

As of old St Andrew heard it: Matthew 4.18-22

NB the full interactive Advent Calendar experience resumes tomorrow!

Yesterday our calendar window was the Advent wreath and the Advent Craft was ideas for making one for your home. We would love to see your creations. If you can, please share your pictures in the comments of the craft post on our Facebook page or reply to this email with your picture and we will add it to the page so others can see them.

We would love to also share the pictures during our evening services.

Our Facebook page is- <https://www.facebook.com/StPhilipAE>



Today is St Andrew's Day, and our TFTD comes from Reader Nick Singleton.

On this day we remember the Apostle Andrew who allegedly was martyred on this day, in Patras, in Greece in the year 60.

A tradition developed that he was crucified on what is known as a "Saint Andrew's cross" or Saltire. Andrew is said to have requested not to be crucified in the same way as Jesus, as he would be unworthy. Incidentally, is this why the Gospels are anonymous? The writers didn't want to detract in any way from our Lord.

We only have the bare bones of Andrew's life. There is a paucity of mentions in the Bible. We learn that he came originally from Bethsaida on the North shore of Lake Galilee but that he went to live in Capernaum 3 miles to the West and in a different jurisdiction. He lived with Simon's family.

The passage we are looking at describes his call to be a disciple whilst he was at work fishing with his brother Simon.

John's Gospel fleshes this out. Andrew was already a disciple of John the Baptist. John pointed out Jesus as being the Lamb of God. I am not sure what it meant to him but it made him decide to follow Jesus along with an unnamed disciple.

They found out where Jesus was staying and stayed with him that day. The text says it was four o'clock in the afternoon. I can only think that Jesus made such an impression on Andrew that he could say the very hour he met Jesus. I can remember when I turned to Jesus as a teenager after reading *Journey into Life* but I cannot remember the day or hour.

Andrew was so struck by Jesus that he was convinced that Jesus was the one that they were all waiting for, the Messiah.

This led to him finding his brother Simon, saying 'we have found the Messiah', and taking him to meet Jesus.

Simon was the talkative brother with leadership qualities. He sometimes spoke before he had put his mind into gear. My impression of Andrew was that he was quieter and reflective. Andrew knew right away Jesus was the Messiah. It seems to have taken Peter a little longer.

He was helpful. He pointed out the boy with bread and fishes to Jesus, even though he thought it was faintly ridiculous, when there were so many to feed.

When some Greeks met Philip (who was also from Bethsaida) and they wanted to see Jesus, Philip brought them to Andrew to broker the meeting.

Andrew is a Greek name meaning manly. Living in Galilee, there was more of a Greek influence compared to Judea.

Andrew was in the inner circle but he tended to be mentioned after his brother and the two brothers- James and John who were fishing partners. He didn't witness the Transfiguration but he was with those three on the Mount of Olives when they asked Jesus, when would the temple be destroyed.

He was called as an Apostle so he went on the preaching mission, preaching the Good News and healing people etcetera. He witnessed the Resurrection.

After this Eusebius records Origen saying he went on a missionary journey to Scythia, which is an area East of the Black Sea. Later writings say he went to Russia and the Ukraine.

He became the patron Saint of Scotland at around the Treaty of Arbroath in the 14th century. At the time they were asserting their independence from England. They wanted a heavy weight patron saint (Columba was removed) when they asked the Pope to stop the English from invading. They allegedly already had some

of his bones at St Andrews and Edinburgh.

Nationalism aside, what I take from this is he quietly got on with his job as a Christian, after leaving everything to follow Jesus. He was friendly, helpful and astute.

At this time of Covid we may be stuck in doors. We may not be one of the outspoken leaders in the church. But Jesus calls the quiet ones as well as the outspoken ones. We each have a place in Christ's church. Our job may be to pray or to speak to others on the phone or to send or make gifts. You will know. It is all valuable just as Andrew was. We have all been called as Andrew was and can be used in His service. To God be the Glory. Amen.

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30th November 2020