public ministry. As a parish community, we beseech St. James to watch over us as we take up the challenge and embrace the privilege of being modern-day apostles. We ask James, our patron and protector, to bless our efforts to follow Christ and to do His will. In the Mass of St. James, the opening prayer is as follows:

*"Almighty Father, by the martyrdom of St. James, You blessed the work of the early Church. May his profession of faith give us courage and his prayers give us strength. We ask this through Christ our Lord."*

St. James the Greater was, with his brother John, one of the "Sons of Zebedee." Together the brothers were called the "Boanerges," i.e., "Sons of Thunder," which one can only guess was because of their ardent and perhaps impulsive nature. They were fishermen with their father along the Sea of Galilee, until Jesus called them beyond their ordinary work to the extraordinary work of fishing for disciples of the Kingdom. The Gospels seemed to indicate that James along with Peter and John were somewhat of a favored "threesome," who were called to a deeper level of revelation and intimacy. The Gospels report that Peter, James, and John were the ones present when Jesus raised Jairus' daughter to life from her death bed; it was they who were with Jesus on the mountain when He was gloriously transfigured; and again, it was they who helped Jesus endure the agonies of Gethsemane, until they feel asleep from exhaustion.

When Jesus ascended to heaven, He sent His trusted disciples on missions in the power of His Holy Spirit. James, we are told, brought the Gospel to Spain. Upon his return to Galilee, Herod Agrippa I martyred him. "He [Herod] killed James the brother of John with the Sword." [Acts of the Apostles]

There is a spiritual tradition that has James' body miraculously transported to Spain, the scene of the Apostle's first labors. It is this tradition that accounts for the world famous shrine of "St. James at Compostella," one of the most famous shrines in Medieval Christendom. Even today, it is an important and treasured pilgrimage site for worldwide Christians to visit the tomb of St. James in Compostella.

As a matter of note, we should be careful not to confuse St. James the Greater with the other Apostle, St. James the Lesser, the relative of the Lord, who was the ruling elder of the Church of first century Jerusalem and to whom the Epistle of James is credited. [The somewhat unfortunate terms, "Greater" and "Lesser," are not intended to refer to the relative merit of these two apostles but most likely refer to their age differences or perhaps their relative physical stature.]

**This Week at St. AJ**

**Saturday, July 24**

9:00AM Mass *Holy Souls in Purgatory*  
3:00PM Wedding Duffy / Washkalavitch GLS  
5:00PM Wedding Parente / Robinson GLS

**The 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – Feast of St. James July 25**

10:00AM Mass *Rose and Joseph Candeloro & Maryann DeMarco*  
Catholic Forum meets today after 10:00 Mass in Newman Center.  
11:30AM Mass *In Memory of Mrs. Daniel W. Dietrich II*  
5:00PM Mass *In Memory John J. O'Connor, Jr.*  
No 10:00PM Mass for Summer – Resumes Sunday, September 5

**Monday, July 26**

No 7:30 AM Mass for Summer – Resumes Tuesday, September 7  
12:05PM Mass *In Praise of God*  
1:00PM Mass Celebrated at Drexel Chapel Monday - Thursday

**Tuesday, July 27**

12:05PM Mass *In Memory of Lawrence and James*  
1:00PM Mass *in Thanksgiving for Blessings Received*

**Wednesday, July 28**

12:05PM Mass *In Memory of Mrs. Daniel W. Dietrich II*  
12:30PM to 2:00PM Church is open today. Please ring Rectory bell

**Thursday, July 29**

12:05PM Mass *Special Intentions*  
1:00PM Mass *In Memory of Dr. George and Virginia*

**Friday, July 30**

12:05PM Mass *In Memory of Nunzio Gatto*  
No 1:00PM Mass at Drexel on Fridays during Summer term

**Saturday, July 31**

9:00AM Mass *Holy Souls in Purgatory*  
No 4:00PM Confessions for Summer – By Request or Appointment  
No 5:30PM Vigil Mass for Summer – Resumes Saturday, Sept. 4

**Feast of St. James - continued**

In the parish Church of St. Agatha-St. James, there are seven stained Glass windows high above the Main altar. The central window depicts St. James the Greater. After the dedication of the Church on October 16, 1887, the Philadelphia press offered this assessment of these windows: "The seven clere stained windows are among the finest specimens in the city."

In all representations of Saint James the Greater the apostle, he is shown with a scallop shell. The shell has several levels of meaning: as a seashell, it depicts James' dual vocations: first, as an ordinary fisherman; and then, his higher calling in Jesus' service as a fisher of Men. Also, the scallop shell, in medieval times was a mark of a Christian pilgrim. It is a sign for us, too, because while we may not be on a physical pilgrimage, we certainly are spiritual pilgrims.

**Charitable Gift Annuities: Help the Parish & Yourself**

Charitable Gift Annuities offer a wonderful gift option that can allow parishioners, especially those 60 and older, to realize tax and financial benefits while making a generous gift for the benefit of the parish. With this option, parishioners can extend their support of the parish after they have passed, leaving a legacy of stewardship for many years. The Archdiocese maintains a Planned Giving Office for those who want more information about this opportunity. For information on a planned gift annuity, please contact the Archdiocesan office directly at 215-587-5650.

*We pray to St. James to continue to watch over our beloved parish and all its parishioners and worshipers and to strengthen us in our sacred mission of **Word, Worship and Witness in University City.***