

THE ORTHODOX WEEKLY BULETIN . . . VESTAL, CLIFFWOOD, NEW JERSEY

CHRIST'S FIRST APOSTLE

SAINT ANDREW was first a disciple of St. John the Baptist. He was attracted to this powerful figure of the wilderness, preparing the way for the Lord. When Andrew followed Jesus and became His first Apostle. He then told his brother Simon Peter that he had found the Messiah.

Patras, Greece is said to be the scene of the martyr's death. The Roman official Ageas came to Patras and observed that multitudes had abandoned paganism and had embraced the faith of Christ. He resolved to correct the situation. It proved impossible for him to stem the tide of the Gospel. In fact, the official's wife and brother, having been cured of illness by the apostle, accepted the Christian faith.

Soon Ageas called Andrew to account for his actions. He derided him as a propagator of that superstition whose Author was put to death on a Cross. Andrew seized the opportunity to speak of the infinite love of Christ Who came into the world and died to save it. The Apostle was sent off to prison and later issued a death sentence.

Because Andrew had preached so much of the cross and sacrifice of Christ, Ageas ordered the saint to be crucified on an X-shaped cross. He saluted it saying: "Hail, precious cross, that has been consecrated by the body of my Lord, and adorned with His limbs as with rich jewels. I come to you exulting and glad; receive me with joy into your arms. O good cross, that has received beauty from our Lord's limbs, I have ardently loved you. Long have I desired and sought you; now you have been found by me and are ready for my longing soul." After teaching the faithful from this special "pulpit" for several days, Andrew gave his life for Christ.

