

**RESOLUTION FOR THE 135th ANNUAL CONVENTION OF
THE DIOCESE OF WESTERN MICHIGAN
APRIL 24-25, 2009**

Subject: Resolution for General Convention, endorsing a Saints' Feast Day

Originator: The Rev. Canon Meredith Hunt, The Ven. Anne Reed, The Rev. Canon William Spaid

RESOLVED, that this 135th convention of the Diocese of Western Michigan submit to the General Convention this resolution to add to the calendar on a trial use basis a feast day for Saints Andronicus and Junia, Apostles, mentioned in Romans 16:7 and venerated for 1400 years in Eastern Orthodoxy and for over three decades in Anglican Churches in the U.S.A. and Canada on May 17th.

As a Christian people, it is important to ask, "What in the life and teaching of Jesus supports this resolution?"

Rationale: The Bible verse mentioning these saints, written by St. Paul, says, "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives and prison companions; they are notable Apostles, and they were in Christ before me." It is appropriate to include in our calendar and to celebrate these two Apostles, a woman and a man, who worked together in mission and evangelism despite being jailed. These Apostles are suitable models in the Communion of Saints for all the baptized. We believe this feast can serve as a reminder that both men and women were part of Jesus' inner circle. Paul, called them outstanding Apostles. Ancient church sources such as Jerome, Chrysostem and others, consider "Junias" a woman. John Chrysostem writes in a homily on Romans, ". . . Oh! How great is the devotion of this woman that she should be even counted worthy of the appellation of apostle! . . ." We feel it would be fitting if the wider church would honor them in like fashion.

Since 1984 some parishes in the Episcopal Church have celebrated this feast day, long hidden from our knowledge by the mistranslation of Junia's name in Romans 16:7. (The evidence for the correct translation has now been well documented by Dr. Eldon J. Epp and CEB Cranfield, Professor of Theology at the University of Durham, 1984.) God the Holy Spirit gave both these saints gifts, and the Spirit is giving men and women in our diocese gifts, and we can see how our call to use *our* gifts for the mission of the Church is an echo of their discipleship. They also represent for us our acceptance of the Spirit calling both men and women to all orders of ministry in our Church. Adding this feast to our calendar would balance it so that it would reflect the truth that the Risen Christ entrusted the Gospel ministry to both men and women. The Diocese of Massachusetts began formal trial use observance of this feast in 2007, and by 2008 parishes in at least seven dioceses observed this feast, from Rome to Iowa to Texas to Hawaii. In 2009 even more parishes and dioceses will be observing this feast.