

## Saint Andrew

One of the Twelve Apostles was most likely born in Bethsaida, just north of the Sea of Galilee, in what is today the Golan Heights. As a young man, he and his brother, Peter, worked as fishermen on the Sea of Galilee. John's Gospel reveals that Andrew was a disciple of Saint John the Baptist prior to his encounter with Jesus. This shows that Andrew was searching and took his faith seriously. As is recorded in John 1:35–42, Andrew and another disciple were listening to John preach in the desert. As they listened to him, the Baptist saw Jesus in the distance and prophetically exclaimed, "Behold, the Lamb of God." After Andrew and the other disciple inquired of Jesus where He was staying, Jesus invited them to follow Him by saying, "Come, and you will see." They then spent the rest of the day with Jesus. Andrew is, therefore, the first of the Apostles to be called and to respond to that call. For that reason, the Greek Church calls Andrew the "*Protokletos*," meaning, "the first called."



## The miracles of Saint Andrew

### An Annual Miracle at the Tomb of the Apostle Andrew from the Sixth Century

Saint Gregory of Tours, in his late-6th century book titled *Glory of the Martyrs* (ch. 30), records the following annual miracle that was done at the tomb of the Apostle Andrew in Patras, Greece:

"On the day of his festival the Apostle Andrew works a great miracle, that is, [by producing both] manna with the appearance of flour and oil with the fragrance of nectar which overflows from his tomb. In this way the fertility of the coming year is revealed. If only a little oil flows, the land will produce few crops; but if the oil was plentiful, it signifies that the fields will produce many crops. For they say that in some years so much oil gushed from his tomb that a torrent flowed into the middle of the church. These events happened in the province of Achaëa, in the city of Patras, where the blessed apostle and martyr was crucified for the name of the Redeemer and ended his present life with a glorious death. But when the oil flows, it gives off such a strong fragrance to noses that you might think a collection of many different spices had been sprinkled there. A miracle and a blessing for the people

accompany this. For salves and potions are made from this oil; once used, they offer great relief to people who are sick. After the glorious reception of Andrew [in Paradise] many miracles are said to have been revealed either at his tomb or in various places where his relics are located."



## **Elder Paisios, the Apostle Andrew and the Earthquake that Shook Patras**

On 14 July 1993, chaos came over the city of Patras when an afternoon earthquake struck and shook up people's lives.

During the earthquake Elder Paisios had a vision on Mount Athos, as he was laying on a bed of suffering one year prior to his death. He saw the Apostle Andrew, the protector and patron of the city of Patras, praying intensely and with tears to our Lord Jesus Christ, saying: "Save my city, save my city."

Immediately Elder Paisios contacted Metropolitan Nikodemos of Patras, who informed his suffering flock and reminded them of their protector.

It is believed for this reason Patras was saved from any major catastrophe.

## **The Miracle of Saint Andrew at Spetses in 1898**

In the Church of Saint Andrew the First-Called in Spetses there is a silver ship hanging from the ceiling, which testifies to a naval miracle of St. Andrew that happened on November 30th of 1898. The following story is related to us by Peter D. Argyri.

It was the dawn of St. Andrew's on November 30, 1898. Most homes on the island of Spetses were lit by oil lamps. Housewives were getting ready for church to celebrate the feast.

Outside there was a bitter cold, as a storm had swept through the night before. Despite the bitter cold, at eight in the morning the church was crowded with the faithful.

As the priest was in procession with the Holy Gifts during the Great Entrance, all eyes turned towards the door. A bunch of bearded, shabby, soggy, disheveled men came in led by their captain. They approached the icon of St. Andrew and knelt together, first the captain followed by his crew. At one point even the priest stopped chanting to watch.

Their faces seemed wild, cold and pale. The salt of the sea or possibly some great agony carved deep wrinkles in their foreheads. Their hair was glued to their heads mixed with the blood from their wounds. Their clothes were ragged, and from the holes in their pants and shirt one could distinguish wounds that had been covered with dried blood.

