

Monday 25 July 2022

Dear Friends

During this week we remember James the Apostle: also known as James, son of Zebedee or Saint Jacob. James was the first of the 12 apostles to be martyred - see Acts 12, v2.

As the patron saint of Spain, James is remembered every day at the cathedral church of Santiago de Compostela in the Spanish northwest province of Galicia.

In 2016, following my retirement as an assistant priest at St Matthew's, I took time to walk the pilgrim trail to Compostela and would recommend that as a spiritual and physical exercise (with caution: it is arduous).

James' experience shows that, depending on circumstances, full commitment may involve sacrifice, even leading to the ultimate price of death in action.

In our time of the 21st century, we often hear of people losing their lives through commitment to a good cause. In this context, we remember people in Ukraine; in Myanmar and many other places where war and injustice rage. Let us pray for them, their families and communities, and support them how and when we are able.

The end of the academic year now offers a period for refreshment for many families, a challenging time for some: and a big change for leavers. May they each find time for reflection and time to enjoy friendships free of working pressures.

As this month of July 2022 comes to an end, we also begin a time of change at St Matthew's. We express our deep gratitude to Simon and Mary as their time of service with St Matthew's, local schools and Park Hill draws to a close. May they be richly blessed in their newly retired life on the south coast; and may we help them in practical ways as they decouple from Croydon and the diocese of Southwark in coming days and weeks.

With all good wishes

Richard Hinder



GUIDO RENI - SAINT JAMES THE GREATER
PAINTED BETWEEN CIRCA 1636 AND CIRCA 1638