

St. Luke

Morning Prayer

First Lesson: Isa 52:7-10

Second Lesson: Acts 1:1- 8

Homily to be written

see also the sermon by Canon Hollister
under this date
in the Sermons by Other Authors

St. Luke

Evening Prayer

First Lesson: Ecclesiasticus 38:1-14

Second Lesson: Col 4:2-18

Homily

There was a doctor named Luke,
a man trained in the arts of healing,
a man trained to observe closely,
the closest thing to a scientist his age could
offer.

This man is sometimes thought to have been a
Gentile,
the only non-Jew to have written Scripture.
Maybe so, maybe not,
Though some of the Fathers thought it so,
and it is generally believed so,
neither his own writings
nor the rest of the New Testament canon
give us any clear information
about his birth or background,
and the various traditions about him
are not really consistent with each other.
We just don't know.

What do we know?

Well, St. Paul called him a beloved physician,
(we just heard that in the Second Lesson)
and he has been seen for centuries
as a patron of the healing arts,
and our first lesson, from Ecclesiasticus,
could have been written with him in mind.
He would seem to have been well-trained
in art of medicine
(as a close reading of his two books will show),
and indeed a man of distinctly scientific bent,
a keen observer of the physical world.
His style of thinking shows also in the form
of his writings,
the Gospel under his name,
and the history known as Acts,
two of the foundational documents of the
Church..

By his own testimony,
he consulted everything he could find
that had already been written,
and also appears to have interviewed
witnesses,
most notably the Blessed Virgin Mary,
as well as, at times,
his own eye-witness testimony.

His descriptions are careful and precise,
as we can especially notice in the sea scenes
of the "we passages" of Acts,
where he himself was present.

Luke certainly appears to have been
at the heart of the early life of the Church.
In our second reading we find him as being
directly at the side of St. Paul,
an extremely valued coworker.

There are also legends,
somewhat unreliable,
but somehow believable,
that present St. Luke as the founder
of Christian iconography,
attributing to him the earliest paintings
of the Blessed Virgin and of the Lord Himself.

Whether Luke was Jewish or Gentile in origin,
he certainly represents a bridge between the
cultures.

He is not the kind of person
that Jewish tradition would have expected
to emerge as a religious leader,
nor did he really fit the Greek and Roman
culture

all that well,
but he obviously understood both,
and is very intentional in presenting
the Gospel of Christ
as a message for all men.

And that is our mission.
As Christians we live in a world that is not
home,
surrounded by people who do not know
the eternal truths entrusted to us,
who have not met our Savior.
We do not fit any culture on this earth,
but we live here, and those among whom we
live
are indeed beloved of the Lord.
Can we love them as Luke did?
Can we do that without being drawn away
from the word God has given us?

Let us pray,

O God, who hast made of one blood all nations
of men for to dwell on the face of the whole
earth, and dists sent thy blessed Son to preach
peace to them that are far off and to them that
are nigh; Grant that all men everywhere may
seek after thee and find thee. Grant that we,

according to thy command, by the example and prayers of St. Luke, may so live and speak that they may be drawn to follow thee. Bring the nations into thy fold, pour out thy spirit on all flesh, and hasten thy kingdom; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.