The captain, after crossing himself and resting his head on the floor, pinned his eyes upon the icon of the Saint. His eyes were filled with tears and he trembled all over. With a quick movement of his hand to his bosom he pulled out a pouch so full that it was about to break from all the coins, and he placed it before the icon of St. Andrew. The sailors did the same, kneeling and kissing the icon with reverence.

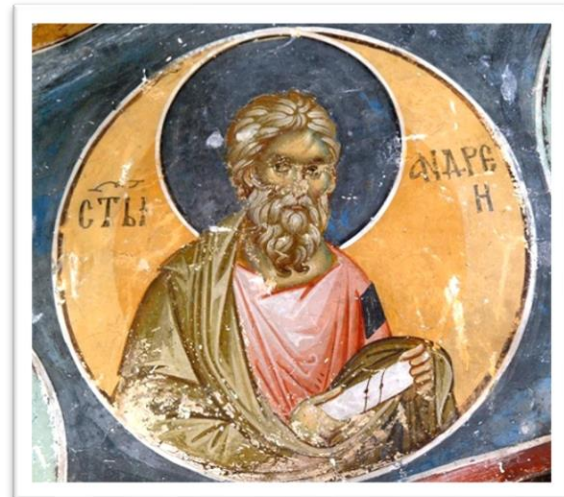
When the priest said: "With the fear of God, faith and love, draw near", the captain with all his sailors approached and with a loud voice said to the priest:

"Commune us all, my Father, though we have never fasted." Papa George looked into the eyes of the captain and said: "The sick and the traveler have no sin, my child." So he offered them Holy Communion, saying: "The servant of God..." "Captain John", he said.

"...John", said the priest, "in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit", and he communed him. He did the same to all the sailors, who also kissed with reverence the Holy Chalice and the hand of the priest. When the time came for the priest to distribute the antidron and the captain approached, the priest told him: "Captain, you would give me great joy if you came with your crew to my home so I can offer you some coffee. I celebrate today." "Thank you, my Father. I will come father joy, since we haven't seen our home for fifteen months now. "Soon everyone filled the house of the priest and the priest's wife took care of them all. Upon discussion the captain began to chronicle how his ship landed on the island.

"We set off from Malta with my friends here 35 days ago. On our way we came upon inclement weather. My ship is forty yards with two masts and they received several shots by the wild waves, but that which happened for three days and three nights I have never encountered in my life. The waves even covered the masts. At one point a huge wave cut the mast like a cucumber and it was swallowed by the sea. The waves were hitting us like balls, from the left and the right, as we tried to hold the ship. Some were wounded, others traumatized, and would moan and beg the Panagia and Saint Nicholas to help us.

Last night as night came, lightning and thunder and furious wind whistled against the ropes as if they were sirens, and we couldn't even see our noses. 'Courage, my lads, courage that we may endure' I yelled. 'It is a shower and it will pass.' We did not know whether we were in the sea or on the ship. The ship was taking in water. To the right a hole had opened. 'Help, Saint Nicholas!' I hopelessly yelled.



In a moment, a huge wave grabbed me and threw me to the corner. It broke my ribs and I was barely able to discern through the bright lightning a certain monk, just like you Papa George with the black cassock, holding the wheel. I do not remember anything else, my Father. But that monk was the same as St. Andrew whom we celebrate today."

Then a middle-aged sailor said:



"After, my Father, we heard in the mayhem the voice of the captain tell us: 'Crash, crash children....' No one responded. We only said to ourselves that the captain had gone crazy. And we shouted to him: 'Have you gone crazy, Captain? Where can we crash in the sea?' He said again: 'Crash in the front!' We obeyed and crashed. Silence spread around us as if everything became calm, and we thought a miracle happened. 'Captain, Captain!' we cried as we searched for him among the wreckage. We finally found him wedged between some planks. He couldn't remember anything."

