

# ✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

November, 2011 - Volume XVI, Issue 10

---

St. Gregory the Great Orthodox Church - A Western Rite Congregation of the Antiochian Archdiocese

---

## *A Reading from a homily of St. John Chrysostom*

*died. 407AD  
feast day - 27 January*

*Inside:*

<i>St. Andrew. . . . .</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Journeys of Faith. . . . .</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Parish News. . . . .</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Our Hearts are Restless. . .</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Calendar. . . . .</i>	<i>7</i>

**W**hen Andrew had been with Jesus, and had learned so much from him, he did not keep this treasure to himself. He made haste and ran to his brother, to share with him what he had learned. Notice what he said to him: “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ). Notice the way in which he shows here what he had learned in such a short space of time. He shows both the power of the Master in convincing them that He was the Messiah and their own zeal and persistence, for they had been concerned about this from the beginning. Andrew’s words are those of one waiting for the Messiah to come from heaven, full of joy that he has come, and hurrying to tell the great news to the others. This action of sharing his spiritual gains with others was born of brotherly love, family ties, and genuine affection.

**B**ut notice also the eager and obedient spirit of Peter. The moment he heard the news he hurried at once to Jesus with his brother. “He brought him to Jesus,” says John. Let no one condemn Peter’s impetuosity in accepting the message without any security. Probably his brother told him everything carefully and at length. Moreover it is a characteristic of the evangelists to tell a great deal in few words, in the interests of brevity. In any case, John does not say that Peter believed at once, but only that Andrew brought him to Jesus. He put Peter into His hands so that he could learn everything from Jesus himself. The other disciple was there also, and was a partner to all that happened.

**J**ohn the Baptist said, “This is the Lamb,” and “He baptizes in the Spirit,” and left the clarification of this teaching to be expounded by Christ. Andrew, who was not capable of giving a full explanation, had all the more reason for doing as John did. He brought his brother to the source of light itself, in so much haste and joy that nothing could delay or put him off.



Jesus, looking upon him, said, ‘Thou art Simon, the son of John; thou shalt be called Cephas’...and James and his brother He called “Sons of Thunder.” Why did He do this? To show that He it is who gave the Old Testament and changed names, calling Abram Abraham, and Sarai Sara, and Jacob Israel. He appointed the names of many from their birth, like Isaac, Samson, and others. He appointed the names of still others even after their name had been received from their parents.

At that time, each one received a different name, while now we all have the same one: that which is greater than all, namely, to be called Christians and sons of God, His friends and His body. This name can stir us more than all those famous ones and make us more desirous of the practice of virtue. Well, then let us not do things unworthy of the honor of our name, considering it the greatest honor that we are called Christ’s.

Let us ponder and reverence the greatness of our name. A person who is said to be of the family of a distinguished general or else of some eminent man is proud when he hears of the one or the other distinction. He considers the name a great honor, and makes every effort not to bring defamation by his carelessness upon the one whose name he bears. Shall not we who are called by the name not of a general, or of some earthly ruler, or of an angel, or of an archangel, or of the Seraphim, but of the King of all these Himself, give up even our life itself, so as not to affront him who has honored us? So let us who have been deemed worthy to be near Him use every means to imitate Christ.

## *St. Andrew, the First-called Apostle*

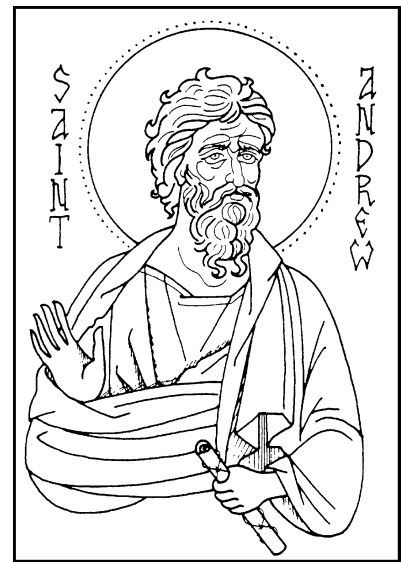
### *Feast Day ~ November 30*

Just as God had been preparing the world to receive his Incarnate Son who would bring redemption, he had also been preparing the hearts of those individuals who would be closest to our Savior and who would carry on His ministry following the Resurrection.

