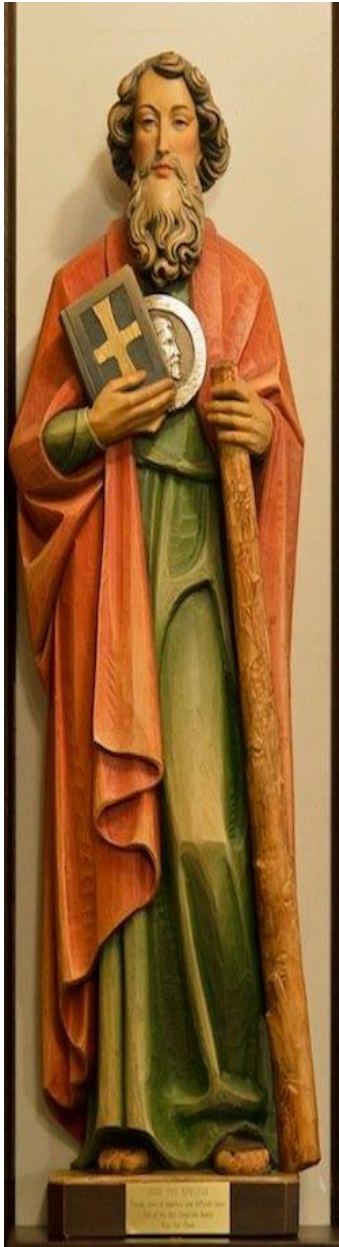


SIMON AND JUDE
28th October 2020



If you can't remember anything in particular about St. Simon and St. Jude, neither apparently do the Gospel writers. They simply mention these names among the Twelve. On the various New Testament lists of the Twelve, the tenth and eleventh places are occupied by Simon and Jude. Some ancient Christian writers say that Simon and Jude went together as missionaries to Persia and were martyred

there. If this is true, it explains why they are usually put together.

Simon is nowhere else mentioned except on these lists. To distinguish him from the Simon whom Jesus nicknamed Peter he is also known as Simon the Zealot which seems to come from an Aramaic term meaning "enthusiast, or zealot". Jude's name is in fact Judas, the same as that of the famous betrayer of the Lord. After the crucifixion there was need for an emphatic distinction from Judas

Iscariot, not to confuse him with the bad apple. After the Last Supper it was Jude who asked Our Lord why he chose to reveal Himself only to the disciples. (John 14:22f) In popular usage, St Jude is often prayed to as the *patron of lost causes*, the "*saint of last resort*," the one you ask for help when all else fails. Maybe this is because his name reminds hearers of Judas Iscariot, so that people were inclined to try one of the other apostles first, making Jude "the saint of last resort," the one whom you ask only when nothing else seems to help! If you find yourself in a desperate situation St. Jude is there for you.

Even if the two saints are not well featured in the Gospels, it is enough that this Simon and this Jude were among the inner Twelve. That is a helpful reminder for those of us who feel forgotten and unnoticed. One day in the future we are all going to be part of a profoundly important secret history of God's people. Simon and Jude may have been portrayed as notably deaf

and blind to their Master's teaching, and still, after the grace of the Resurrection and Pentecost they turned out to be powerful instruments of the Lord's preaching and healing mission. Just as Peter was transformed from an impetuous but doubt-ridden man to a powerful leader, Simon and Jude went through a similar transformation even though the Gospel writers pass over them in relative silence. Let us stand up and move forward, confident in that we are dependable instruments at the hands of Our Lord.

