

serpent. By his prayers and preachings, he succeeded in destroying this hideous idolatry; but the magistrates were so enraged at his success in spreading the Gospel among the people, that they ordered him to be crucified.

St. James is called *the brother of our Lord*. Among the Hebrews, cousins were counted brothers. He was chosen Bishop of Jerusalem, and from the holiness of his life gained the title of St. James the Just. He was martyred by the Scribes and Pharisees, who set him upon a pinnacle of the temple at the feast of the Passover, hoping to compel him to renounce Christ in the sight and hearing of all the multitude. But he fearlessly declared Him to be the Son of God; and they, in the fury of disappointment, threw him down from the high place, and with stones and clubs completed his destruction, even while he prayed for them.

ROGATION DAYS.

"Ask, and it shall be given you."—ST. MATTHEW vii. 7.

ROGATION DAYS are the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Ascension. Their names signifies supplication, and they have been kept by the Church as days of fasting and prayer since the middle of the fifth century. At that time Mamercus, Bishop of Vienne, in France, fearing that disasters were about to befall his diocese, appointed these days to be observed with litanies and penitence, to appease the wrath of God, and turn aside His judgments. The design in observing them is to prepare us for the feast of the Ascension, to pray for God's mercy to protect us from all calamities, and for His blessing upon the fruits of the field.

DO YOU REMEMBER ASCENSION DAY?

(HOLY THURSDAY.)

"And it came to pass while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into Heaven."—ST. LUKE xxiv: 51.

The great Festival of the Ascension of our LORD JESUS CHRIST is at hand. I most earnestly pray you to keep it holy to the LORD. It has, alas! fallen into strange neglect among us; we do not meet to look up to our ascended LORD, as the early Christians used to do, we have ceased to make it a day of holy joy. This is sadly inconsistent, for though we meet together to observe the day of our Redeemer's Birth, of His Death, of His Resurrection, yet strange to say, the glorious day of His *Ascension* has practically ceased to be kept, not only as a holy feast, but even with holy worship; it is passed over as a common day, and the world has been allowed to take away from the Church, to steal one great day from our hands, which was once thankfully given up to GOD, and consecrated to prayer and praise. Now a coldness has come over our hearts, and we will not leave our business, our trade, our shops, our ploughs, to bless GOD, as with one voice, for this crowning and triumphant act of the mystery of our redemption. The Church, indeed, still calls out to us, the bell sounds in our ears; the Clergy are ready to do their part; the Prayer-book keeps the feast in its own high place among the other feasts.

Christian, are you, indeed, mindful of your ascended Lord? *Are you*, if you pass over this day which is the pledge of so great blessings to your soul? Think for a moment—

Upon what can you rest any hope of passing into the Heavens? Only upon