

REFLECTIONS – 18TH OCTOBER 2020 – ST LUKE’S DAY

Readings 2 Tim 4 5-17 and Luke 10 1-9

On this Day, the Church celebrates the life and work of St Luke

In the Epistle Reading, all who follow Christ are asked to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. It also reminds us that Luke was a companion of Paul. But we don’t know why Luke chose to follow Christ. But we do know that he was a Doctor

But today he is well known for his Gospel- it is his contribution to advancing the Kingdom of God

So why did he write it?. He tells us that it was written for a man called Theophilus (and so now us). In it he writes a collective narrative of the life and work of Jesus Christ

He does this in a very detailed way . This should not surprise us as he was a Doctor. It is said that all Doctors are like detectives as they ask many questions to try and find out what is wrong with someone.

In the same way Luke has asked many questions and gathered much information about Jesus and about the Kingdom he brought into the world

Here are some of the Key Themes from the Gospel. There are many more but it is up to you to work out what they are.

One theme is that of “ Jesus- a sign that people reject”

We see it early in the Gospel in Luke Chapter 2 .34 when after Simeon has praised God for the birth of Jesus he tells Mary his Mother “This child is destined to be a sign that many will reject”

This should remind us today that many will choose to reject our faith journey

But there will always be people who want to know more Jesus. And so our job is to find them and get our story noticed even in the depths of a pandemic

Luke's Gospel tells us that no one was forced to follow the Risen Christ and so that now includes us today.

Another theme is that of Jerusalem missing its vocation

It comes out very strongly in Luke 13.34 where Jesus says

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem the city that murders the prophets and stones the messengers sent to her. How often have I longed to gather your children as a hen gathers her brood under her wings- but you would not let me

But as he says this, Jesus must know that there will come a time when he has to take on his enemies in Jerusalem for the last time.

Perhaps this theme reminds us to stay true to the task of following Christ and so not missing our vocations on our faith journeys.

Another key theme of the Gospel is that the Good News of Jesus Christ is shown in individual response

We see this in the early part of Chapter 7 where a Roman Centurion says to Jesus, " But say the word and my servant will be cured"

It comes out best of all in Luke 24.13 when the Risen Christ appears to Cleopas and another disciple on a journey that they are making on the First Easter Day from Jerusalem to Emmaus

They are downcast but the presence of the Risen Christ and his words empower them to return to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples that Jesus had risen from the dead just as he said he would

That powerful story should empower us to better tell out the Good News of Jesus Christ

And another key theme of the Gospel is that Jesus is a good story teller. This comes out very strongly in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (10.30) and in the Parable of the Prodigal Son (15.11)

You only find the Parable of the Prodigal Son in Luke. When reading this Parable, you find yourself asking this question. Do the elder son's words at the end of the Parable show that he is about to become a Prodigal Son. We don't know as the Parable is left open ended as Jesus stories often are.

Today, we often think that sequels are a new idea. Just how many James Bond sequels are there going to be?

But they are not new. Luke also wrote a sequel called "Acts of the Apostles". But some have argued that it should be called "Acts of Apostles" as many people named by Luke and not named by him played their part in advancing the early Christian communities. What do you think about that thought?

But this Book has an open ending. Perhaps that is to remind us that future readers of his sequel are to continue the task of telling the Good News of Jesus Christ in the best of times and in the worst of times.

I will end with a piece of folk lore for you.

We often have good weather round and about St Luke's Day. Because this can happen at this time of the year, it was often known as "St Luke's Little Summer"

That thought can remind us that there will be better summers to come

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