

THE FEAST OF ST. MARK



A feast day in the Church is a day set aside to commemorate and honor a specific saint or an event from the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. A Patronal Feast commemorates the patron saint of a church. The Feast of St. Mark falls on April 25 and we will observe it on April 28. It is a day to give thanks for the life of Mark and for our church that bears his name. It can also be a day to recognize excellence in ministry.

The Collect for Mark

Almighty God, by the hand of Mark the evangelist you have given to your Church the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God; we thank you for this witness, and pray that we may be firmly grounded in its truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

A Brief Biography

The Book of Acts mentions a Mark, or John Mark, a kinsman of Barnabas. The house of his mother Mary was a meeting place for Christians in Jerusalem. When Paul and Barnabas, who had been in Antioch, came to Jerusalem, they brought Mark back to Antioch with them, and he accompanied them on their first missionary journey, but left them prematurely and returned to Jerusalem. When Paul and Barnabas were about to set out on a second missionary journey, Barnabas proposed to take Mark, but Paul thought him unreliable, so that eventually Barnabas made one journey taking Mark, and Paul another journey taking Silas. Mark is not mentioned again in Acts. However, it appears that he became more reliable, for Paul mentions him as a trusted assistant in Colossians and again in Second Timothy. The Apostle Peter

had a co-worker whom he refers to as "my son Mark". Papias, an early second century writer, in describing the origins of the Gospels, tells us that Mark was the "interpreter" of Peter, and that he wrote down ("but not in order") the stories that he had heard Peter tell in his preaching about the life and teachings of Jesus.

The Gospel of Mark, in describing the arrest of Jesus, speaks of a young man who followed the arresting party, wearing only a linen cloth wrapped around his body, whom the arresting party tried to seize, but who left the cloth in their hands and fled naked. It is speculated that this young man was the writer himself, since the detail is hardly worth mentioning if he were not. Tradition has it that after the death of Peter, Mark left Rome and went to preach in Alexandria, Egypt, where he was eventually martyred. It is natural to identify the John Mark of Acts with the Gospel-writer and interpreter of Peter, and this identification is standard in liturgical references to Mark. However, "Mark" is the most common of Latin first names, and they may well have been separate people. Mark's symbol in art is a Lion, usually winged. It is thought that the lion is identified with Mark whose narrative begins with John the Baptist crying out in the desert much like a lion roars in the desert.

A lion rampant is a **symbol of a lion standing upright on one or both hind legs, with its front paws raised and claws unsheathed**. It is a term that describes the attitude or position of the lion in heraldry.

The lion rampant is often seen as a sign of bravery, strength, and royalty. It can be seen in the yellow and red Royal Flag of Scotland hanging in the ceiling of the nave. After the consecration by Scottish bishops of Samuel Seabury as the first American bishop, the **Scottish Prayer Book** served as a model for the first and subsequent editions of Book of Common Prayer in the United States.