

May 9, 2020-Saturday, Fourth Week of Easter

'About that time King Herod laid hands upon some members of the church to harm them. He had James, the brother of John, killed by the sword.' -Acts 12:1-2

How did the apostles die?

Tradition says that the apostles were martyred for their faith.

Except for St. John. Despite attempts to poison him and immerse him in boiling oil, John died of old age.

The cause of death for the other apostles was reported by witnesses or is the result of legends that have developed over the years:

- James the Greater was the first apostle to be killed, and his is the only death of an apostle described in the New Testament. legend adds that James' body was placed in a boat and set adrift, and it came ashore in Spain.
- Peter was crucified in Rome.
- Andrew was crucified in Greece in the year 70. A tradition originated in the Middle Ages that he wished to be crucified on an X-shaped cross.
- Philip was martyred in Phrygia (an area that today is part of Turkey).
- Bartholomew/Nathanael was flayed alive in Armenia.
- Matthew was beheaded in Ethiopia.
- The historian Josephus says James the Lesser was stoned to death in Jerusalem.
- Jude (Thaddeus) was martyred in Armenia.
- Thomas was stabbed by a spear in India.
- Simon was sawed into pieces in Persia.
- Matthias was martyred in Turkey or in Jerusalem.

Jesus said: "A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly."
(John 10:10)

I came so that they might have life...

Sometimes I may get the impression that to join the Church is just the opposite of what Jesus said in the Gospel. Instead of coming out of the confinement of the sheepfold and into the wide open pasture, a person who joins the Church seems to be going into the confinement of the sheepfold.

Maybe I feel confined because there are things I can't do. Maybe I feel my thinking has to be stifled.

But Jesus' words *are* true.

I may expect that belonging to the Church community means I give up some freedom to think what I want to think. In reality, the security I can find in the Church allows me to dream and explore and ask questions I couldn't ask before.

By belonging to a community of the Lord's disciples, I can dream great dreams and experience a great destiny no matter who I am.

Jesus has come so that I might have life.

Spend some quiet time with the Lord