

wrote the Book of Revelation, since the author identifies himself as *John* on the island of Patmos.

John lived to an old age, surviving all his fellow apostles. He brought the Blessed Mother to Ephesus (present-day Turkey) and built her a house there. The house is now visited by Christians as well as Muslims who revere her. At some point, it is likely that she went with John on pilgrimage to Jerusalem and from there she was assumed into heaven.



Tomb of St. John in Ephesus, Turkey

John died in Ephesus about the year 100. His tomb is at the Basilica of St. John there. The Basilica was originally built in the sixth century, and has been destroyed. Today, you can see many

of the foundation stones, ruins, and its baptismal font.

Quotes by St. John: “If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing.” (1 Jn. 1:9) “...the world and its enticement are passing away. But whoever does the will of God remains forever.” (1 Jn. 2:17) “Whoever does not love has not come to know God, because God is love.” (1 Jn. 4:8) “There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear...” (1 Jn. 4:18) “And the victory that conquers the world is our faith.” (1 Jn. 5:4b)

Sources include the canon of Scripture along with: catholic.org, CatholicNewsAgency.org

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St. John the Evangelist

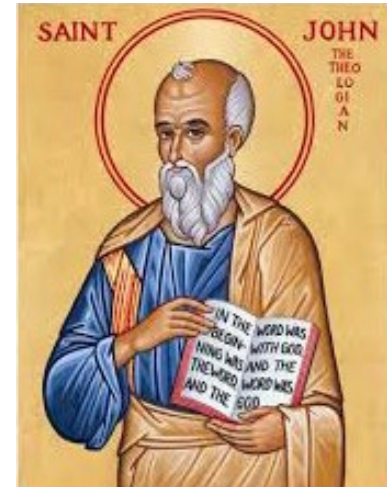
*Apostle & Beloved Disciple of Christ,
Protector of the Virgin Mary*

Lived: First Century

Feast Day: December 27

Patronage: The Nation of Turkey,
Writers, Artists, Friendships

The name John (*Johanan* in Hebrew) means “God is gracious” or “God is merciful.”



John was the son of Zebedee, and his mother’s name was Salome. John’s brother, probably considerably older, was Saint James, also called James the Greater since two of the Apostles were named James. The family lived on the shores of the Sea of Galilee and were fishers by trade. The Gospel mentions “hired men” and John’s home, suggesting to the hearer that the family was financially well off.

Young John followed John the Baptist, who preached repentance in the wilderness around the Jordan River. When the Baptist exclaimed with prophetic perception, “Behold the Lamb of God!” two unnamed disciples (John 1:35) who looked at Jesus “as he walked” were very likely John and Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter. The two men followed and asked Jesus where he dwelt. He invited them to “come and see,” and they stayed with him all day.

Saint Matthew reports in his Gospel account that, as fishermen, Peter and Andrew were casting their nets into the Sea of Galilee when Jesus called them to follow him, and they did so. Afterward, the three men continued walking along the shore and encountered James and John who were with their father, mending their nets. Jesus called the two brothers to follow him, and “they immediately left their boat and their father and followed him” (cf. Matthew 4:18-22). Imagine leaving your own family business behind to follow a young rabbi hailing from a tiny village! This is what they did.

John followed Jesus and was with him, the other disciples, and Jesus' mother at the marriage feast of Cana early in Jesus' ministry. John journeyed with him to Capernaum, and never left him. John, James, and Peter came within the innermost circle of their Lord's friends; these three were to remain with Christ when all the rest of the disciples were kept at a distance. This included Jesus' transfiguration, certain miracles, and the night of Jesus' arrest.

The mother of James and John, knowing Jesus' love for them, made a special request of Jesus that her sons might in his kingdom sit, one on his right hand, the other on his left. This personal quality of boldness seems to have been passed down to her sons; James and John were nicknamed *Boanerges* by Jesus, meaning 'sons of thunder.' Perhaps this quality was on display when John reported to Jesus that the disciples had tried to stop a person who had been casting out demons in his name, because the person was not part of the apostles' group. Jesus corrected John, telling him not to prevent this. Another time, we are told that James and John asked Jesus if they should call down fire from heaven to consume some Samaritans who would not offer them shelter! Here, too, Jesus rebuked their hot-headedness.

John and Peter are often mentioned together in the Gospel; these two Jesus sent forth to prepare his final Passover meal. "The disciple whom Jesus loved" is a phrase used only in the Gospel according to John; naming the one who reclined next to Jesus at the Last Supper, resting his head on Jesus' chest. This posture demonstrates the close, brotherly friendship that existed between Jesus and John.

After Jesus shared the Passover meal with his disciples, he crossed the Kidron Valley with Peter, James, and John. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus asked his three friends to keep watch and pray while he himself went off to pray alone. There, Jesus was deeply distressed, betrayed by their companion Judas, and was arrested.

Crucifixion was a publicly humiliating manner of capital punishment. John's faithfulness as the only of Jesus' male disciples identified as remaining at the cross is truly praiseworthy. To the beloved disciple, the dying Jesus gave the exquisite honor of caring for his mother. "Woman, behold your son... Behold, your mother."

John and Peter were the first to receive the news from Mary Magdalene about Jesus' Resurrection. On the first Easter, she "ran and went to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, 'They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him'" (John 20:2). John recalls, perhaps with a smile, that he and Peter ran side by side, but then "the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first" (20:4b). John did not enter but waited for Peter and let him go in first. This point is among several noteworthy ways that John's gospel points to Peter's primacy among the apostles. After Peter entered the tomb, "the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first, and he saw and believed" (20:8). Uniquely, John mentions three times the burial cloths present in the empty tomb.

After the Resurrection, John was with Peter when the first great miracle in Jesus' name took place—the cure of a man crippled from birth during the three o'clock hour at the Temple area. The outcry about this miracle led to the two apostles spending the night in jail together. Then, brought before the Sanhedrin, they witnessed to Christ. "Observing the boldness of Peter and John and perceiving them to be uneducated, ordinary men, they were amazed, and they recognized them as the companions of Jesus" (Acts 4:13). After facing several threats and being ordered not to preach in Jesus' name, they were released. This only encouraged the early Christian community.

Despite his uneducated background, John is credited as the author of the fourth Gospel account, three Epistles, and the Book of Revelation in the New Testament Scriptures. His gospel is a very personal account, and reveals the divinity of Christ (the 'Word' of God) in the events of his earthly life. His gospel also famously contains a long discourse from Jesus about the Eucharist (John 6). Because of the depth & height of his theology, John is usually portrayed in sacred art with the symbol of an eagle. He is also pictured with a chalice and serpent, alluding to a story about an attempt to poison him.

He founded many churches in Asia Minor. Brought to Rome, tradition relates that he was by order of Emperor Domitian cast into a cauldron of boiling oil but came forth unhurt and was then banished to the island of Patmos for a year. This is connected to the theory that John