

December Holy Heroes
St. John the Evangelist - feast day Dec 27

The Apostle of Charity

By Stephanie Purcell for the Catholic Identity Committee

Hello friends!

My name is John. You may know me as the "beloved disciple" of Jesus. Before I met Jesus, my brother and I were fishermen, and followers of John the Baptist. The moment Jesus called us; we left our boats and followed Him. Jesus called my brother and me the *Sons of Thunder* because of our zeal for His honor. Along with the other apostles, I was blessed to live and travel each day with Jesus during His three-year public life. It was then that we saw Him perform countless miracles and learned His teachings.

The faith of Peter, James and I was rewarded in a special way by Jesus. Our Lord chose the three of us to be present at His Transfiguration. We were also the ones who witnessed the raising of Jairus' little girl from the dead, and we were the only ones with Him when He suffered His Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. On that special night before Our Lord suffered His holy passion, I sat right beside Jesus at the Last Supper. Because I could not abandon my Lord during His sufferings, He entrusted me to protect and care for His Mother Mary. I helped to console her in her sorrow, and took her into my home as if she were my own mother. I smile now as I remember that first glorious Easter morning. When we heard news of the resurrection, Peter and I ran to the tomb of Jesus as fast as we could. I was the first to arrive, but I waited for Peter, our leader, to enter before anyone else.

After Jesus entered into Heaven, I preached the Good News of Christ in Jerusalem and at Ephesus, which is now called Turkey. I also founded many churches in Asia Minor. As a witness to the truth of the Gospel, I suffered no harm whatsoever when (by the order of Emperor Dometian) I was cast into a pot of boiling oil. I was then banished to the Island of Patmos. I wrote the fourth Gospel as well as three epistles, (letters) and the Book of Revelation. I lived to a very old age.

The message that I most want to send to you through my Gospel writings is that *Jesus was the Son of God, as well as a man*. I wanted to highlight the glorious and divine Jesus Christ, the Messiah for ALL mankind. He is the Word of God who became flesh, and anyone who believes in Him will have eternal life.

St. John's symbol is that of an eagle because he soars above all earthly things and speaks of the divine nature of Christ. We can honor St. John by reading his writings in the Bible. The more we read the Bible, the more it becomes part of the way we think and live. St. John's message is the message of Christ: "Love one another".