

SAINT JAMES APOSTLE (B)

1st. Reading (Acts 11, 19-21; 12, 1-2.24)

Those who had been scattered because of the persecution over Stephen travelled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message, but only to the Jews. But there were some natives of Cyprus and Cyrene among them who, on coming into Antioch, spoke also to the Greeks, giving them the good news of the Lord Jesus. The hand of the Lord was with them so that a great number believed and turned to the Lord. About that time King Herod decided to persecute some members of the Church. He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword.

Meanwhile the word of God was increasing and spreading.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 67)

May God be gracious and bless us;
may he let his face shine upon us,
that your way be known on earth
and your salvation among the nations.

May the countries be glad and sing for joy,
for you rule the peoples with justice
and guide the nations of the world.

May the peoples praise you, O God,
may all the peoples praise you!

2nd. Reading (2Cor 4, 7-15)

However, we carry this treasure in vessels of clay, so that this all-surpassing power may not be seen as ours but as God's. Trials of every sort come to us, but we are not discouraged. We are left without answer, but do not despair; persecuted but not abandoned, knocked down but not crushed. At any moment we carry in our person the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in us. For we, the living, are given up continually to death for the sake of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may appear in our mortal existence. And as death is at work in us, life comes to you. We have received the same spirit of faith referred to in Scripture that says: I believed and so I spoke. We also believe and so we speak. We know that He who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and bring us, with you, into his presence. Finally, everything is for your good, so that grace will come more abundantly upon you and great will be the thanksgiving for the glory of God.

Gospel (Mt 20, 20-28)

Then the mother of James and John came to Jesus with her sons, and she knelt down to ask a favour. Jesus said to her, "What do you want?" And she answered, "Here you have my two sons. Grant that they may sit, one at your right and one at your left, when you are in your kingdom." Jesus said to the brothers, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They answered, "We can." Jesus replied, "You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right or at my left is not for me to grant. That will be for those for whom the Father has prepared it." The other ten heard all this and were angry with the two brothers. Then Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the nations act as tyrants, and the powerful oppress them. It shall not be so among you; whoever wants to be more important in your group shall make himself your servant. And if you want to be first make yourself the servant of all. Be like the Son of Man who has come, not to be served but to serve and to give his life to redeem many."