Commemoration of the Holy Apostle Luke - Fr. Thomas Homily October 18, 2026

Glory to Jesus Christ. >> Glory forever.

Today the church commemorates the life of the holy apostle and evangelist Luke. He is the author of the Gospel reading that we just heard this morning. But a bit about the man who recorded the words. What we know of his life doesn't come entirely from scriptures. Most of what we know of his life comes to us as part of our holy tradition, passed down and preserved as well as is humanly possible and with the help of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church. The Apostle Luke was born in Antioch. His parents were probably pagans, but from his youth he sought wisdom both in arts and in science. He traveled much to quench his thirst for knowledge. He was accomplished in painting and also in the art of medicine becoming a physician himself. He was fluent in both Hebrew and Aramaic and his Gospel shows an excellent command of the Greek language.

He was familiar with the Jewish laws and customs and most likely he himself became a convert to Judaism before he encountered Christ and his disciples. But when he heard of the miracles and the teachings and the works of Jesus, he traveled to Galilee to see this teacher and healer for himself. When the Lord appointed 70 lesser apostles, the Apostle Luke was one of those. He was one of those who were sent two by two before the Lord to announce the salvation of the Lord in the towns and villages. He was present in Jerusalem at the time of the Lord's passion and he stood a far off with the other disciples and witnessed the Lord as he hung on the cross. Later on that day on the day of the resurrection, he was found walking on the road to with Cleopus. They were both distraught at the loss of the Master. However, their sadness was turned to joy when the Lord, who had joined them along the way, but kept his identity concealed, revealed himself to them in the breaking of bread. St. Luke was also present a week later when the Lord appeared to the disciples. And in response to St. Thomas, he showed them his hands in his side.

After Pentecost, St. Luke remained for quite some time, it appears, in Jerusalem. However, he did return back to Antioch. And on the way back, he stopped at the city named Sebast, which is in Samaria. Here lay the venerable body of St. John the Baptist. St. Luke wanted to take the entire body back with him to Antioch. But the people there begged him not to because this relic, this venerable relic, St. John the Baptist, had brought much grace to the people and to the town there. They did, however, allow him to take the right hand of St. John the Baptist with him, and he returned with the hand to Antioch. When he was in Antioch, he met the Apostle Paul who was in on his second missionary journey and he accompanied Paul to proclaim the Gospel in Greece. He

traveled with him from Troas to Philippi and St. Paul left him there to nurture the newly churched form which had just begun.

He remained in Macedonia for several years. When St. Paul visited Philippi again on his third missionary journey. He sent Luke to Corinth to receive the collection that had been made there by the faithful for the needs of the poor in Jerusalem. Together the two apostles returned to the holy city. Along the way, they strengthened the Christian communities that they found in the Aian Islands Minor Phoenicia and in Cesaria. When St. Paul was arrested in Jerusalem, St. Luke remained with him. He accompanied him to Rome and their difficult and eventful voyage is described in the book of acts. Luke wrote his Gospel in the book of Acts while in Rome in obedience to a request from the apostle Paul who guided and approved his work. His Gospel provides details not found in the other two the Gospels of the other two evangelists Matthew and Mark. But he recorded what he himself saw and heard and he also related what was handed down from those who were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word from the very beginning.

In telling the savior's life, the apostle Luke stressed mercy and compassion for humanity. And in the book of Acts after telling of all that had happened at the foundation of the church in Jerusalem he gave much attention to the work of the apostle Paul who the one who labored more abundantly than all the other apostles in spreading the glad tidings of salvation. After two years of imprisonment in Rome, St. Paul was released and resumed his missionary work this time once again accompanied by his faithful disciple Luke. But when Nero launched a furious persecution of Christians in Rome, the two apostles returned there to strengthen the Christians who were in that community. Once again, the Apostle Paul was arrested. This time suffering much worse conditions than his first imprisonment. However, even when some of the other disciples had fled, St. Luke remained faithful to the Apostle Paul and remained with him. Most likely Luke was present at the martyrdom of the Apostle Paul, but he didn't a written record of that particular event.

After the Apostle Paul was martyred, Luke traveled to Akia. There he preached the Gospel in Italy, Dalmatia, and Macedonia. He later traveled to Egypt where he went as far as a remote desert in Cush where he converted many to Christ. Returning to Greece, he became the bishop of Thiva in Bolelicia. There he established churches, ordained priests and deacons to serve in them. He healed the sick and body by his prayers. Arrested by idolators when he was 85 years old, he was flayed alive and crucified on an olive tree. His body was laid was laid to rest in Thiva and many miracles were performed by a miraculous stream of myrrh that flowed from his tomb.

Later in the second half of the 4th century, the emperor Constantius sent St. Artimius of Thiva to Thiva to bring the relics of the of the Apostle Luke to Constantinople. During the transfer of his relics, there was a eunuch named Anatolius who had been sick with an an

incurable disease. He had spent practically everything they had. He offered to help carry them. And when he lifted the the relic up and carried himself, he was suddenly cured of a disease that he had suffered from for many years. The relics of the Apostle were placed under the altar of the church of the apostles together with the relics of the apostles Andrew and Timothy.

Holy tradition relates to us that St. Luke was the first iconographer. At a request of the faithful, he painted an image of the Theotokos during her lifetime. When she saw it, she said to him, "May the grace of him who was born of me be upon this image." St. Luke later painted some other images of that they are hopeless and of the elder apostles giving rise to the devout and holy tradition of veneration of icons of Christ and his saints. He's honored as the as so let us give thanks to God for his saints especially for the holy apostle and evangelist Luke. Let us give thanks for the inspiration and the instruction they provide us. For their prayers through which they help and guide us and for the hope that they offer to each of us that we too might be numbered among those who love the Lord and are called his friends.

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Link to Sermon - https://youtu.be/bkRDgFbft6c?t=4896