



SAINT LOUIS ABBEY



Mass of Temporary Profession -- Brother Andrew and Brother Cassian Saint Louis Abbey

January 6, 2007; 9:00 a.m. Mass

Homily

Dear Brother Andrew, dear Brother Cassian:

In choosing the Gospel text for your Profession Mass which we have just heard, you have gone to the heart of the matter. For in this text Our Lord expresses, under a particularly lovely aspect, what it is that a monk is to dedicate his whole life to, his every thought and word and action. It is to live ever as a friend of the Lord.

Dear Brother Andrew, your great patron, Saint Andrew, the Apostle, was a friend of the Lord. Indeed, he was the Lord's first friend: he it was who first went to "stay with the Lord", and he it was who found his brother Simon and invited him to come into the Lord's friendship. He kept on inviting people. When Greeks came near the end of the Lord's earthly ministry and said, "We wish to see Jesus" -- such a portentous event so far as the future history of the Church was concerned -- when Greeks came, Saint Andrew it was who presented their request to the Lord.

Dear Brother Cassian, your great patron, Saint John Cassian, the teacher of all the monks of the West, the one who told us that he learned the monastic life in Bethlehem, where Our Lord took flesh, and so he learned it as it were under the tutelage of Our Blessed Mother -- Saint John Cassian was a friend of the Lord. He was a passionate friend of the Lord. He spoke of the fire of love; he spoke of tears; he said to the young monks who came to him: "Go from the heights to still higher places, go from strength to strength, go from one perfection to another, until you come to that most blessed state, which is love, and intimate commerce with the Lord in friendship."

"Intimate commerce with the Lord in friendship." Dear brothers, if this is your calling, your beautiful calling, then what is not worth sacrificing for it? Give up your toils in the world; give up yourself, as laying down a heavy burden. Take on your shoulders the Lord's light yoke, his light yoke for you of the monastic way, of humble obedience, of unceasing conversion, of constant fidelity, his light yoke of renunciation for the sake of unceasing search for God, of separateness for the sake of unceasing prayer. Learn from him, who is meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Let the meaning of your life be the glorious meaning the Lord offers you, speaking to you in your Gospel: "I no longer call you servants, I call you friends, for I have made known to you everything I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me, no, I chose



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you, and appointed you to bare fruit that will remain. This is my commandment, that you love, as I have loved you.”

Dear Brother Andrew, dear Brother Cassian: You had us pray with you today:

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal on your arm;
For hard as death is love,
relentless as the grave is devotion;
its flames are a blazing fire.
Deep waters cannot quench love,
nor floods sweep it away.

Your had us pray with you:

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink?

There is one thing I ask of the Lord,
for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
to savor the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold his temple.

It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
hide not your face.

Come, then, dear brothers, and profess your vows.