St. Andrew was one who had been awaiting the Messiah. A native of the town of Bethsaida, he participated in the family fishing business, and had become a disciple of St. John the Baptist, finding hope in his teachings about repentance. When the Forerunner pointed to Jesus and said, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”, Andrew and a companion - thought to be St. John the Evangelist who wrote this account - immediately went to investigate this claim. They followed Jesus to

where he was staying and remained with him until the next day, listening to his teaching. [John 1:35-39]

**A**ndrew again took immediate action, going to his brother Simon to give him the good news that they had found the Messiah. From that day, the brothers and others whom Jesus called, were his constant companions. They witnessed the first miracle at the wedding feast in Cana; they heard the comforting words of the Sermon on the Mount; and they pondered the parables, seeking to understand their meaning. Andrew brought the young boy's loaves and fish to the Lord to feed the multitudes, and he and his companions witnessed Christ walking on the water of the Sea of Galilee. They saw our Lord heal the sick and raise Lazarus from the dead. Andrew was with those who questioned Jesus on His prophecy about the destruction of the Temple. They were with Christ through the difficult days of Holy Week and Andrew - like his brother Peter and all but John - fled when Jesus was crucified. After experiencing the joy of seeing the Resurrected Christ, the Apostles were present at the Ascension and received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.



**O**utside the Gospel accounts, Andrew is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as having participated in the selection of Matthias to replace the traitor Judas, keeping the number of the Apostles at twelve. He attended the first Church Council in Jerusalem, which decreed that Christians did not have to abide by Jewish law. All this we know of St. Andrew from the Biblical accounts. For the rest of his story, we turn to Holy Tradition.

**W**e are told that, after Pentecost, those twelve then followed our Lord's command to "go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." They divided the territories of the known world among them and, joined in their efforts by St. Paul, began their work of evangelizing the world.

**S**t. Andrew traveled throughout Asia Minor, part of Greece, the area along the Black Sea (to the city of Byzantium), and some say as far as Russia. Everywhere that St. Andrew traveled, he taught the people about the love of Christ and baptized many into the Church. He ordained priests to continue this ministry before leaving an area. In some places, the new Christians tore down the temples of the idols they had formerly worshiped and brought the treasures of those temples to St. Andrew. He advised the people to use the money to help the poor but to save some of it for the building of a Temple for the worship of the true God.

**I**n the city of Patras, St. Andrew was God's vehicle for a healing miracle which ultimately led to his martyrdom. He healed

Maximilla, the wife of the imperial governor, Aegeatus, of an infirmity of the eyes. In her gratitude, Maximilla listened fervently to St. Andrew's preaching and became convinced of the truth of Christianity. Her brother-in-law, Stratocles, was also convinced, but Aegeatus did the politically expedient thing and condemned Andrew, despite what he had done for his wife. After repeated tortures, he had St. Andrew crucified on an X-shaped cross. It was about the year 62 when St. Andrew the First-called Apostle received the crown of martyrdom.

After two hundred years, the relics of this great saint were taken to Constantinople for veneration by the faithful in the Church of the Apostles built by the first Christian Emperor, Constantine. In 1460, the head of St. Andrew was given to the Roman Catholic pope, but this relic was returned to the Orthodox in 1964. Another relic of the saint - his arm - is in Moscow. St. Andrew is honored as the patron saint of both Russia and Scotland.

Like St. Andrew, those who recognize Jesus as the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" must follow Him as a disciple. And, if we are true disciples, we will bring others to Him, sharing our faith and hope of eternal life.

