

SAINTS PHILIP AND JAMES: TUESDAY, 3RD MAY, 2022, WEEK III, EASTER.

1 CORINTHIANS 15:1-8; PSALM 19; JOHN 14:6-14

Today, we celebrate the memorial of Saints Philip and James. Most of what we know about them is what we have recorded in the Bible.

Jesus called Philip in Galilee and then Philip called Nathaniel (John 1:43-46). In John 6:5-7, Jesus tested Philip by asking how they could feed the multitude who came to listen to Him (Jesus).

At the Last supper, Philip was the one who told Jesus to show them the Father (John 14:9 - today's Gospel). He also, together with Andrew, brought some Greeks to see Jesus (John 12:20-21).

According to an extra-biblical source, he took the Gospel to Greece, Syria and Phrygia. We are told that he converted the wife of the proconsul of the city of Hierapolis through his miraculous healing and preaching. Out of fury, the proconsul had him crucified upside down and from this cross, he was preaching to the people around and converted many of them.

St. James is called 'the Less' to differentiate him from James the Great, the brother of John and son of Zebedee. Nothing much is known about James except that he was the son of Alphaeus. He is called "the brother of the Lord" and was also the leader of the Church in Jerusalem. Together with Peter and John, he is also called a pillar of the Church (Acts 15:13-21; Galatians 2:9). He is the author of the Epistle of St. James, which is very rich in theology.

James also died a martyr's death, at the close of the Passover in the year 62AD in Jerusalem, during the reign of Nero.

He was asked to deny Jesus publicly but instead, he preached about Him and testified to His Resurrection. In his preaching, James converted so many who came for the Passover. In a rage of fury, the Jewish leaders had him thrown from the top of the temple. He fell and was badly injured but did not die, so he was then stoned. He finally died after someone gave him a blow with a club.

WHAT IS EXTRAORDINARY ABOUT THEM?

I. They were faithful to Jesus to the end.

Only extraordinary people remain faithful to Jesus to the end. Many have started with Jesus and have then turned back to the world. Only those who persevere to the end will be saved (Matthew 24:13).

II. They died a good death.

You may ask, "how is stoning, crucifixion or torture a good death?" A good death is not necessarily dying peacefully in our sleep or in the arms of relatives. It is dying in a state of friendship with Jesus. Even if one dies in a fire or a crash, once the person dies in a state of grace, a state of friendship with Jesus, a state of active service in God's vineyard, it is a good death.

In today's Gospel, Philip said to Jesus, "show us the Father and we shall be satisfied." Now they behold the Father face to face and they are fully satisfied. May nothing in this world satisfy us and distract us from longing for the satisfaction of seeing God face to face in heaven.