

Thoughts on the Daily Word

21st Week of Year. Monday 24th August. St Bartholomew. Readings: Apocalypse 21:9-14; Psalm: 144; Gospel: John 1:45-51.

Bartholomew and Nathanael are considered by tradition to be the same characters in the Gospel, hence the reading from John. We think of the Apostles as belonging to the past, or just history. Our first reading is a vision of the future in which the 12 Apostles are the foundation of the new Jerusalem, an image of the Church at the Second Coming of Christ. The Apostles remain a life-giving power sustaining the Church. If we think of the Church as One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic then the Apostles continue to sustain the Church in its mission to prepare for the final coming of Christ. We continue to hold on to the faith that Nathanael proclaims to Jesus as Son of God. Jesus sees Nathanael as having been under a fig tree. That is an image of Nathanael as a teacher or rabbi or perhaps even a student sitting at the feet of a teacher under a fig tree, a common image in Israel. Teaching and learning are the image of what the Church is about. It doesn't yet know everything and is still growing but it must share what it knows with others. The integrity that Jesus proclaims of Nathanael is the same integrity that we have to share. Being single-minded in our teaching and learning the faith of Christ.