

**May 1**

**FOR THE FEAST OF SAINT JAMES AND OF SAINT PHILIP**

**119.1 First Point**

Saint James was so devoted to prayer that Saint Chrysostom says of him that his forehead had become hardened like a stone, because he always kept it pressed to the ground when he prayed. This great application to prayer reveals itself in the Epistle which he wrote to all the faithful, in which he states at the beginning that we should especially ask God for true wisdom and piety, that God's liberality toward us is great, that we should pray with faith, and the main reasons why we do not receive what we ask of God.<sup>616</sup>

Learn from this holy apostle, from his example as well as from his words, the love you should have for prayer, the great benefit it produces in you, and the assiduity you should give to this holy exercise.

**119.2 Second Point**

This saint, having been chosen to be the first Bishop of Jerusalem, labored much to establish the Church there. By his instructions and his holy life he brought about the conversion of a very great number of Jews and pagans. This is what led to his death, for the Jews threw him down from the roof of the temple.

How fortunate we are when we have the advantage of suffering and dying as this saint did because we have labored to win souls to God! This is what you should expect as your reward for the care and work of your ministry.

Study also the admirable instructions that this saint has set forth in his Epistle. They will help you very much to sanctify yourself, and to form the spirit of Christianity in those for whom you are responsible, for it is impossible for these truths not to make holy those who put them into practice.

**119.3 Third Point**

When Saint Philip was called to the apostolate by Jesus Christ, he immediately showed such great zeal for leading souls to God that he brought Nathaniel to Jesus Christ,<sup>617</sup> in order to make him know Jesus, and by means of Jesus to engage Nathaniel to take the true path of salvation.

It seems that Jesus Christ also gave this saint a special grace, namely that of tenderness and an engaging manner to bring others to know and love Jesus Christ, for Jesus Christ addressed himself to Saint Philip when he was thinking of feeding the great multitude of people who had followed him.<sup>618</sup> Again, when several Gentiles who had come to Jerusalem were eager to see Jesus, they asked this saint to introduce them to him.<sup>619</sup>

In your work you have a special need for zeal for the salvation of souls. Ask this earnestly of God by the intercession of Saint Philip, who will help you very much to obtain it.

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De La Salle considers that the Apostle James, son of Alpheus, is the same James who was the first bishop of Jerusalem martyred in 62 A.D. and the author of the Epistle. Some scholars, however, hold that the Apostle bishop and the author of the Epistle were two different persons. However, there is no confusion about Philip as one of the first Apostles called by Jesus. The feast of these two Apostles was transferred to May 3 by Pope Pius XII in 1956 in order to allow for the feast of Saint Joseph the Worker on May 1. The feast of the other Apostle James, son of Zebedee, is on July 25.

616 Jas 1:5-7  
617 Jn 1:43-50

618 Jn 6:5  
619 Jn 12:20-22