

## Archaeologists Report Finding St. Philip's Tomb

ROME, JULY 29, 2011 .-

Archaeologists are asserting that they have uncovered the tomb of the Apostle Philip.

The discovery took place in Pamukkale, former Hierapolis, in Western Anatolia, Turkey, the city where Philip died, after having preached in Greece and in Asia Minor.

The discovery was made by an Italian archaeological mission that began in 1957, and today is made up of an international team, directed since the year 2000 by Francesco D'Andria, professor of the University of Salento.

In reporting the announcement, L'Osservatore Romano pointed out that an important step in the search for St. Philip's tomb was achieved in 2008, when the team identified the processional street that pilgrims followed to reach the apostle's sepulcher.

"Next to the Martyrion (octagonal building of worship, built on the spot where St. Philip was martyred), we have found a fifth-century basilica with three naves," explained the mission's director. "This church was built around a first-century Roman tomb, which evidently enjoyed the highest consideration, if the decision was made later to build a basilica around it."

Due to these and other elements, "we have come to the certainty of having found the tomb of the Apostle Philip, which was the aim of the pilgrimages to that place," said D'Andria.

In the fourth century, Eusebius of Caesarea wrote that two stars shine in Asia: John, buried in Ephesus, and Philip, "who rests in Hierapolis."

The question linked to the apostle's death has sparked controversy. According to an ancient tradition, he was not martyred, but the apocryphal gospels state that he suffered martyrdom

under the Romans. (Zenit)