

the time. George objected and with the courage of his faith approached the Emperor and ruler. Diocletian was upset, not wanting to lose his best tribune and the son of his best official, Gerontius. George renounced the Emperor's edict in front of his fellow soldiers and tribunes and also claimed to be a Christian himself who worshiped Jesus Christ. Diocletian attempted to convert George but failed in his efforts.

Recognizing the futility of his efforts, Diocletian ordered George to be executed. Before the execution George gave his wealth to the poor and prepared himself. After various torture sessions, including laceration on a wheel of swords in which he was resuscitated three times, George was executed by decapitation before Nicomedia's city wall, on April 23, 303. A witness of his suffering convinced Empress Alexandra and Athanasius, a pagan priest, to become Christians as well, and so they joined George in martyrdom. His body was returned to Lydda in Palestine for burial, where Christians soon came to honor him as a martyr.

One of the best-known stories about Saint George is his fight with a dragon. But it is highly unlikely that he ever fought a dragon, and even more unlikely that he ever actually visited England. Despite this, Saint George is known throughout the world as the dragon-slaying patron of England. *(excerpted from: www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk//wikipedia.org)

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Saint George

Feast Day: April 23



The popularity of Saint George in England stems from the time of the early crusades when it is said that the Normans saw him in a vision and were victorious.

Saint George

*According to tradition, Saint George (c. 275/281—23 April 303) was a Roman soldier from Syria Palæstina. In hagiography, Saint George is one of the most venerated saints in the Catholic (Western and Eastern Rites), Anglican, Eastern Orthodox, and the Oriental Orthodox churches. He is immortalized in the tale of Saint George and the Dragon and is one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers. His memorial is celebrated on 23 April, and he is regarded as one of the most prominent military saints.

Saint George is also the patron saint of England. His emblem, a red cross on a white background, is the flag of England, and part of the British flag. Saint George's emblem was adopted by Richard The Lion Heart and brought to England in the twelfth century. The king's soldiers wore it on their tunics to avoid confusion in battle.

The work of the Bollandists Danile Paperbroch, Jean Bolland and Godfrey Henschen in the seventh century was one of the first pieces of scholarly research to establish the historicity of the saint's existence via their publication in *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* and paved the way for other scholars to dismiss the medieval legends. Pope Gelasius stated that George was among those saints "whose names are justly revered among men, but whose actions are known only to God."

The traditional legends have offered a historical narration of George's encounter with a dragon as noted above. The modern legend that follows is synthesized from early and late hagiographical sources, omitting the more

fantastical episodes, to narrate a purely human military career in closer harmony with modern expectations of reality. Chief among the legendary sources about the saint is the Golden Legend, which remains the most familiar version in English owing to William Caxton's 15th-century translation.

It is likely that Saint George was born to a Christian noble family in Lod, Syria Palæstina during the late third century between about 275 AD and 285 AD, and he died in Nicomedia. His father, Gerontius, was a Roman army official from Cappadocia and his mother, Polychronia, was from Palestine. They were both Christians and from noble families of Anici, so by this the child was raised with Christian beliefs. They decided to call him Georgius (Latin) or Geōrgios (Greek), meaning "worker of the land." At the age of 14, George lost his father; a few years later his mother died.

Then George decided to go to Nicomedia, the imperial city of that time, and present himself to Emperor Diocletian to apply for a career as a soldier. Diocletian welcomed him with open arms, as he had known his father Gerontius-- one of his finest soldiers. By his late twenties, George was promoted to the rank of tribune and stationed as an imperial guard of the Emperor at Nicomedia.

In the year AD 302, Diocletian (influenced by Galerius) issued an edict that every Christian soldier in the army should be arrested and every other soldier should offer a sacrifice to the Roman gods of