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Who were Andronicus and Junia?

St. Paul describes them as “my relatives and prison companions; they are notable Apostles, and they were in Christ before me.” (Romans 16:7)

Why was May 17 chosen?

May 17 is their feast day in churches of the Eastern Rite, both Orthodox and Catholic, where they have been commemorated for 1,400 years, since being canonized by the patriarch of Constantinople in the year 607 or 608. [However, if in any year this day falls on a Sunday or the Feast of the Ascension, their commemoration should be transferred to a nearby open weekday.]

What are the reasons to observe this feast?

- To learn about and celebrate this part of our biblical and historic heritage in the Communion of Saints;
- To celebrate these two Apostles, a woman and a man, sent out by the Risen Christ in the power of the Spirit, working together in mission and evangelism despite being jailed;
- It is a wonderful model and validation of our experience of the Spirit's guidance;
- This will allow our diocese to test the revised Propers, and to judge how much support there is for celebrating these saints more widely in the Episcopal Church.

The diocese of Massachusetts observes the feast of the biblical Saints Andronicus and Junia, Apostles, on a trial basis on May 17 each year.

What should our parish do if we want to participate?

- Obtain a copy of the lea et with the Propers for the day (available online in English, and soon to be available in a Spanish version as well).
- Advertise your celebration and make your congregation aware of the distinct history of Andronicus and Junia, through announcements and articles in your weekly bulletin or parish newsletter.
- You might also consider incorporating stories about Andronicus and Junia into a Sunday School class about Pentecost and the birth and spread of the church.
- You may want to publicize (and sing!) a newly-written hymn stanza, intended to be used as the second verse of Hymn 231 or 232 in *The Hymnal 1982*:

Companions in God's service,
 this woman and this man,
 Andronicus and Junia, —
 set out to tell God's plan.
 Imprisoned for their witness
 they shared a cell with Paul.
 He called them both "Apostles,"
 sent forth to live God's call.

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For further reading

- Rena Pederson, *The Lost Apostle: Searching for the Truth about Junia* (San Francisco: Josey-Bass, 2006)
- Eldon Jay Epp, *Junia: First Female Apostle* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005)
- A four-page history of how Junia has been treated in Bible translations and commentaries is available at <http://www.womenpriests.org/classic/brooten.asp>

A slide presentation outlining the history of the veneration of these saints is available for viewing in your deanery or parish for a nominal fee of \$5.00 plus travel arrangements. Contact the Rev. Kathryn Piccard (617-242-4734) to schedule a time.