

preserved his life miraculously until the skin was torn from his whole body, and as he still continued to declare the true God, then the tyrant had him beheaded. The Almighty, however, visibly punished the king and the idolatrous priests, who had instigated this fearful cruelty. They all became possessed of the Evil One, and after having been tormented by him for thirty days, they were strangled. The holy body of the Martyr was placed by the Christians in a leaden coffin, and was buried with all due honors. In the course of time the pagans cast the leaden coffin with the relics of St. Bartholomew into the sea; but the waves miraculously supported it and carried it to the island of Lipari, the Christian inhabitants of which received the sacred deposit with joy, and placed it

in a church erected for the purpose. Thence, this sacred treasure was brought to Benevento, and finally, in the reign of Otto II, it was transported to Rome, where it is kept at this day in great honor.

St. Bartholomew's name appears on the three lists of the Apostles given in the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark and St. Luke, and in each list he is associated with St. Phillip. But beyond the fact that he was an Apostle, we have no further certain information about him. St. John does not mention the name Bartholomew at all, but he does state, as we have seen, that Philip brought Nathanael to Jesus. This coupled with the fact that the other evangelists always associate Philip with Bartholomew in their lists, makes it probable that Bartholomew is the same person as Nathanael.

In summing up the popular traditions concerning St. Bartholomew, the Roman Martyrology states that he preached in India and then went to Greater Armenia. Here, after many conversions, he was flayed alive and beheaded at the command of King Astyages at Albanopolis, on the west coast of the Caspian Sea. It is indeed possible that St. Bartholomew preached and died in Armenia as the tradition of later historians of that country maintains.

* (excerpted from: www.catholic-pages.com; [//catholicarboroffaithandmorals.com](http://catholicarboroffaithandmorals.com); The Golden Legend or Lives of the Saints by Jacobus de Voragine, Archbishop of Genoa, 1275)

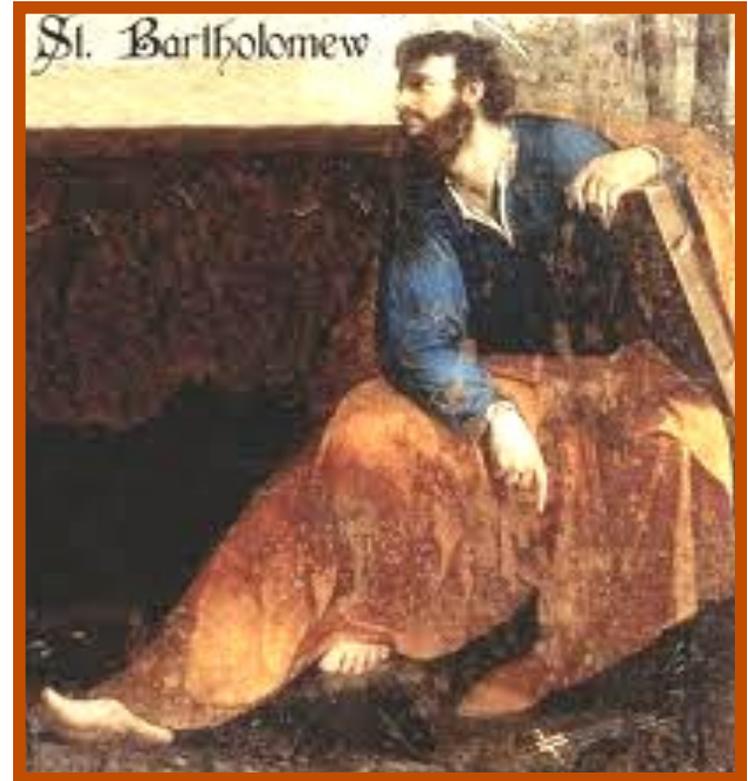
QUOTE: "Like Christ himself, the apostles were unceasingly bent upon bearing witness to the truth of God. They showed special courage in speaking 'the word of God with boldness' (Acts 4:31) before the people and their rulers. With a firm faith they held that the gospel is indeed the power of God unto salvation for all who believe... They followed the example of the gentleness and respectfulness of Christ" (*Declaration on Religious Freedom*, 11).

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Saint Bartholomew

Apostle

Feast Day: August 24



PRAYER

**Almighty and everlasting God,
who didst give to thine apostle Bartholomew
grace truly to believe and to preach thy Word:
Grant that thy Church may love what he believed
and preach what he taught;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth
and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost,
one God for ever and ever.**

Saint Bartholomew

*The Gospel gives us no other account of St. Bartholomew, than that he was joined by our Savior to those men whom He called Apostles, and chose to convert mankind. As with the others, he followed the Divine Teacher, and learned from Him the doctrine which he afterwards preached to the nations. The life of this saint, after the ascension of Christ, is described by authentic writers as follows. When the Holy Apostles, after the Holy Ghost has descended upon them, dispersed to preach the gospel to the whole world, St. Bartholomew was sent into East India and the neighboring countries. After converting a great number of the heathens, and providing them with priests, he journeyed to Greater Armenia.

