



St. Jude

Born in the first century AD in Galilee; believed to have died about 65 AD in Beirut, Lebanon

Feast Day: Oct. 28

Prayer: Lord, I thank you for loving me and believing in me when no one else does.

And looking around at those seated in the circle he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. [For] whoever does the will of god is my brother and sister and mother." (Mark 3:34-35 NAB)

Action: With Jude's help, write a note or email to a loved one from whom you are estranged, regardless of who was at fault, expressing appreciation for his or her gifts to the world.

About St. Jude: It can be hard to live down—or up to—another family member's reputation. Maybe our older brother is the football hero and we don't play sports, or our older sister ran with a fast crowd and the assumption is we will too. Even our own parents, siblings, and other relatives sometimes don't see our value or worth. They tease us to the point of cruelty or ignore us because we're different.

Consider the case of St. Jude, about whom we know very little other than that he appears on the lists of apostles in the New Testament and almost certainly did not write the Letter of Jude. He may have been a cousin of Jesus's, the brother of James the Less, Joses, and Simeon of Jerusalem, the son of Clopas and Mary, the Blessed Virgin's sister. Over the centuries, probably even during his lifetime, many people confused him with Jesus' betrayer, Judas Iscariot; there is speculation Jude was called Thaddeus to differentiate him. How difficult that must have been for Jude, to have been confused with one of history's greatest scoundrels.

Still, the confusion didn't send Jude into isolation or worse. It appears he married and had at least one child, as there are some references to his two grandchildren. It also didn't keep Jude from preaching the Good News to the point of his own martyrdom. His story reminds us that no cause is ever really lost, and that family in the Body of Christ goes beyond human blood. We *do* fit in, regardless of what others may have done or not done. We *are* loved by the greatest Father of all. — *Melanie Rigney*