The priest did the sign of the cross, and said to them:

"Saint Andrew saved you, my children. And you who were night and day at sea amidst many dangers must have Christ within you."

The captain sighed deeply, and as he sipped his coffee and lit his pipe, he said:

"They took me, my Father, and lay me on a blanket. We had no light, pitch darkness, and we waited for God to bring the dawn of day, since we imagined to be at some port. When we began to distinguish the white houses on your island, a good child came by at the beach, and having asked him what place this was, he said it was Spetses and the feast of St. Andrew. It was him that grabbed the wheel and gave orders to my sailors.

We had left Malta and went to Crete and after to Chios. But who would have imagined that weather, the Saint, would bring us to your island. With the coins we left at the icon of the Saint, help the orphans, the widows and the poor. It was fifteen months of fares. Money I can gain again, but my life and that of my sailors never. I will return to your island and hang, by his grace, a silver ship, similar to mine."

The priest blessed them, and all got up to leave, wishing them good travels, and they left towards the ship, to continue along what was set for their fate.

## **A Great Miracle of the Apostle Andrew in Cyprus in 1912**

The Holy Monastery of the Apostle Andrew in Karpasia, Cyprus, which is presently in the occupied area of Cyprus under the Turks, has an unknown history. According to tradition, it was here where the ship of the Apostle Andrew was in a lull for three days. It was also here where the Apostle struck a rock to create a source of water, which runs from the old church where the holy water flows near the sea. This holy water healed the blind son of the captain of the ship, who, according to tradition, later built the first church here dedicated to the first-called disciple of Christ, Andrew.



However, what made this monastery famous to every Cypriot was the following miracle:

During the abbacy of Economou Christophorou Kykkotis a wonderful event happened which moved the residents of Cyprus and increased respect and love for the Apostle Andrew and his monastery. Around 1896 certain Turks in the city of Allagia, Asia Minor kidnapped the only son of a poor Greek woman named Maria. Despite her efforts to restore her 13 year-old son, this became unfortunately impossible.

Little Pentelis Hatzigeorgis was taken by his kidnappers to military schools to serve in the Islamic battalions, and after graduation would enter into service of the Sultan and Muhammad. The mother of the child placed her hope in God and prayed daily for His mercy and the restoration of her child. Many years passed, it was 1912, and Maria saw in her dreams a certain man named Andrew, and he announced to her that she would soon see her son. Maria believed that her visitor was none other than the first-called disciple of Christ Himself. She immediately boarded an Austrian steamer which was going from Smyrna to Larnaka in order to venerate the Apostle Andrew at his monastery in Cyprus.

On this same ship were many Cypriots, men and women, who were working in Mersina and Adana for an official German company that manufactured large rail projects in the East. Also aboard were a small group of dervishes, who were visiting Cyprus to attend a pending issue regarding one of their Tekke's on the island. To certain women on the ship Maria expressed her deep conviction that with the help of Saint Andrew she would get back her son.

One of the dervishes overheard the woman with great interest and observed her. Eventually the young man approached Maria. He asked Maria how she would identify her lost son, so she told him of the peculiar pair of birthmarks that he bore on his shoulder and chest. The young man then threw off his woolen cloak to expose the same marks and fell on his knees before his mother. Despite the many years of separation and Turkish education, Pentelis remembered his childhood.

He then removed the hat from his head, dressed in Greek clothes and confessed his Orthodox Christian faith. The joy of both mother and son, together with the other Christians traveling with them, was great and very moving. Immediately when the ship docked in Larnaka, both mother and son ran to the Church of Saint Lazarus, where they prayed fervently and thanked the Apostle Andrew. Approaching the priest of the church, Fr. John Makoulis, he confessed once again his faith in the Holy Trinity. Fr. John then chrismated him to return him officially once again to the Orthodox Christian faith.

They then visited the Monastery of Saint Andrew where they venerated Saint Andrew and once again thanked him for the deliverance of Pentelis and the answered prayers of Maria. From there they went to Kykkos Monastery where they stayed for a few days.