## *Journeys of Faith*



Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me. This verse from the vision of St. John the Evangelist [Rev. 3:20] shows Christ's invitation to each of us. On the other side of the door is a soul on the verge of conversion. All that is necessary is to open the door and let Christ enter the heart and mind and soul. This is what true conversion requires.

For some, the journey of faith is marked by dramatic, numinous experiences of God. The Bible is full of these stories of conversion and the resulting commitment. Old Testament accounts of Jacob's dream [Gen. 28:10-15], of Moses and the Burning Bush [Exodus 3:3:1-6], of Isaiah's vision of the seraphim and God's call to him [Is. 6:1-8] show how God used the Patriarchs and Prophets of the Old Law to help bring about his plan for our salvation. The New Testament account of St. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus [Acts 9:1-6] reveals God's intentions for those who are truly converted: go and tell others the Good News.

Most of us have not had visions or dramatic conversion experiences, but have been converted to the life of a Christian

through a slow, gradual process, a journey of faith. Most of us were baptized as children when promises were made on our behalf by parents and godparents. But as we matured, we read books and attended church services. We were taught by parents, teachers and priests. We heard the stories of the saints and observed the lives of the living saints and wanted to emulate them. We prayed and our prayers were answered.

Whether we experienced conversion dramatically or gradually, we should remember the moments of acceptance and commitment and keep our hearts open to a continual commitment in order to truly fulfill our call as Christians. If we are to be faithful followers of Christ, we will want to share his love with others. If we are to be an evangelistic parish, we will keep our stories alive and tell them to others.

Our parish library contains a number of books about the faith journeys of converts from many different backgrounds and experiences who have found Christ in the Orthodox Church. These include: *Surprised by Christ* of Fr. James Bernstein, the fascinating story of a Jew's journey into Christianity; *Islam Encounters Christ* by Nahed Netwalli, a former Muslim who, against great odds, accepted Christianity; *Becoming Orthodox*, the conversion story of Fr. Peter Gillquist and his evangelical Protestant companions; and *A Sorrowful Joy* by Albert Raboteau, the story of how an African-American man reconciled the various elements of his heritage in the Orthodox Church.

When we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the founding of St. Gregory's parish five years ago, several of us wrote about our journeys of faith which led us to the Orthodox Church. Copies of those stories are available in the library as well. (If there are others who would like to add the story of their Christian pilgrimage, please speak to Fr. Nicholas.) Reading and re-reading these stories may help us to keep our vision clear and our evangelistic zeal alive. May God give us courage and wisdom to participate in the conversion of the world.



## *Parish News*

We will remember at the altar the names of our departed loved ones in the commemoration of All Souls on Wednesday, November 2. Requiem Mass will be celebrated at 7:30PM preceded by Vespers of the Departed and followed by a pot-luck supper.



All Saints will be celebrated on the Sunday within the Octave, November 6. After Mass that day, we will have our annual All Saints Party when we share stories about the saints.

Bishop THOMAS will ordain Deacon Raphael Garcia to the Holy Priesthood on Sunday, November 20, at St. Andrew mission in Lewes, Delaware. Deacon Raphael is currently enrolled in a hospital chaplaincy program at the National Institutes of Health. As a priest, he will be able to provide a greater sacramental ministry as needed, and he will be able to assist the other three Western Rite parishes in our region. He will celebrate his first Mass at St. Gregory's on Monday, November 21, for the feast of the Presentation of the Theotokos in the Temple.

We begin another new year in the Church, a new liturgical cycle, on Sunday, November 27, the First Sunday of Advent. In the Advent season, we prepare our hearts particularly through fasting, penitence and alms-giving as we anticipate the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Son of God

## *Our Hearts Rest in Thee*

*One of the most famous conversion stories is that of St. Augustine, the 5<sup>th</sup> century bishop of Hippo. In his Confessions, he wrote of his long struggle (aided by his persistent mother, St. Monica, and the teachings of the bishop, St. Ambrose of Milan) from a life of intellectual pride and moral lassitude to finally embrace the truth of Christianity. The following is an excerpt from his journey of faith.*

