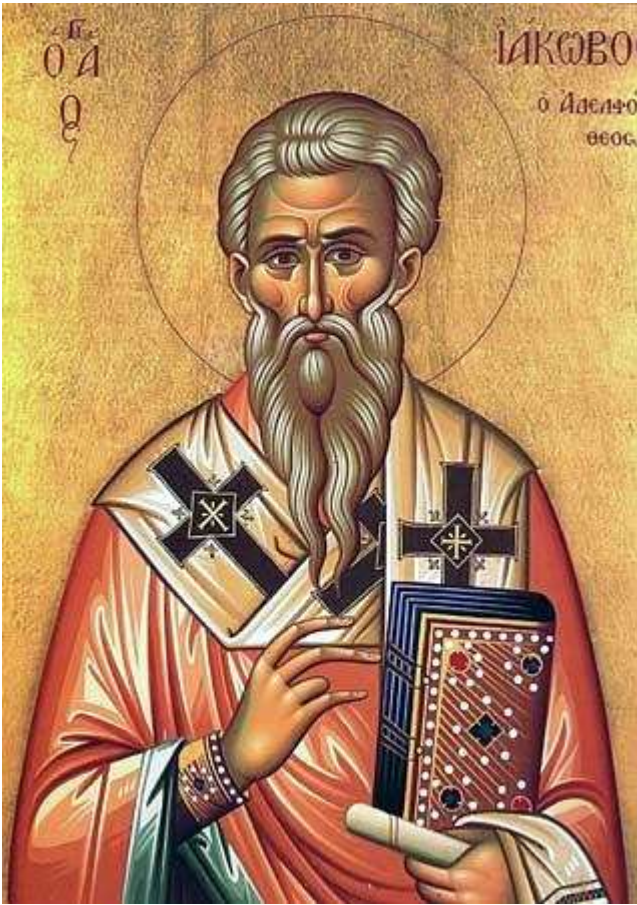


03 May

James the Less, Apostle



Feast Day: May 3

Canonization: Pre-Congregation

James was given the nickname “the Less” so that he would not be confused with the other Apostle named James, whose feast we celebrate on July 25. We believe that it means that he was younger than the other St. James, who was called “the Greater.” James the Less was the son of Alphaeus. His mother stood at the Cross with Mary on the day Jesus was crucified.

After Jesus’ Ascension, James the Less became an important part of the Church’s growth in Jerusalem. Tradition tells us that he led an important meeting of the early Church, the Council of Jerusalem, in the year 50 AD. At this meeting, St. Paul, St. Peter, and other Church leaders discussed whether Gentiles, or people who were not Jewish, could become followers of Jesus. James listened carefully to the discussion and helped the group to decide that the Church was open to all and that all people could be saved by living as followers of Jesus.

Like Philip, James was martyred for spreading the Gospel. We honor Philip and James the Less as saints on May 3. Their lives of faith inspire us to listen for the Lord’s call in our lives and to respond with love and faith.