

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Simon and Andrew. That's the way the Holy Scriptures record Andrew the Apostle. It's never Andrew and Simon. It's always Simon and Andrew. St. Mark even puts James and John before him. And yet St. John records that it was Andrew, a disciple of the Baptizer, that saw the Incarnate Lord first.

Having seen Jesus, it was Andrew that went to Simon and said "We have found the Messiah!" And then it was Andrew that brought Simon to the Lord. Yet even after the resurrection of our Lord, when St. Luke recounts the events of the Upper Room, he lists Peter first, then James, and John, and then Andrew.

At the Transfiguration, it isn't Simon and Andrew. It's Peter, James and John. Andrew apparently didn't make the cut. The "inner circle" of disciples didn't include him. The flesh, of course, would quickly protest, "I found Him first!" That's because the flesh desires to be first. The flesh craves recognition. The flesh likes the corner office, the nicest car, the biggest house, the nicest suits, cash to flash, and respect and honor and reverence from men.

The flesh finds beauty in mirrors and bank accounts. So the Lord has a Word for fleshly men, a Word spoken through the Prophet Ezekiel: "...give them a warning for me: ...say to the wicked... 'you shall surely die.'" He gives fleshly men, He gives you, a different mirror to use – a mirror in which to see yourself clearly - the mirror of the Law, the mirror in which all your sins are visible.

So to the sinner in each of us, to the sinner in you, to the old man that desires the best seat, to the fallen man that craves honor and recognition, to the jealous man, the lustful man, to the man who desires to be first, the Word of the Prophet is for you: If you do not turn from your wickedness, nor from your wicked way, you will die in your iniquity.

The Scripture doesn't record very much about the life of Andrew. He is in all the Apostolic lists. His Divine Call is clearly recorded. He was with his brother, fishing, and the Lord called them to be fishers of men. They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

Later, as the crowd was in the wilderness hearing Jesus, and the Lord looked up and saw the hungry multitude, Andrew, who John clarifies was Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?" But with God nothing is impossible, even to give His own Flesh, which is the Bread that brings life to the world.

When Peter's wife's mother was healed by the Lord, it was at the house where Andrew lived. And when there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast, they came to Philip, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus. When the Lord reveals the signs of the end, Andrew is there with Peter, James and John. Outside of his inclusion in the Apostolic List in Acts, that is the last recorded act of Andrew in the New Testament.

So we learn from Scripture that Andrew, the first of the Twelve to see the Lord, the first of the Twelve to call Him the Messiah, which is to say the first to believe, still Andrew didn't seek to be first. For it is not Andrew, but the sons of Zebedee and their mother that argue over who will sit at the Lord's right and left. And it is Peter that we call "chief of the Apostles".

Of Andrew we learn that Andrew left his boat and followed Jesus. He was Divinely Called and Sent, rightly an Apostle. And we learn that he brought others to Christ. The Spirit lit upon his head too at Pentecost. And then on St. Andrew the Scripture is silent.

With that faith is not troubled. Andrew preached Christ, not himself. That's what faith does. Andrew taught others not about himself, but about the Promised Messiah, the Bread of Life, the Incarnate God, the only true God. He didn't strive after fame and fortune, because faith doesn't seek that. He knew that his reward would not be found in this world, but in the next. He preached Christ. He brought others to Christ. Would that all of us be remembered for that.

It was Andrew's horror to know the gruesome death of His Lord. And it was Andrew's great joy to be in that locked room when fear was displaced by rejoicing, as the risen, living Lord entered miraculously said "Peace be with you." Andrew saw Christ's pierced hands and the mark of the spear thrust. He saw the Promise fulfilled. He saw the proof of his own salvation. The Blood Christ shed He shed for Andrew. And then God breathed on Andrew, and by the very breath that brought life to the first man, Andrew received authority to bring eternal life to fallen men.

The Blood Christ shed He shed for Peter and James and John, and for all the Apostles, even the one who would betray Him. He shed His Blood for the many unnamed disciples, for the multitudes that followed Him, and for all men of all times. That Precious Blood He shed for you. In that Blood, the Blood of Christ, the very Blood He bids you drink this day, there is forgiveness for all your sins. And in the risen Christ, in His defeat of death, you have by imputation the perfect righteousness and holiness that He alone can bestow.

The tradition of the church is that after Pentecost, Andrew preached Christ in Greece, and for his witness was martyred by crucifixion on a saltire cross. On this Scripture is silent.

The name Andrew means "manly" in Greek. But it is not the man Andrew that died for you. It is the God Man Jesus Christ. In Him you, and all men, have salvation. For the same Spirit that lit upon the Apostles at Pentecost works faith in you, faith in Christ, baptismal faith, faith that longs to see Jesus, faith fed even this night as you hear Christ, as you receive Christ's forgiveness, and as you eat His Body and drink His Blood. And although you see Bread and Wine, faith sees Jesus.

For as you kneel at this rail, it is you who are given the best place, you who Christ bids to move up, you who He makes first, you who are made His "inner circle" as you draw nigh unto Him, and He makes Himself your Miraculous Meal. For with God, nothing is impossible.

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