

Celebrating St Paul, the Apostle.

Around this time last year, Pope Benedict proclaimed a Year of St. Paul, to extend from 29th June 2008 until 29th June 2009 as a way of honouring, in a special way; this great apostle.

Week after week, we listen to the letters Paul sent to the communities he had established. The Catholic Parish of Ivanhoe Liturgy Group thought that June 2009 would be a good time to highlight his life and his work by making it a Month of St. Paul. It will offer some insights each week for this month

This week, a few facts about his early life. Scholars tell us that he was probably born a few years after Jesus. Saul, as he was then called, lived in Tarsus which is in present day Turkey. He enjoyed Roman citizenship and practised as an orthodox Jew. In fact the eminent Gamaliel had taught him and Saul himself became a rabbi. He would have spoken Greek but did understand Hebrew and earned his income as a tent maker. The first mention of him in the Scriptures appears to be a notorious one. He was a witness to the stoning of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Acts 7.58 records that he fully approved of the stoning.

Note: Resources are abundant. They include:

Fr. Gerard Dowling writes about him in Kairos 31st May—13th June .

The pastoral letter from Archbishop Hart (copies are available from church entrances).