

Feast of St. Luke the Evangelist, 10/ 18/ 24

1 Called evangelist, b/c he wrote Gos. According to St. Luke. Convert of Paul and Companion also wrote Acts. Appears from the 16th chapter to the end.

2 Born in Antioch so a Gentile. Only gospel to have been written by a non-Jewish person. B/C of association with St. Paul, Luke is often referred to as the written by the authority of Paul – Paul’s gospel.

3 Known as a physician from Col. 4:14. “Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you.” Also known as a painter. Legend that he painted the first icon of Mary, and many churches and monasteries claim to have icons by him. Luke’s gospel is the only one to have detailed accounts of the nativity of Christ, so, in a sense, He is the first painter of the image of the BVM and the Child Jesus.

4 He has an eye for narrative detail that comport with an eyewitness account and is consistent with history and geography. Powers of observation maybe from his

practice of medicine and art. Considered one of the first historians. Modern historians discount him, b/c of their a-priori disdain for the miraculous.

5 Luke states that he wishes to present an accurate

account in his gospel “1 Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, 2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; 3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, 4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

6 Luke begins the Acts of the Apostles in a similar way

1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: 3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

6 So Luke has researched and interviewed eyewitnesses

to verify with accuracy the life of Jesus and of the Church

immediately after Christ's Ascension.

7 Question – who is this Theophilus? May be a real person. The name literally means “lover of God” in Greek. So this may be addressed to all who seek knowledge of God. It may be addressed to all who read. To you and I.

8 By default, Luke poses questions to us. He asks each of us: Are we lovers of God? Will we accept his carefully researched narrative? He speaks Truth to us. He tells us of Jesus compassion for outcasts and penitents. These turned to Jesus. They became lovers of God by becoming lovers of Jesus. Will we follow their example, living each day in greater love of God and submission to Christ?

9 This, of course, is the challenge of the gospel. So many of us are too wrapped up in their own priorities that they respond, “Oh that is interesting, but I’ve no time for religion. That’s interesting, but I need to carefully research for myself. ... but I am scientific. ... but that

story has been disproved ... but this, but that.

10 Maybe we already claim to be Christian, but we don't really want to be that committed. We want to keep Jesus at arms length. Jesus is great, just as long as He stays in this little box over here. I don't want Him interfering too much with my life, with my ideas.

11 Let's face it, we are all like this to some extent, and let us at least admit to ourselves that, to the extent that we are like this, we are not lovers of God.

12 Our challenge as Christians is to always go deeper into God. To always give more of ourselves to Jesus for in Him true love and joy are to be found. That is where I want to be. That is where I hope all of us want to be.

13 Give thanks to God for the ministry of St. Luke. As baptized believers, we have started our journey to God, but may we not be satisfied with the status quo. May we always want more of Jesus, may our imaginations be shaped by God, and, by our actions, may we merit the name Theophilus, Lover of God.