*You are great, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is your power, and of your wisdom there is no number. And man desires to praise you. He is but a tiny part of all that you have created. He bears about him his mortality, the evidence of his sinfulness... yet this tiny part of all that you have created desires to praise you. You so excite him, that to praise you is his joy. For you have made us for yourself and our hearts are restless till they rest in you.*

*Who shall grant me rest in you? By whose gift shall you enter into my heart and fill it so compellingly that I shall turn no more to my sins, but embrace you, my only good? What are you to me? Have mercy, that I may tell. What rather am I to you, that you should demand my love?*

*For your mercies' sake, O Lord my God, tell me what you are to me. Say unto my soul, I am your salvation. So speak that I may hear, Lord, my heart is listening; open it that it may hear you say to my soul: I am your salvation. Hearing that word, let me come in haste to lay hold upon you. Hide not your face from me. Let me see your face even if I die, lest I die with longing to see it.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>November 2011</h1>						
<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Sung Mass at 9:30AM</i>		<b>1</b> All Saints Day	<b>2</b> All Souls Day  <i>Mass at 7:30pm</i> <b>B</b>	<b>3</b> of the Octave of All Saints; St. Winifred, VM, 680	<b>4</b> of the Octave of All Saints; Ss. Vitalis & Agricola, Mm, c. 304	<b>5</b> of the Octave of All Saints; St. Elizabeth, Ma, 1st C.; St. Silvia, Mother of St. Gregory, Ma, 592  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>6</b> Sunday in the Octave of All Saints; comm. 21 <sup>st</sup> Sun. after Pentecost; St. Leonard of Noblac, Ab, c. 559  <i>W</i>	<b>7</b> of the Octave of All Saints; St. Wilibrord of Echternach, BC, 739	<b>8</b> Patriarchs & Prophets of the Old Law; Octave Day of All Saints; Four Crowned Martyrs, c. 303	<b>9</b> Dedication of the Basilica of the Holy Savior in Rome, 324; St. Theodore Tyro, M, 306; St. Benignus, BC, c. 468	<b>10</b> Ss. Tryphon, Respicius & Nympha, Mm, c. 250	<b>11</b> St. Martin of Tours, BC, 397; St. Menna, M, c. 303; St. Theodore the Studite, Ab, 826	<b>12</b> St. Martin I, PC, 655  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>13</b> Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost; St. Britius of Tours, BC, 444  <i>G</i>	<b>14</b> St. Gregory Palamas, BCD, 1359	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> St. Gregory the Wonderworker, BC, c. 270; St. Gregory of Tours, BC, 594	<b>18</b> Dedication of Basilicas of Ss. Peter & Paul in Rome, 4 <sup>th</sup> c.; St. Odo, Ab., 10 <sup>th</sup> c.	<b>19</b> St. Pontianus, PM, 235  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>20</b> Twenty-Third & Last Sunday after Pentecost; St. Edmund, KM, 870  <i>G</i>	<b>21</b> Presentation of the BVM; St. Gelasius, PC, 496  <i>Mass at 7:30pm</i> <b>W</b>	<b>22</b> St. Cecilia, VM, c. 230	<b>23</b> St. Clement, PM, 96; St. Felicity of Rome, M, 165	<b>24</b> St. Chrysogonus of Apuleia, M., c. 304  <i>(Thanksgiving Day)</i>	<b>25</b> St. Katherine of Alexandria, VM, c. 4th c.	<b>26</b> St. Peter of Alexandria, BM, 311  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
<b>27</b> First Sunday of Advent  <i>V</i>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> St. Saturninus, M, 309	<b>30</b> St. Andrew the Apostle, 1st c.	<b>1</b> St. Eligius, BC, 660	<b>2</b> St. Peter Chrysologus, BCD, c. 450	<b>3</b> St. Bibiana, VM, 363  <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>

Confessions may be made following Vespers, during the Psalms at Matins, and by appointment.

Coffee Hour follows Liturgy