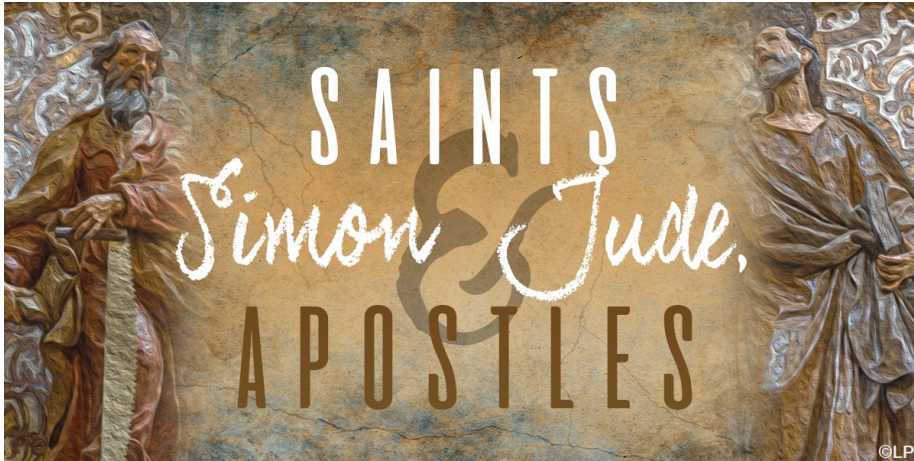


FROM FR. JASON

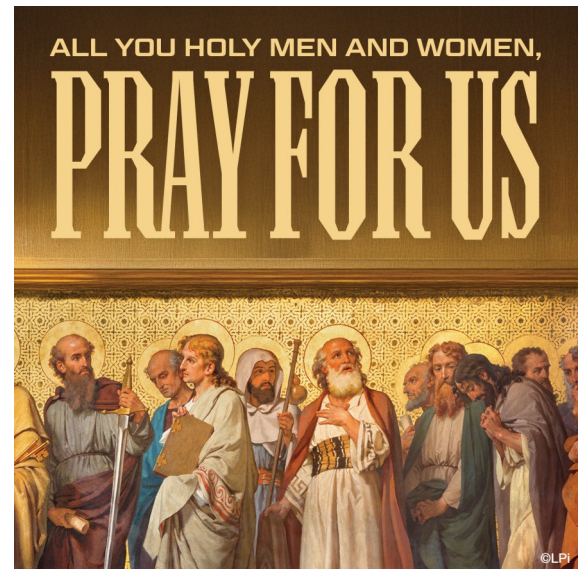


Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we prepare to celebrate the Feast of Sts. Simon and Jude on Tuesday, October 28, we are drawn into the lives of two apostles whose unwavering faith and dedication to Christ's mission inspire us to deepen our own journey of discipleship. This feast invites us to reflect on the transformative power of God's call, as exemplified by these saints who left everything to follow Jesus.

St. Simon, known as "the Zealot," was a man of intense conviction. His title suggests a fiery commitment, possibly rooted in his association with the Zealot movement, a group of Jews passionate about liberating Israel from Roman rule. Yet, when Jesus called him, Simon redirected his zeal toward a higher purpose: proclaiming the Kingdom of God. Tradition holds that he preached the Gospel in regions such as Egypt and Persia, tirelessly spreading the message of Christ's love. His life challenges us to examine our own passion for the faith. Are we zealous in living out the Gospel, even when it demands sacrifice? Simon's example calls us to surrender our personal agendas and embrace the mission God has for us, trusting that His plan surpasses our own.

St. Jude, also called Thaddeus, is revered as the patron saint of hopeless causes, a title that resonates deeply with those facing seemingly insurmountable challenges. Scripture identifies him as one of the Twelve (Luke 6:12-16), and his presence at the Last Supper is marked by a profound question to Jesus: "Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?" (John 14:22). This question reveals Jude's desire to understand the mystery of God's plan. Tradition tells us that he preached in Judea, Samaria, and Mesopotamia, often alongside Simon, and that he faced martyrdom for his faith. Jude's intercession reminds us that no situation is beyond God's mercy. When we feel overwhelmed or lost, we can turn to him, confident that God's grace is sufficient. His life encourages us to persevere in prayer, trusting that the Lord hears our cries, even in our darkest moments.



The Gospel for this feast (Luke 6:12-16) depicts Jesus spending the night in prayer before choosing His apostles. This act of discernment underscores the sacredness of their call - and ours. Simon and Jude, though distinct in their backgrounds, were united by their response to Christ's invitation. They left behind their former lives to become witnesses to the Resurrection, carrying the Good News to distant lands despite persecution and hardship. Their courage inspires us to reflect on our own baptismal call. Are we willing to step out in faith, to proclaim Christ through our words and actions, even when the world resists?

We are reminded that the apostles' mission continues through us. Like Simon, we are called to channel our zeal into building God's Kingdom, letting go of worldly attachments. Like Jude, we are invited to trust in God's power to transform the impossible into moments of grace. As we celebrate this feast, let us honor Sts. Simon and Jude by renewing our desire for prayer, sacrifice, and evangelization. May their intercession strengthen us to live as authentic disciples, proclaiming with our lives that Jesus Christ is alive and present among us.

Peace,