

The life of St. Eustachius



St. Eustachius was originally a very important Roman Officer called Placidus. He lived in the second century AD, with his wife and two sons. Although he wasn't originally Christian he was very kind and generous and often gave money and help to the poor and needy. He was out hunting near Rome one day and was chasing a stag with magnificent antlers, when the deer stopped and Placidus saw that between his antlers was a shining cross (crucifix) with the dying Jesus on it. Placidus heard a voice say "I am Jesus Christ who you helped when you gave to the poor and needy."

Placidus immediately went back home to his family and they were all baptised into the Christian church. He changed his name to Eustachius, which means 'fortunate'.

Unfortunately (ironically given his name!) the whole family then went through a very tragic time and they all became separated. Eustachius had to work as a servant on a farm for very little money. After many years he was reunited with his wife and sons, which filled him full of joy and gratitude.

The Emperor Hadrian asked Eustachius to come back into the Army, but Eustachius didn't like the things he was supposed to do and argued with the Emperor – not a good idea!

Hadrian forced Eustachius and his family to face a fierce lion, but instead of attacking them, the lion bowed his head as if in honour, and left them alone (Aslan?).

This made the Emperor very cross, so he had Eustachius and his whole family burned – not a happy ending! But Eustachius was made a saint because of his faith. The emblem of our church is the picture of a stag with a cross between its antlers.



St. Eustachius was:

Generous

Listened to Jesus

Followed God's word

Suffered because of his faith

Was proud to follow Jesus

Became a servant

Loved his family

Was thankful

Was very brave.....