

Today is the Feast of St. Andrew the Apostle.

In Greek, St. Andrew is often called *Protokletus* - meaning "first called." In Matthew's Gospel we hear an abbreviated version of the call of Andrew and his brother Peter.

John's Gospel gives a more detailed rendition - wherein Andrew introduces his brother Peter to Jesus.

In St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, we hear what might be called the "lineage of Faith."

*[H]ow can they call on him in whom they have not believed?
And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard?
And how can they hear without someone to preach?
And how can people preach unless they are sent?*

The word Apostle is from the Greek meaning - "one who is sent."

It is through the preaching of the Apostles that the first Christians heard the Word of God ... and from that believed.

The way Paul breaks this down is almost mathematical - sending, preaching, hearing, believing. And through belief, we learn to call on Jesus Christ as our Savior and Redeemer.

And so it has been for twenty-one centuries, through successive generations, that the Faith has been passed on.

During this Season of Advent, let us use our time wisely to prepare for Christmas. Not only through our preparations for the holiday by shopping and social gatherings; but also through a spiritual preparation - through our prayer and study of the Word of God.

May we receive abundant graces through our Advent devotions and prayer; and may we rely on the intercession of the Apostles, especially St. Andrew; and the abundant graces poured out in the Eucharist we celebrate today.