

Alexandria the anniversary of Blessed Mark the Evangelist...at Alexandria of St. Anianus Bishop, the disciple of Blessed Mark and his successor in the episcopate, who fell asleep in the Lord." The date at which Mark came to Alexandria is uncertain. Eusebius assigns it to the first years of Claudius (A.D. 41-4), and later on states that St. Mark's successor, Anianus, succeeded to the See of Alexandria in the eight year of Nero (A.D. 61-2). This would make Mark Bishop of Alexandria for a period of about twenty years.

In the preface to his Gospel in manuscripts of the Vulgate, Mark is represented as having been a Jewish priest: "Mark the Evangelist, who exercised the priestly office in Israel, a Levite by race". Early authorities, however, are silent upon the point, and it is perhaps only an inference from his relation to Barnabas the Levite (Acts 4:36). Later tradition, however, makes Mark one of the seventy-two disciples, and St. Epiphanius says he was one of those who withdrew from Christ (John 6:67). The later tradition can have no weight against the earlier evidence, but the statement that Mark neither heard the Lord nor followed Him need not be pressed too strictly, nor force us to believe that he never saw Christ. Many indeed are of the opinion that the young man who fled from Gethsemane when Jesus was arrested (Mark 14:51) was Mark himself. Early in the third century, Hippolytus, refers to Mark as "mutilated-fingered" or "mutilated in the finger(s)", and later authorities allude to the same defect. One explanation for this suggests: Mark, after he embraced Christianity, cut off his thumb to unfit himself for the Jewish priesthood; that his fingers were naturally stumpy; that some defect in his toes is alluded to; or that the epithet is to be regarded as metaphorical, and means "deserted" (cf. Acts 13:13).

The date of Mark's death is uncertain. St. Jerome assigns it to the eighth year of Nero (62-63 A.D.), but this is probably only an inference from the statement of Eusebius, that in the year Anianus succeeded St. Mark in the See of Alexandria. Certainly, of St. Mark was alive when II Timothy was written (2 Timothy 4:11), he cannot have died in 61-62. Nor does Eusebius say he did; the historian may merely mean that Mark then resigned his see, and left Alexandria to join Peter and Paul at Rome. As to the manner of his death, the "Acts" of Mark give the saint the glory of martyrdom, and say that he died while being dragged through the streets of Alexandria; so too the Paschal Chronicle. But we have no evidence earlier than the fourth century that the saint was martyred. This earlier silence, however, is not at all decisive against the truth of the later traditions. For the saint's alleged connection with Aquileia, see "Acta SS", XI, pp. 346-7, and for the removal of his body from Alexandria to Venice and his cultis there, *ibid.*, pp. 352-8. In Christian literature and art St. Mark is symbolically represented by a lion. He is the Patron Saint of Venice and glaziers. The Latin and Greek Churches celebrate his feast on 25 April, but the Greek Church keeps also the feast of John Mark on 27 September. ***(excerpted from: //mb-soft.com)



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Saint Mark the Evangelist

Feast Day April 25



*" ... This is how it is with the kingdom of God;
it is as if a man were to scatter seed on the land and would sleep and rise
night and day and the seed would sprout and grow,
he knows not how.*

*Of its own accord the land yields fruit,
first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.
And when the grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once,
for the harvest has come"
(Mark 4:26-29).*

Saint Mark the Evangelist

*Mark, the evangelist; "John whose surname was Mark" (Acts 12: 12, 25). Mark (Marcus, Col. 4:10, etc.) was his Roman name, which gradually came to supersede his Jewish name John. He is called John in Acts 13:5, 13, and Mark in 15:39, 2 Tim. 4:11, etc. He was the son of Mary, a woman apparently of some means and influence, and was probably born in Jerusalem, where his mother resided (Acts 12:12). Of his father we know nothing. He was a cousin of Barnabas (Col. 4:10). It was in his mother's house that Peter found "many gathered together praying" when he was released from prison; and it is probable that it was here that he was converted by Peter, who calls him his "son" (1 Pet. 5:13). It is probable that the "young man" spoken of in Mark 14: 51-52, was Mark himself. He is first mentioned in Acts 12:25. He went with Paul and Barnabas on their first journey (about A.D. 47) as their "minister," but from some cause turned back when they reached Perga in Pamphylia (Acts 12:25; 13:13).

