

FOR TEENS: About Bartholomew

Our students have heard that according to tradition, Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew were the first enlighteners of Armenia that they spread the good news there and later were martyred. The following is an activity connected with one of the few Scripture references to either of these apostles.

Materials Needed:

posterboard; scissors; markers of various colors; magazines; newspapers; old Sunday school textbooks; glue; paper punch; yarn, string or ribbon.

Bartholomew's name suggests that he may have been a special kind of student. "Bar" means son, so Bartholomew was probably "son of Talmai." This was a noble name at the time of Jesus. A talmai was highly regarded in Hebrew circles as a leader of the study of scripture, and Bartholomew may have been one of the special students of that school. In *John 1:45* Philip tells Bartholomew, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote." This suggests that Philip and Bartholomew had studied the law and the prophets together.

In the story of Bartholomew's first encounter with Jesus, our Lord said: "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you." (*John 1:48*) The fig tree was and continues to be a favorite tree in Israel. It normally grows to be about fifteen feet in height, with an expanse of branches that affords shade and privacy for meditation. Rabbis and students of the scriptures thought of the fig tree as a suitable place for their study. According to tradition, when Jesus saw him under the fig tree, Bartholomew had been praying for the coming of the Messiah.

Read the narrative of Bartholomew, recorded in *John 1:43-51*, and illustrate portions of the scripture passage by making an accordion-folded book. Depict parts of the story on separate pages of the book. Include themes like: Bartholomew sitting under the fig tree praying; Philip coming to tell him about Jesus; Bartholomew questioning Philip; Philip's invitation to "come and see"; Going to meet

Jesus; Jesus telling Bartholomew he already knew all about him; Bartholomew's proclamation that Jesus was the Son of God, and so forth.

For the book, choose as many pieces of posterboard as there will be pages of the story. On each page, use markers to draw and write about the scene, or cut pictures and words from old Sunday school textbooks, magazines, and newspapers, and glue them in place. Create a cover which includes the word, "Bartholomew." Punch three holes in the sides of each page and the cover. Use yarn, string or ribbon to lace the sheets together. Fold the book accordion style. Use the book to retell the account of Bartholomew to younger children in the Sunday school and family members.

St. Bartholomew is remembered, along with St. Thaddeus, on December 2..

