

**Thursday 24 August 2023**

# St Bartholomew

St Bartholomew the Great—'Barts'—in the City of London



It has long been assumed that Bartholomew is the same as Nathanael, though it is not certain. The gospels speak of Philip bringing Nathanael to Jesus and calling him 'an Israelite worthy of the name'. He is also present beside the Sea of Galilee at the resurrection. Although he seems initially a somewhat cynical man, he did recognise Jesus for who he was and proclaimed him as Son of God and King of Israel.

By very ancient tradition, soon after Pentecost, Bartholomew went to Armenia, then to India, where he was a powerful evangelist. A much later tradition says he was martyred by being flayed alive, which explains why (in a great many representations) he carries his own skin and a broad flaying knife.

**Sermon and prayers of intercession** © Revd Dr Paul Monk.

**Liturgy** © 2000 The Archbishops' Council.

**Bible readings** © the publishers of the NRSV translation.

The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration appear at the end.

All the hymns are hosted on YouTube. Please click on the links to hear them.

To see service transcripts from previous weeks, please visit the page,

<http://www.medlockhead.co.uk/resources/index.htm>

## Introduction and welcome

**HYMN 1** [We walk by faith](#)

(please click on this link to hear the hymn)

## The Welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

**All Amen.**

The Lord be with you

**All And also with you.**

## The Preparation

**All Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
with all your soul, with all your mind,  
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

**All Amen. Lord, have mercy.**

Christ calls us to share the heavenly banquet of his love with all the saints in earth and heaven.

Therefore, knowing our unworthiness and sin,

let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,

firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

**All** Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you  
and against our neighbour  
in thought and word and deed,  
through negligence, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We are truly sorry  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past  
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life  
to the glory of your name. Amen.

Almighty God,  
who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All** Amen.

## **The Gloria**

This Gloria is sung to the tune of 'Cwm Rhondda'. Click [here](#) for the tune.

**All** Glory be to God in Heaven,  
Songs of joy and peace we bring,  
Thankful hearts and voices raising,  
To creation's Lord we sing.  
Lord we thank you, Lord we praise you,  
Glory be to God our King:  
Glory be to God our King.

Lamb of God, who on our shoulders,  
Bore the load of this world's sin;  
Only Son of God the Father,  
You have brought us peace within.  
Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy,  
Now your glorious reign begin:  
Now your glorious reign begin.

**You O Son of God are Holy,  
You we praise with one accord.  
None in heav'n or earth is like you,  
Only you are Christ the Lord.  
With the Father and the Spirit,  
Ever worshipped and adored:  
Ever worshipped and adored.**

### **The Collect for 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.

**All Amen.**

### **First reading**

A reading from the book of the Prophet Isaiah

Bring forth the people who are blind, yet have eyes, who are deaf, yet have ears! Let all the nations gather together, and let the peoples assemble. Who among them declared this, and foretold to us the former things? Let them bring their witnesses to justify them, and let them hear and say, 'It is true.' You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the Lord, and besides me there is no saviour. I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; and you are my witnesses, says the Lord. I am God, and also henceforth I am He; there is no one who can deliver from my hand; I work and who can hinder it? *Isaiah 43:8-13*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

## Second reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Many signs and wonders were done among the people through the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared to join them, but the people held them in high esteem. Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on cots and mats, in order that Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he came by. A great number of people would also gather from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all cured. *Acts 5:12-16*

This is the Word of the Lord

**All Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN 2 May your Kingdom come  
Your Kingdom come**

[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)  
[\(click on this link to hear the hymn\)](#)

## Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

**All Glory to you O Lord.**

A dispute arose among the disciples as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. But Jesus said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

'You are those who have stood by me in my trials; and I confer on you, just as my Father has conferred on me, a kingdom, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'

*Luke 22:24-30*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**All Praise to you O Christ.**

## Sermon

Today's reading from Isaiah starts with the chilling first line, 'Bring forth the people who are blind, yet have eyes, who are deaf, yet have ears'. The centre of the complaint hinges on the sentence, 'I, I am the Lord, and besides me there is no saviour'. God is complaining that some people choose not to perceive Him as He truly is. Similarly, today's Gospel shows the disciples arguing about which of them is the greatest, so again it describes people misunderstanding, maybe deliberately. Taken together, these two readings imply that ignorance is no defence because everyone should be able to discern the nature of God.

This complaint seems rather unfair because God is a spirit and is therefore invisible to the human eye and inaudible to the human ear. Most of us struggle to hear God in prayer and to connect with Him clearly. Before the events in today's Gospel passage took place, the disciples will have known a great deal about Jesus and heard him talking about himself as 'Messiah' and as 'Son of Man', yet it's clear they completely failed to understand him. Discerning the true nature of God is difficult. We all struggle.

In fact, it's a dilemma and can feel a bit like a Catch-22 situation: we grow in faith by listening, but we cannot listen properly until we've grown in faith.

We need to remember that God made us for Himself and He willingly tells us about Himself. He therefore wants us to grow in faith which will at the same time help us to grow in the ability to hear, see, and understand Him in a spiritual sense. Perhaps in our own responses to this dilemma, we could pray the words of St Peter when trying (and failing) to walk on water, 'Lord I believe—help thou my unbelief!' St Peter is using the small amount of faith that he does have to seek a greater faith.

