

## Andrew the Apostle

*Observed 30 November*



*Cross of Saint Andrew on Scottish flag*

Saint Andrew the Apostle is in most minds overshadowed by his more prominent brother, the impetuous Simon Peter. The sons of Zebedee worked with their father fishing on the Sea of Galilee and doubtless expected to continue to do so throughout their lives, until Jesus came along and invited them to fish for people instead. Andrew is described as the very first to join Jesus and is remembered for bringing others to Christ, most notably his famous brother. Because of this a group encouraging personal evangelism took his name as ‘the Fellowship of Saint Andrew’. John mentions Andrew as the one who brought the little boy with the loaves and fishes to Jesus on the occasion of the feeding of the multitude. As the first apostle, it is appropriate that his feast is used to define the beginning of the Church year, which begins on the Sunday closest to Saint Andrew’s Day. Saint Andrew is well known to be the patron saint of Scotland, whose flag is Saint Andrew’s cross (in an x shape) on a blue background, the Scottish contribution to the Union Jack of Great Britain. Saint Andrew claims many other places as well. Byzantine tradition claimed Andrew as its first Bishop, such that he became the patron saint of the Byzantine Empire. In his travels, he is said to have spread the Gospel in areas now part of Romania, Ukraine, and Russia, all of which claim him as a patron, although Christianity was not

firmly established in those areas until much later. When we come to the Feast of Saint Andrew at the end of November, we do well to think of all the new beginnings that come with a new Church year, and to think of ways to follow Saint Andrew in sharing the wonders we have found in Christ with our own friends and family as he did.

*Lessons*        Deuteronomy 30:11-14; Psalm 19; Romans 10:8b-18; Matthew 4:18-22

*Collect*        Almighty God, who gave such grace to your apostle Andrew that he readily obeyed the call of your Son Jesus Christ, and brought his brother with him: Give unto us, who are called by your Word, grace to follow him without delay, and to bring those near to us into his gracious presence; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.