Saint Bartholomew

We celebrate the feast of St. Bartholomew (also known as Nathanael), on August 24th. We don't know a great deal about his background, except to say he was an Israelite, a friend of the apostle Philip, and seems to have been a man who would speak his mind! For example when he was told, by Philip, Andrew and Peter that they had found the Son of God, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, Bartholomew said "***Can anything good come from Nazareth?***"

His initial scepticism was soon displaced, and Bartholomew became an exceptionally loyal friend and follower of Jesus, who said of him: "***Here is a true Israelite. There is no duplicity in him.***" Jesus also says he saw Bartholomew under a fig tree (before Philip called him), so maybe Bartholomew was in prayer with the Lord, and at an early stage asserted "***Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel.***"

St. Bartholomew seems to have been respected for his blunt honesty - at first openly sceptical, he ultimately does not hesitate in affirming his belief as Jesus reveals himself. Bartholomew was clearly very open to seeing things in a new way - Jesus' way!

After Jesus 'ascension, St. Bartholomew is thought to have traveled further afield than most of the other Apostles, preaching the Gospel throughout Syria, Ethiopia, India, and Armenia, where he was executed by being flayed alive…

As well as being the patron saint against nervous and neurological diseases and ailments (likely in deference to his execution), he is also seen these days as the patron saint of leatherworkers, bookbinders, plasterers, butchers, tanners, and shoemakers…

Thought for the Week: We learn from St. Bartholomew's example that we can come to know and to trust God through reflection and prayer. We can also see, through his evangelism, the

importance of sharing the Gospel truths that we know with other people, by living-the-Faith

St. Bartholomew's prayer led him to that tTruth. He trusted Jesus implicitly, to the death, and throughout his ministry shared that truth with others in order to convert them to Christianity..

May we learn to **trust God, absolutely,** through St. Bartholomew's example!

The Collect for August 24th (The Feast of St Bartholomew)

Almighty and everlasting God, who gave to your apostle Bartholomew grace truly to believe and to preach your word: grant that your Church may love that word which he believed and may faithfully preach and receive the same; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.