Arriving at the capital of this state, he repaired first to the grand temple of the idol Aseroth, where he found a great many blind, deaf, lame, and otherwise disabled persons, who were praying to this god to restore their health. Some were helped, others not. The devil, as he afterwards confessed, at the command of St Bartholomew, had first, by witchcraft or other means, made these persons blind, deaf, or lame, and when they sought help in his temple, he destroyed the spell cast upon them, or used natural means to restore their health, while they believed that their god had helped them. Satan would speak through the image of this idol, and reply to those who questioned him. From the moment, however, when the Holy Apostle entered the temple, the devil had become silent, and answered not a word.

To the Armenians, this silence was incomprehensible; hence they asked the idol of another temple the reason of it. Satan, by the mouth of the image, said that Bartholomew, an Apostle of the true God, was the cause of it, and that the same would happen to him as soon as this Apostle would enter this temple. The idolatrous priest desired to know who this Apostle was, and by what means they could recognize him. Satan described him most minutely, adding that he prayed a hundred times during the day and as many times during the night. They immediately sought for St. Bartholomew, and found him just after he had delivered a man possessed of the devil; for Satan cried with a loud voice, that he was tormented by the prayers of St. Bartholomew, and forced to give way. After the idolaters had thus become acquainted with the Saint, they began to deliberate what they should do with him.

Meanwhile, Polymius, the king, whose daughter was also possessed by the Evil One, and who had heard of the deliverance of the one mentioned above, sent to the Apostle, humbly requesting him to come and free his daughter in a like manner. Bartholomew said a short prayer, after which he commanded Satan, in the name of Jesus Christ, to leave the body of the possessed, which was instantly done... The king, to show his gratitude to the saint, offered him a large sum of money and many other presents. St. Bartholomew accepted nothing, saying: "I am not here to seek gold and silver, but to convert the people, and lead souls to the knowledge of the true faith and to heaven." After this he began to speak to the king and courtiers of the only true God, and explained to them how the only begotten Son of God by His sufferings

and death, had redeemed the world. He told them fearlessly, that the gods which they all worshipped were false gods, nay, nothing but spirits of hell, and to prove this he proposed to force the devil himself, who until now had spoken to them through the idol, publicly to confess the same.

The king, went on the following day, with all his courtiers, to the temple. St. Bartholomew came also, and asked the idol Aseroth, in the name of Jesus Christ, to say who he was. The devil began to lament and to howl, but at last, forced by the divine power, confessed that he was one of the spirits of hell, who had, until then, wickedly deceived the king and the people. He said further, that there was only one true God, Who was He whom St. Bartholomew, His Apostle, preached and adored. All present looked at each other and knew not what to think or what to say. The holy Apostle, then commanded the devils to leave the idols, and destroy them all, without exception, throughout the whole city. The devil obeyed, and the idols of the city fell from their altars and were dashed to pieces. This sufficed to convince the king that St. Bartholomew was a proclaimer of the truth, and after being instructed in the Christian faith, he and his wife and children were baptized. The example of the king was followed by the whole court, and by most of the inhabitants of the capital; and not long after the twelve principal cities of the state became converted to Christianity. To preserve so large a number of faithful in the church, St. Bartholomew ordained many priests, and appointed them to take charge of the new converts.

This glorious victory of the gospel left only the idolatrous priests stubborn in their error, and as, after the downfall of their idols, they were despised and derided, they thought of means to revenge themselves on the holy Apostle. And when many plans had failed, they turned their eyes upon Astyges, a brother of King Polymius, who reigned over the other part of Armenia, and accused St. Bartholomew before him as an enemy and disturber of the land, who had even succeeded in seducing the king and the whole court, and who was intent upon entirely exterminating the ancient worship of the gods. Astyges, in whose weak mind idolatry had taken deep root, resolved to avenge the wrong which had been done to the gods. He called the holy Apostle to his court under the pretext of hearing his instructions. No sooner, however, had the holy man made his appearance, than the tyrant threatened him with the most cruel torments and the most terrible death, if he did not immediately sacrifice to the gods.

St. Bartholomew endeavored to convince him of the nothingness of his gods, but the tyrant would not listen, and commanded the executioners to seize the Saint, and tear the skin from his whole body, and thus slowly put him to death. The order was executed, and the holy Apostle was flayed alive. During this inhuman torture the Saint did not cease to praise God and continued to proclaim the true faith. God