

APOSTLE THOMAS

The name Thomas means, "twin." He was one of the Twelve, a Galilean by birth. Sophroneus (not the famous Patriarch of Jerusalem [7th Century, celebrated March 11], but a friend of Jerome's), quoted also by Jerome, says that Saint Thomas preached to the Parthians, Persians, Medes, Hyrcanians, Bactrians, and neighbouring nations.

According to Heracleon, the Apostle died a natural death; according to other accounts, he was martyred at Meliapur.

His tomb was known by Saint John Chrysostom to be at Edessa in Syria, to which city his holy relics may have been translated from India in the fourth century.

source: <http://www.iconograms.org/sig.php?eid=230>

The Holy Apostle Thomas.

He was one of the twelve Great Apostles. Through his doubt of the Resurrection of the Lord Christ, a new confirmation was given of that wonderful and saving event, for the risen Lord appeared again to His disciples, to convince Thomas. The Lord said to Thomas: 'Reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing', and Thomas cried: 'My Lord and my God! (John 20). After the descent of the Holy Spirit, when the apostles cast lots to see who would go where to preach the Gospel, it fell to Thomas to go to India. He was somewhat saddened at having to go so far away, but the Lord appeared to him and comforted him. In India, St Thomas converted many, both rich and poor, to the Christian faith, and founded a Church there, making priests and bishops. Among others, St Thomas converted two sisters, Tertiana and Mygdonia, wives of Indian princes. Both sisters were ill-treated for their faith by their husbands, who would not live with them after their baptism, and divorced them. Being freed from their marriages, they lived godly lives till their deaths. Dionysius and Pelagia, a couple at first betrothed to each other, heard the Apostle's teaching and did not live together, but devoted themselves to the ascetic life. Pelagia died a martyr for the Faith and Dionysius was made bishop by the Apostle. Prince Misdæus, the husband of Tertiana, whose wife and son St Thomas baptised, condemned the Apostle to death, and sent five soldiers who ran him through with their lances, and thus the holy Apostle Thomas gave his soul into the hands of his Christ. Before his death, he, with the other apostles, was miraculously borne to Jerusalem for the funeral of the most holy Mother of God.

Arriving late, he grieved bitterly and, at his request, the tomb of the Most Pure was opened, but the body was not there; the Lord had taken His Mother to His heavenly home. Thus St Thomas first, by his unbelief, confirmed the faith in the Resurrection of the Lord and then, by his late arrival, revealed to us the wondrous glorification of the Mother of God.

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