It's at this point that we must re-read the passage from Isaiah. God's real complaint is not against those who don't know Him but against those who refuse to seek Him and those who untruthfully say they do know Him.

There are many reasons why people say they know God when they don't: it's often because they know that He will ask them to change. Maybe, like the disciples in today's Gospel reading, they want others to be impressed. Maybe others more are lazy and do not want to put in the spiritual effort of growing to become holy. But the simple statement 'But I'm only human' simply will not do because all the great saints were merely human yet used their lives (which were often quite short) to discern God.

It's probably time to re-read today's Collect and take it to ourselves: God 'gave to the apostle Bartholomew grace truly to believe'. Perhaps we need to ask God to give *us* the grace truly to believe—really growing in genuine faith. So let's start asking right now.

## The Creed

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,  
the source of all being and life,  
the one for whom we exist?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,  
who took our human nature,  
died for us and rose again?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,  
who gives life to the people of God  
and makes Christ known in the world?

**All We believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church.

**All This is our faith.  
We believe and trust in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**

## Prayers of intercession

*These prayers are inspired by today's Gospel passage.*

Jesus' disciples disputed which of them was the greatest. Prompt us to explore our vocation of equality and discipleship. In particular, we pray ...

Lord, hear us.

**All Lord, graciously hear us.**

The Lord Jesus stands among us 'as one who serves.' Inspire your Church to recognise Jesus and adopt his ministry of radical service. In particular, we pray ...

Lord, hear us.

**All Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus said, 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them.' Inspire everyone with power to use it with wisdom and compassion. In particular, we pray ...

Lord, hear us.

**All Lord, graciously hear us.**

Jesus said, 'I confer a kingdom on those who stand by me in my trials.' We ask your blessing on those who are suffering trials of any kind. In particular, we pray ...  
Lord, hear us.

**All Lord, graciously hear us.**

We pray for those who've passed from this world to the next and now 'eat and drink at your table in the kingdom'. In particular, we pray ...  
Lord, hear us.

**All Lord, graciously hear us.**

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
Amen.**

## The peace

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you,

**All And also with you.**

**HYMN 3 Wine of the Kingdom** (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

## The Dismissal

The peace of God which passes all understanding,  
keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God,  
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;  
and the blessing of God the Almighty,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
be with you now and remain with you always.

**All Amen.**

**HYMN 4 Walk in the light** (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All In the name of Christ. Amen.**



## The Liturgy of the Sacrament

### Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

**All and also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**All We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
And now we give thanks, most gracious God,  
surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses  
and glorified in the assembly of your saints.  
The glorious company of apostles praise you.  
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.  
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.  
We, your holy Church, acclaim you.  
In communion with angels and archangels,  
and with all who served you on earth and worship you now in heaven,  
we raise our voice to proclaim your glory,  
for ever praising you and saying:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
and as we obey his command,  
send your Holy Spirit,  
that broken bread and wine outpoured  
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends  
and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:  
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;  
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.  
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:  
Drink this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,  
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,  
we proclaim his death and resurrection  
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

**All Christ has died.**  
**Christ is risen.**  
**Christ will come again.**

Lord of all life,  
help us to work together for that day  
when your kingdom comes  
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,  
gather us in your loving arms  
and bring us with Bartholomew and all the saints  
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,  
for ever and ever.

**All Amen.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All**     **Our Father in heaven,**  
          **hallowed be your name,**  
          **your kingdom come,**  
          **your will be done,**  
          **on earth as in heaven.**  
          **Give us today our daily bread.**  
          **Forgive us our sins**  
          **as we forgive those who sin against us.**  
          **Lead us not into temptation**  
          **but deliver us from evil.**  
  
          **For the kingdom, the power,**  
          **and the glory are yours**  
          **now and for ever. Amen.**

## **Breaking of the Bread**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All**     **Though we are many, we are one body,**  
          **because we all share in one bread.**

**All**     **Lamb of God,**  
          **you take away the sin of the world,**  
          **have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,**  
          **you take away the sin of the world,**  
          **have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,**  
          **you take away the sin of the world,**  
          **grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ  
which he gave for you,  
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,  
and feed on him in your hearts  
by faith with thanksgiving.

**All** We do not presume  
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,  
trusting in our own righteousness,  
but in your manifold and great mercies.  
We are not worthy  
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.  
But you are the same Lord  
whose nature is always to have mercy.  
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,  
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ  
and to drink his blood,  
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body  
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,  
and that we may evermore dwell in him,  
and he in us. Amen.

Communion is distributed.

### **Prayer after Communion**

Almighty God,  
who on the day of Pentecost  
sent your Holy Spirit to the apostles  
with the wind from heaven and in tongues of flame,  
filling them with joy and boldness to preach the gospel:  
by the power of the same Spirit  
strengthen us to witness to your truth  
and to draw everyone to the fire of your love;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All** Amen

**All** Almighty God,  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work  
to your praise and glory.  
Amen.