

November 30: Saint Andrew, Apostle

Gospel for the feast of the apostle Saint Andrew, and commentary.

Gospel (*Mt 4:18-22*)

As Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

Immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on from there he saw two other brothers,

James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Commentary

The day had started like any other. Andrew and his brother and their fellow fishermen were immersed in the exhausting work that provided food for their families. They were, as always, casting the nets into the sea and waiting for the fish to enter. But this time the day would end very differently.

Amid their daily work, Andrew and his brother received an attractive but still unclear call. Jesus passed by and invited them to be a “fishers of men.” He didn’t give any specific details nor

did he tell them what their life would be like, or their death. Our Lord asked them to be at his side, and little by little, in the warmth of the love in his Heart, he forged them so that they could share in his destiny.

This is how the story of Andrew's and also his brother's life would end: embracing with ardent desire the Cross of the Master – something totally surpassing the calculations of the young fishermen by the Sea of Galilee.

In considering the trajectory of Saint Andrew's entire life, from his call by the sea to his death on the Cross, we grow in our awareness that God's plans are perfectly aligned with our desire for happiness. Surely, if on that first day Jesus had announced to Andrew that he was going to die on a cross, he would have been terrified. But we see him growing bold as he grows in love over the years, eager to

embrace that font of suffering, which for him was a font of happiness, as we see in the wonderful testimony he left us in his hymn before the Cross.

God's plans, as we already said, are perfectly aligned with our desire for happiness. But the experience of the apostles teaches us that to attain this happiness we need to truly abandon ourselves to our Lord and not ask him to fulfil our own plans. Saint Andrew's life didn't turn out as he expected, but he was much happier.

We need to decide to follow our Lord in the same way, without wanting to control everything and deciding on the end ourselves. If we truly follow Jesus, our life will not be as we envision it: it will be much better, no matter what happens. God always keeps his promises, and he has promised us that if we are faithful our deeds will have repercussions we cannot even imagine. But this

requires on our part leaving behind the security of the known, as Saint Andrew did, in order to follow the One who truly loves us.

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