



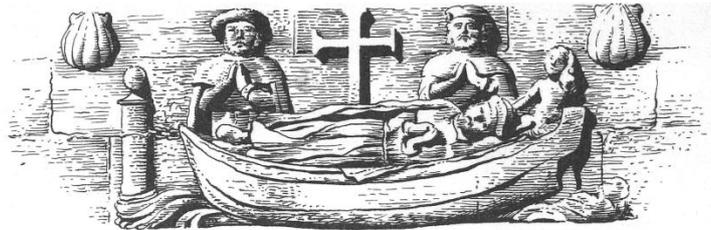
Top 10 Facts About St. James

1. James is mentioned three times in the gospels – when Jesus called he and his brother John to be followers, when his mother asked that he and his brother be seated on either side of Jesus when he became king and when Jesus rebuked him for offering to bring fire upon a Samaritan town that did not welcome them.



2. James's family were all mentioned too. His father Zebedee was a well-known fisherman in the area where Jesus lived, his mother Salome followed Jesus too and his brother John was entrusted to take care of Jesus' mother Mary after his crucifixion.

3. James journeyed to Spain after Jesus ascended into heaven and is credited with bringing Christianity to that place.



4. The place in Spain where James was buried after his death, Santiago de Compostela, is the third most visited site in the world for Christian pilgrims after Jerusalem and Rome.

5. There are many Spanish legends of St. James helping Christian armies in fighting against their enemies. Many works of art depict him on his horse, trampling defeated enemies underfoot.





6. James was executed by King Herod Agrippa, the only apostle to be mentioned as being martyred in the New Testament. It is commonly held that he was the first to suffer this fate.

7. James's disciples also suffered – they were imprisoned when they returned his body to Spain but were released after the king who imprisoned them was miraculously killed with his army when a bridge they were crossing collapsed. A wealthy local lady was converted by them and gave them a palace where James was laid to rest.



8. As pilgrims started to make their way to the site of St. James's burial, a route developed which became known as the Camino de Santiago or Way of St. James. Pilgrims were given shelter in monasteries, hospitals and inns along the 500-mile route.

9. The Way of St. James started to be marked by a scallop shell. This was St. James's symbol because of his original job as a fisherman and because of miracles recorded by pilgrims who touched the shells from the coastline near Santiago. The grooves in the scallop shell also symbolise the many routes taken by pilgrims, all ending in a single point.



10. Hundreds of thousands now make the pilgrimage every year, travelling by foot, on horseback and even by bike. They are rewarded at the end with a pilgrims' mass in the Cathedral of Santiago and with a Compostela, or certificate, for completing their journey.