

**AUGUST 24**  
**SAINT BARTHOLOMEW, Apostle and Martyr**  
Apostle, Missionary, Martyr  
Rv 21:9-14; Ps 145:10-11,12-13,17-18; Jn 1:45-51

***A TRUE ISRAELITE WITHOUT DUPLICITY***

Homily by Fr. Michael A. Van Sloun  
Saturday, August 26, 2017, 5:00 p.m. Mass  
Sunday, August 27, 2017, 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Masses

This is a **fantastic weekend** for our parish.  
Not only are we celebrating the feast of our **patron saint, St. Bartholomew**,  
we are celebrating our **100<sup>th</sup> anniversary** as a parish,  
which makes this a **historic moment**.  
A moment like this comes along once **every 100 years!** Once in a lifetime!

There are a couple of **other distinctive aspects** to our celebration.  
This is the first time on the feast of St. Bartholomew  
that we actually have a **statue of St. Bartholomew** in our worship space.  
The statue is positioned **next to the gospel book repository** in the back.  
There is a **two-page article** in this week's parish bulletin that describes the **details of the statue**.  
When Archbishop Bernard Hebda comes next month  
for the official closing of our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration,  
he is going to bless the statue.

There is a **second thing** that is **distinctive** about our celebration today.  
We are very fortunate to have a **close relationship** with **Father Michael Joncas**.  
He is an **awesome musician**.  
He writes the **melody** or the **tune** for hymns.  
He composes the **lyrics** or the **words** for hymns.  
Fr. Joncas **presides for Mass** here at St. Bart's a number of **weekends** each year when I'm away,  
and he comes in **December** for *Lessons and Carols*.  
Richard and I invited Fr. Joncas to **compose two original pieces**  
in **honor** of our **100<sup>th</sup> anniversary**, and **he accepted** the **commission**.  
If you would take a look at your worship aid, page one,  
notice the opening hymn: *God Creating, God Sustaining*.  
It is an **original text** on the **Most Holy Trinity** written by Father Joncas for this occasion.  
If you go page 3 of your worship aid, there is another hymn, *Drawn by His Word*,  
another **original text** which honors **the apostles**, and St. Bartholomew is an apostle,  
and it is written by Father Joncas for this occasion.

There is something **sad** about **hymns** that are **commissioned** for **special occasions**,  
like the grand opening of a church, or the visit of a dignitary,  
or an anniversary, like we are doing over the course of this year.  
The **sad thing** is that often the piece is **written so narrowly** that it applies **only** to **that occasion**,  
and after the event is over, the hymn is put on a shelf and **never used again**.

But **not these two hymns!**

We asked Father Jonas to **write them more broadly** that they would be **usable** at **any parish** for multiple **different occasions** in the future.

These two hymns find their beginning at St. Bart's,  
but they are not going onto the shelf.

Both are **scheduled for publication** in an upcoming hymnal.

With these two hymns,

**Fr. Michael Joncas** has added **two more excellent pieces** to his body of work, **melodies** and **lyrics**, an **incredible collection** of **sacred music**, in **widespread use** throughout the **United States**, and in the **English-speaking countries** around the **world**.

Let us move on now to a **reflection** on our **patron saint, St. Bartholomew**.

The saints give great **example**, outstanding **witness**,  
and they serve as an **inspiration** for us.

We at St. Bartholomew's need to know what is special about our patron saint  
if he is going to inspire us in the ways of **holiness** and **Christian living**.

**St. Bartholomew** has a pretty **low profile** in the gospels.

He is **barely mentioned** (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:14; Acts 1:13).

But in the passage that we just heard,

Jesus saw Bartholomew walking toward him (Jn 1:47a).

**Jesus** is the **ultimate judge** of **character**,

and this what Jesus had to say about Bartholomew:

**"Here is a true Israelite. There is no duplicity in him"** (Jn 1:47b).

This is the scripture quote on our St. Bartholomew statue.

**What do you think of Jesus' comment?**

What would it mean if Jesus made the same comment about you or me?

"There is a true Israelite."

"There is no duplicity in that person."

We need some **background information** to understand this,

and it is found in the Old Testament in the Book of **Genesis**.

**Jesus knew** the stories in **Genesis backwards and forwards**.

So did his Jewish audience.

So our first question is: **"What is a true Israelite?"**

Or better yet, **"Who is the true Israelite?"**

There are **three patriarchs** in the Book of **Genesis**:

**Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**.

Everyone in Jesus' audience was thoroughly familiar with these three.

Even we have heard of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

In the **story of Jacob**,  
one night **Jacob wrestled** with an **angel** until dawn (Gn 32:25).  
Jacob suffered a **dislocated hip** (Gn 32:26).  
In the morning, after the wrestling was over,  
the **angel gave Jacob a new name**, “**Israel**” (Gn 32:29).  
A while later **God confirmed** what the angel had declared.  
God said that Jacob’s **new name** would be “**Israel**” (Gn 35:10).  
If Jacob’s name is Israel,  
and the **entire nation**, the **Chosen People**, is also **Israel**,  
**Jacob**, and his **grandfather Abraham**, are the **fathers of a great nation**.  
The “**true Israelite**” of the Old Testament is **Jacob**.

