

St. Mark the Evangelist

Feast Day, April 25

The Patron Saint of Notaries, Lawyers, City of Venice

St. Mark was the son of Mary of Jerusalem (Acts 12:12) whose home became a meeting place for the apostles. He is also the cousin of St. Barnabas (Colossians 4:10), a Levite and a Cypriot.

Mark joined St. Paul and St. Barnabas on their first missionary journey to Antioch in 44 A.D. When they reached Cyprus, Christian tradition holds that Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem, (Acts 13:13). This created a disagreement between Paul and Barnabas and led Paul to exclude Mark on their second journey to the churches of Cilicia and the rest of Asia Minor.

However, it can be assumed the troubles between Paul and Mark did not last long, because when Paul was first imprisoned, Mark, who was at the time in Rome with plans of visiting Asia Minor, visited him as one of his trusted companions (Col 4:10).

St. Mark also held a close relationship with St. Peter, who referred to Mark as 'his son' in his letter addressed to a number of churches in Asia Minor (1 Peter 5:13).

St. Mark lived for years in Alexandria, where he died as a martyr while being dragged through the streets.

Mark's Gospel was believed to be written between 60 and 70 A.D. and was based upon the teachings of St. Peter.

St. Mark's symbol is a winged lion. This may be from his description of St. John the Baptist, as "a voice of one crying out in the desert" (Mark 1:3). The wings come from Ezekiel's vision of four winged creatures as the evangelists.

The lion also may symbolize Jesus' Resurrection as lions were thought to sleep with their eyes open, possibly symbolizing Christ in his tomb, and Christ as king.

He is often depicted as writing or holding his Gospel. He is sometimes shown as a bishop on a throne or as a man helping Venetian sailors.



MAJOR SHRINES

Venice, Italy

Alexandria, Egypt

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Cairo, Egypt

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