Three years afterwards a "sharp contention" arose between Paul and Barnabas (15:36-40), because Paul would not take Mark with him. He, however, was evidently at length reconciled to the apostle, for he was with him in his first imprisonment at Rome (Col. 4:10; Philemon 24). At a later period he was with Peter in Babylon (1 Pet. 5:13), then, and for some centuries afterwards, one of the chief seats of Jewish learning; and he was with Timothy in Ephesus when Paul wrote to him during his second imprisonment (2 Tim. 4:11). He then disappears from view.

*(excerpted from: //mb-soft.com)

**The Gospel of Mark is the earliest canonical gospel, written sometime before 68-70 A.D., which is the approximate time of his death, but may have been written as early as 38-40 A.D. Mark's is the shortest gospel, written simply and directly. The Gospel of Mark is believed to have been intended for Roman Christians. Roman names, offices, and monetary values are included in a style that implies the reader knows them already; whereas Jewish customs are explained in a manner that implies the reader would have been unfamiliar with them. The Old Testament, which Christian of Jewish heritage would have known, is only quoted once in Mark. Additionally, terms described as

Latinisms, or uses of vulgar Greek, were more common in cities such as Rome, and appear more often in Mark's gospel than in the other three.

** (excerpted from: www.aquinasandmore.com)

***When, on the occasion of the famine of A.D. 45-46, Barnabas and Paul had completed their ministrations in Jerusalem, they took Mark with them on their return to Antioch (Acts 13:35). Not long afterwards, when they started on St. Paul's first Apostolic journey, they had Mark with them as some sort of assistant; but the vagueness and variety of meaning of the Greek term makes it uncertain in what precise capacity he acted. Neither selected by the Holy Ghost, nor delegated by the Church of Antioch, as were Barnabas and Paul, he was probably taken by the Apostles as one who could be of general help. The context of Acts 13:5, suggests that he helped even in preaching the Word. When Paul and Barnabas resolve to push on from Perga into central Asia Minor, Mark departed from them, if indeed he had not already done so at Paphos, and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). What his reasons were for turning back, we cannot say with certainty; Acts 15:38, seem to suggest that he feared the toil. At any rate, the incident was not forgotten by St. Paul, who refused on account of it to take Mark with him on the second Apostolic journey. This refusal led to a separation of Paul and Barnabas, and the latter, took Mark with him to Cyprus (Acts 15:37-40). At this point (A.D. 49-50) we lose sight of Mark in Acts, and we meet him no more in the New Testament, until he appears some ten years later as the fellow-worker of St. Paul, and in the company of St. Peter, at Rome.

While St. Paul was writing to the Colossians during his first Roman imprisonment (A.D. 59-61), Mark had some intention of visiting Asia Minor. At about the same time St. Paul sends greetings to Philemon from Mark, whom he names among his fellow-worker. The Evangelist's intention of visiting Asia Minor was probably carried out, for Paul, writing shortly before his death to Timothy at Ephesus, bids him pick up Mark and bring him to Rome. Turning to 1 Peter 5:13, we read that the Church that is in Babylon, elected together with you, salute you and so does Mark my son. This letter was addressed to various Churches of Asia Minor, and we may conclude that Mark was known to them. Though he had refused to penetrate into Asia Minor with Paul and Barnabas, St. Peter makes it certain that Mark went afterwards, and the fact that Peter sends Mark greetings implies that he must have been widely known there. In calling Mark his "son", Peter may possibly imply that he had baptized him. When we turn to tradition, Papias asserts not later than A.D. 130, on the authority of an "elder", that Mark had been the interpreter of Peter, and wrote down accurately, though not in order, the teaching of Peter. A widespread, if somewhat late, tradition represents St. Mark as the founder of the Church of Alexandria. The "Martyrologium Romanum" (25 April) records: "At