

## INTRODUCTION

Who was St John:

- A Palestinian Jew
- The disciple whom Jesus loved
- His mother was Salome and Father Zebedee. His brother James was beheaded by King Herod. "Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword" ([Acts 12:1-2](#)).
  - The martyrdom of James is the only biblical account of a death of one of the twelve apostles.
- James and John were called, 'Sons of Thunder' They became known as the "Sons of Thunder" for their high spirits and zeal as seen in their desire to destroy an unfriendly Samaritan city ([Luke 9:51-56](#)).
- The only apostle to die a natural death
- Represented by the eagle (see the "Did You Know" box for why)

The Gospel was written between 60-90AD. Other things that were happening in the world around the same time include:

- 64 AD: St Peter was martyred
- 64 AD: The great fire of Rome: thought to be started by Emperor Nero to make room for his palace (??!!)
- 67 AD: Buddhism was introduced to China
- 79 AD: Mt Vesuvius erupts and buries Pompeii



## Monday and Tuesday: Read John Chapter 1

- ✘ Many people have been converted to Christianity through Chapter 1. Verse 1-14 describes our Trinitarian faith. Recount the first part of the Apostolic creed and how closely it aligns with these first few lines of the gospel of St John.

*We believe in one God, God the Father, the Almighty, Who created heaven and earth, and all things, seen and unseen.*

*We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not created, of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made;*

What does it mean that the Word was 'begotten' of the Father?

### The Calling to follow Christ:

1:35-51. St John describes the different ways Jesus called His disciples to follow him. Who was called:

- directly (v43)
- indirectly though other people (v41)
- indirectly though His actions (v48-49)

We won't all have the same 'calling' from Christ to be his disciple but our revelation of Christ will be personal. Some are called to be lay people, others monks, nuns and priests. But the aim for all is the same – to be united with Christ.



*St John the beloved of Christ*

### Did You Know?

St John's Gospel is symbolised by an eagle. Why? Well, according to St Augustine, because it "soars like an eagle above the clouds of human infirmity, and gazes upon the light of the unchangeable truth with those keenest and steadiest eyes of the heart." Basically what he's saying is that unlike the other gospels (collectively referred to as the "synoptic gospels because they are a synopsis (or summary) of Christ's teachings and dealings with people) the gospel of John deals with "higher things" - like theology! Who is God? Who is Jesus? Is Jesus really God? These are issues that are above people's problems - and they will all be answered in the coming chapters!

# GOSPEL OF ST JOHN

## ✘ Wednesday and Thursday: Chapter 2 .

### The New wine

St John describes this as His first miracle. Christ began to work miracles in Cana, an obscure corner of the country, remote from Jerusalem, to show that He did not want honor from men. The wedding may have been for a close relative of St Mary. St Mary was 'there' as if it was her home. Jesus and his disciples were 'invited'. **Do you seek honour from men or God? How can you fix this?**

Vs 12: Who is His mother, His brother and His disciples? Find out what St Jerome says about Jesus' relatives.



*St John on the Island of Patmos. Sitting beside him is an eagle*



Highlight the areas mentioned in the first three chapters.

- Bethsaida- where Philip was from
- Cana: site of the first miracle
- Nazareth: 'can anything good come out of Nazareth?'
- Bethabara: is also known as 'Bethany upon Jordan'
- Aenon near Salim: where St John baptised as 'there was much water'
- Capernaum: this became Jesus' 'headquarters' for his teaching

## ○ Friday and Saturday: Chapter 3

### The New Birth

Christ describes baptism as being 'born again'. By doing this, Christ has invited all people to Salvation, one does not need to be born into the 'right' family to inherit the Kingdom of God – i.e. you don't need to be Jewish to be a "son of God". It is our choice, refer back to John 1:12-13. We are the 'adopted' children of Christ (also read Ephesians 1:5).

**You were born again when you were baptized. You were given a nice clean garment instead of the dirty one. Unfortunately, we all get our garments dirty every once in while. How do you get it cleaned? When was the last time you went to confession?**

The first three chapters of the Gospel of St John describes the Holy Spirit. How is the Holy Spirit described? Does the Apostolic Creed agree with this?

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Life-Giver, Who proceeds from the Father, Who, with the Father and the Son, is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke in the prophets.*

The Holy Spirit is an important part of the Trinity, without Whom we cannot enter the Kingdom of God. **Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in your everyday life. He is willing – all you need to do is make sure your heart is a clean place for Him to live, and then ask Him to take over!**