

June 11th: Memorial of Saint Barnabas, Apostle

Gospel text (Mt 10:7-13): Jesus said to his Apostles: “As you go, make this proclamation: ‘The Kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give...”

St. Barnabas, Apostle

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)

(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, we celebrate the apostle “Barnabas”, that is “son of encouragement” (Acts 4:36) or “son of consolation”. He was a Levite Jew, a native of Cyprus. Having settled in Jerusalem, he was one of the first to embrace Christianity after the Lord's Resurrection. With immense generosity, he sold a field which belonged to him, and gave the money to the Apostles for the Church's needs (Acts 4:37). It was he who vouched for the sincerity of Saul's conversion before the Jerusalem community that still feared its former persecutor (cf. Acts 9:27). Sent to Antioch in Syria, he went to meet Paul in Tarsus, where he had withdrawn, and spent a whole year with him there, dedicated to the evangelization of that important city in whose Church Barnabas was known as a prophet and teacher (cf. Acts 13:1). The Church of Antioch sent Barnabas on a mission with Paul, which became known as the Apostle's first missionary journey.

—Together with Paul, he then went to the so-called Council of Jerusalem where after a profound examination of the question, the Apostles with the Elders decided to discontinue the practice of circumcision so that it was no longer a feature of the Christian identity. It was only in this way that, in the end, they officially made possible the Church of the Gentiles, a Church without circumcision; we are children of Abraham simply through faith in Christ.