It is a **compliment** to be called a “**true Israelite**.”  
It is like saying, “That person is a **good Jew**,”  
**equivalent to** someone saying about you or me, “That person is a **good Catholic**.”

The **next comment** that Jesus makes about Bartholomew is much **more telling**.  
After Jesus said, “There is a true Israelite,”  
Jesus went on to say, “**There is no duplicity in him**” (Jn 1:47).

**Duplicity** is not a word that we use all that much.  
Duplicity means **two or double**.  
If a person is **duplicitous**, it means that the person is “double” or “**two-faced**.”  
This is **no compliment**.  
It means that the person has a very **nice**, pleasant, bright **outward appearance**,  
but **underneath**, the person is **dark** and **evil** and **sinister**.

Let’s put these **two parts together**.  
Jesus was talking about a “**true Israelite**” and “**duplicity**.”  
The “**true Israelite**” was **Jacob**,  
and if there ever was a poster child for **duplicity** in the **Old Testament**,  
it was **Jacob**,  
and everyone in Jesus’ audience new the story.

Let’s go back and **review** the story.  
Jacob’s **dad** was **Isaac**.  
Jacob’s **mom** was **Rebekah**.  
Jacob’s **twin brother** was **Esau** (Gn 25:25).  
**Esau** came out first; he was **firstborn** (Gn 25:25a).  
These two boys didn’t get along from the start.  
They were kicking, fighting, already in their mother Rebekah’s womb (Gn 25:22).  
Because Esau was born first, he had the **birthright**:  
he **ranked above** Jacob,  
and he would get **double share** of the inheritance.

**Esau** was a **good hunter** and made nice meals for dad (Gn 25:27a).  
**Jacob** was the **fair-skinned stay-at-home** boy (Gn 25:27b).  
Dad liked Esau; mom liked Jacob (Gn 25:28).

Dad was getting old, it was time to pass on the blessing to his firstborn,  
and his vision was failing (Gn 27:1-4).

So what does Jacob do?

Maybe you remember from your Bible history days.

**Jacob** decided to **steal** his older brother **Esau's blessing**.

Jacob wore his **brother Esau's clothes** (Gn 27:15,27a).

Jacob put **animal hides** over his smooth skin (Gn 27:10-12,16,22,23),

so when Isaac felt him, it would feel like his brother's hairy skin.

Jacob **brought** in a **tasty dish** prepared by his mother (Gn 27:14),

and he **claimed to be his brother Esau** (Gn 27:19,24).

Jacob **tricked his father** into giving him the blessing

that Isaac intended to give to Esau (Gn 27:27b-29).

Jacob **deceived his father**.

Jacob gave this **nice outward appearance**, "I am a good son,"

but **underneath** he was **liar** and a **cheat**.

He **impersonated** his brother.

I **lied** to his dad.

He **stole** from his brother.

This is what it means to be **duplicious**:

**nice** on the **outside**, **nasty** on the **inside**.

Duplicious: to be **two-faced**, to lack integrity,

to have a **nice exterior**,

but to have **dark side** that is **concealed** from others.

The people in Jesus' audience knew that Jacob was the poster child for duplicity.

When Jesus saw Bartholomew, Jesus said Bartholomew was "without duplicity."

Jesus was saying,

"Bartholomew looks like a **good** and **holy** man on the **outside**.

Well, Bartholomew is a good and holy man on the **inside, too**.

Bartholomew is **no trickster, no conniver**.

Bartholomew is completely **trustworthy**.

He is a man of **integrity**.

**What you see is what you get**.

He looks good on the outside, and there is **no sin on the inside**."

**Jesus** is a true **judge of character**,

and he could not have paid Bartholomew a better **compliment**.

This kind of **holiness**, this **lack of duplicity**, is why Bartholomew is a **saint**,

and we are fortunate to have Bartholomew as our patron saint.

A **choice** is being offered to you and me.

Shall I be like **Jacob**, a person **with duplicity**?

Or, shall I be like **Bartholomew**, a person **without duplicity**?

It is clear what **Jesus wants**.

Jesus wants **followers** who are like Bartholomew,  
people **without duplicity**.

The lesson that we learn in this one brief comment about Bartholomew  
is that it should be the **goal** of every Catholic Christian  
to be **good, inside and out**.

We are all concerned with our **outward appearance**:

how people perceive us, what people think about us.

Our **inner private world** is more important:

**how Jesus perceives us**, how **authentic** we are.

On this, the feast of St. Bartholomew, we hold up our patron saint  
as a wonderful **example** and someone to **inspire** us.

**Jesus would like to say about you and me, what he said about Bartholomew:**

**“There is no duplicity in that person!”** (paraphrase, Jn 1:47).