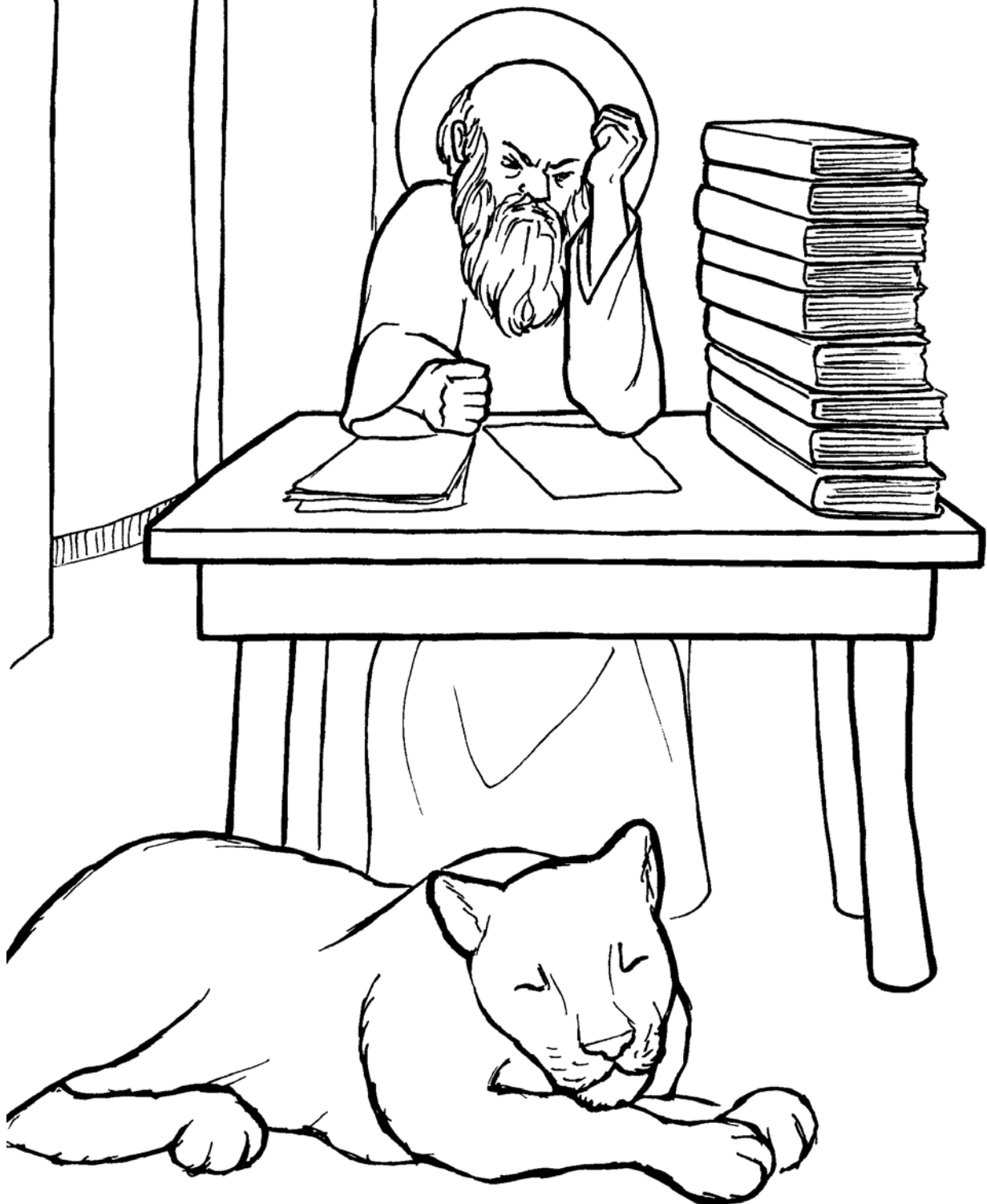


**St. Jerome**  
September 30



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# St. Jerome

347–419 • Dalmatia

Jerome was a brilliant scholar from a young age, and he went to Rome to pursue his studies. At this time, Jerome did not put God first in his life, even though he had been brought up in the Christian Faith.

But then he had a dream that changed him forever.

In his dream, Jesus appeared to Jerome and said, "You are a Ciceronian, not a Christian." (Cicero was a famous Roman writer.) When he woke, Jerome knew that Jesus was telling him that he loved his Roman and Greek studies more than he loved God. For penance, he spent four years as a hermit in the desert and learned Hebrew so he could study Scripture.

Jerome returned to Rome and, because of his great learning, he became Pope Damasus's secretary. But Jerome had a bad temper! He harshly criticized the people who lived sinful lives in Rome. When the pope died, all the enemies Jerome had made because of his bad temper spread lies and gossip about him.

So Jerome left Rome. He traveled to Bethlehem and wrote in a cave near where Jesus was born. Legend says that he made friends with a lion while he was staying at the cave in Bethlehem.

Jerome's writings are very important. He wrote in defense of the Faith, even though many of his letters are cranky. He got into arguments with many other theologians, even St. Augustine, though they became friends later.

In Bethlehem, Jerome completed his most famous work. He translated the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin. This took Jerome fifteen years! Up to that point, there was no good translation of the whole Bible into Latin, the language many people spoke. Because Jerome knew Hebrew, he could read the original books of the Bible, and so his translations were the best! Jerome's translation of the Bible is called the Vulgate, which comes from the Latin word *vulgus* (which means "common people"). Because of Jerome, many more people could read the Bible!

St. Jerome died a holy death, and he reminds us that even saints are not perfect. His life was holy, even though he had a bad temper!

St. Jerome, help me to learn to love Jesus through reading the Bible!