

Why Saint Andrew is the First-Called - Photo journal from his chapel



We say that Saint Andrew together with Saint John the Theologian were the first apostles of Christ, as the Gospel according to John teaches us:

Saint John the Baptist saw Jesus coming to him, and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, "After me comes a man who is preferred before me, for he was before me. I didn't know him, but for this reason I came baptizing in water, that he would be revealed to Israel. I have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God'.

Again, the next day, John was standing with two of his disciples, and he looked at Jesus as He was walking, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard him saying this, and they followed Jesus, who turned, saw them following, and said to them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, 'Rabbi' (in other

words 'Teacher'), where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see'. They came and saw where He was staying, and they stayed with Him that day.

From the above we see several very important things:

- Saint Andrew and John went towards Christ immediately, showing total determination, without hesitation, already calling him Rabbi (Teacher), at the indication of their (then) spiritual leader, Saint John the Forerunner. This is perfect obedience.
- Christ did not call them to be apostles then, nor did He try to explain something to them intellectually, but called them to have His experience. They renounced everything and stayed for the experience of Christ. This is perfect dedication. Their life as apostles was just an effect of their dedication.
- Andrew first found his own brother, Simon, and said to him: 'We've found the Messiah!' (that is, Christ, the Anointed One). This is perfect faith, because Christ didn't give any proof to Andrew that He is indeed the Messiah. Andrew believed just because their spiritual leader- Saint John the Forerunner- told them so. Andrew and John didn't see and understand what happened at Christ's baptism. Saint John told them. This is also the deepest love because Saint Andrew didn't keep the news to himself but shared it with his brother. Moreover, from his behavior we see that Saint Andrew lived in very deep hope and expectation for the Messiah.

Because of all these qualities of Saint Andrew's soul, he has the honor to be the first called by Christ together with Saint John. May we follow his example in order to have the honor to be, at least, the last called by Christ into His heavenly kingdom.

Based on John 1:29-41, Saint John Chrysostom

The photographs were taken at a Divine Liturgy held by metropolitan Athanasios of Limassol in the Chapel of Saint Andrew, the Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopedi, Mount Athos.

































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