



October 23

Commemoration: James of Jerusalem, martyr, c. 62

James first Bishop of Jerusalem, who died in 62 AD, was an important figure in Early Christianity. He is distinguished from the Apostle James by various epithets; he is called James the brother of the Lord by Paul (Galatians 1:19), James the Just by Hegesippus and others, "James the Righteous", "James of Jerusalem", "James Adelphotheos", and so on.

James became the leader of the Christian movement in Jerusalem in the decades after Jesus' death, but information about his life is scarce and ambiguous. Apart from a handful of references in the Gospels, the main sources for his life are the Acts of the Apostles, the Pauline epistles, the historian Josephus, and St. Jerome, who also quotes the early Christian author Hegesippus. The Epistle of James in the New Testament is traditionally attributed to him, and he is a principal author of the Apostolic Decree of Acts 15. In the extant lists of Hippolytus of Rome,

Dorotheus of Tyre, the Chronicon Paschale, and Dimitry of Rostov, he is the first of the Seventy Apostles, though some sources, such as the Catholic Encyclopedia, draw the conclusion that "these lists are unfortunately worthless".

The Belgian theologian Achille Camerlynck (1910) concludes that, based on Hegesippus's account, it is "probable" that James the Just is also James the Less, and in line with "most Catholic interpreters", that he is therefore James, son of Alphaeus, one the Twelve Apostles of Jesus, as well as James, the son of Mary Cleophas, He is not, however, identified with James the Great.