

Feast of Saint Simon and Jude, Apostles

28th October 2021

Luke 6:12-16

Simon and Jude were two members of the twelve apostles and they have shared the same feast since ancient times. Simon is called the Zealot in today's gospel reading, perhaps to distinguish him from Simon Peter. It suggests that he had a zeal to keep God's Law. Jude is a version of Judas and he is referred to in the gospel reading as Judas son of James, to distinguish him from Judas Iscariot. He has been traditionally known as the patron saint of hopeless cases. Perhaps that is because he was the last member of the twelve Apostles that people would turn to for help, in case they found themselves praying to Judas Iscariot. You would have to be really desperate to pray to Saint Jude. Both Simon and Jude are believed to have died as martyrs. In the first reading, Paul speaks of the apostles as the foundation of God's house or household, with Jesus Christ being its cornerstone. Paul also reminds us there that we are all part of God's household, where God lives in the Spirit; we are a holy temple in the Lord. The place where God was now dwelling in the Spirit was not the Temple in Jerusalem but the community of believers, the household of God. It is a striking claim. Our calling is to live in a way that is worthy of our membership of God's Temple on earth. We have to show by our lives that God is living among us through the Spirit of the risen Lord and, thereby, draw people to the church, as they were once drawn to the Temple in Jerusalem. Immediately after Jesus called the Twelve, he came down from the hills with them, and people from all over came to him to hear him and be cured of their diseases. Like Jesus, the community of believers is to be a place, a space, where people hear the word of God being proclaimed and experience the Lord's healing presence. We all have a role to play in ensuring that the church, the temple of the Lord, is faithful to this identity and calling.