

St. James the Less

by [Jane Zwart](#) in the [February 6, 2013](#) issue

It may or may not be a sin, but I cannot hear your name, St. James the Less, without crocheting apocrypha for you, without drafting sentences, all of which start *Nonetheless, St. James the Less* and then lapse, describing a world whose vividness—the molting sycamores and lepers, an urn lurching on the potter’s wheel, the fishermen darning their nets—always trumped your quiet rectitude.

Nonetheless, St. James the Less—after the Greater James, his fervor all joy and rage, and not unlike simple imprudence, anointed the contrite and doused those who had it coming—it must have been you (was it not?) blotting kerosene from all the penitents’ habits.