

Feast of St. Bartholomew, Apostle (Nathaniel)

Homily of Bishop John Barres

St. Agnes Cathedral

August 24, 2022

St. Bartholomew, from Cana in Galilee, is identified as Nathaniel because St. Matthew lists him together with Philip as one of the first apostles chosen by Christ.

In John 2, Our Lord says: “Here is a true child of Israel. There is no duplicity in him.” Some translations would describe Nathaniel “as a man without guile.”

In general, people have a good radar for deep sincerity and sincerity is critical for an effective Catholic evangelizing missionary spirit.

Humble sincerity wins people over.

Carmelite Spiritual Theologian Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen gives a powerful description of the importance of sincerity: “It is not sufficient to be sincere in our words; we must also be sincere in our actions and conduct. Sincere conduct is that which makes us appear just as we are, with no affectation, and no desire to appear to be what we are not. Our words and actions should express the truth which has been sought and loved interiorly. Sincerity does not require us to reveal all that we think or know to everyone; this would be contrary to prudence and to other virtues. It does, however, demand that everything we do reveal, by word or act, or even by silence, corresponds to truth.”¹

On this Feast of the Apostle St. Bartholomew, it makes sense for us to review and pray section 857 of *Catechism of the Catholic Church* which describes why the Catholic Church is “apostolic”:

¹ Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, OCD, *Divine Intimacy*, (New York: Deslee Company, 1963), 851-852.

“The Church is apostolic because she is founded on the apostles in three ways:

--she was and remains built on ‘the foundation of the Apostles,’ the witnesses chosen and sent on mission by Christ himself;

--with the help of the Spirit Dwelling in her, the Church keeps and hands on the teaching, the ‘good deposit,’ the salutary words she has heard from the apostles;

--she continues to be taught, sanctified, and guided by the apostles until Christ’s return, through their successors in pastoral office: the college of bishops, assisted by priests, in union with the successor of Peter, the Church’s supreme pastor.”

I invite you later today to go back to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and review section 857. Use the Catechism frequently to enrich your Catholic Faith and your spiritual life.

There is a beautiful prayer grounded in the psalms in the Liturgy of the Hours that I often go back to and pray. It reads: “Father, as you made springs in valleys to form streams between mountains, so you made living streams of grace flow from the apostles that their teaching may bring salvation to all nations.”

We ask the intercession of St. Bartholomew and all the Apostles today that we ourselves can be truly apostolic missionaries and evangelizers.

We pray for all Bishops, all successors of the Apostles around the world, today. In a special way, we pray for the Successor of Peter, our Holy Father Pope Francis.