

18. October 2024

Feast of Saint Luke, Evangelist  
'Proclaiming the Gospel without losing heart'

NOTE: Today we will listen to the responsorial psalm for the Feast of St Luke. A meditation on the Gospel of the day can be found at the following link:  
<https://en.elijamission.net/i-send-you-out-as-lambs-in-the-midst-of-wolves/#more-11507>

Ps 145(144):10-11,12-13ab,17-18

*All your creatures shall thank you, Yahweh, and your faithful shall bless you. They shall speak of the glory of your kingship and tell of your might, making known your mighty deeds to the children of Adam, the glory and majesty of your kingship. Your kingship is a kingship for ever, your reign lasts from age to age. Yahweh is trustworthy in all his words, and upright in all his deeds. Upright in all that he does, Yahweh acts only in faithful love. He is close to all who call upon him, all who call on him from the heart.*

The feast of St. Luke the Evangelist invites us to reflect once again on the infinite value of evangelisation. This becomes even more important when we notice that the Gospel message is often being watered down, unfortunately even by the Church's highest authority.

If we bear in mind Pope Francis' recent statements in Singapore, saying that all religions are a path to God (a statement he reemphasised a few days later), we have to realise that this is a fundamental contradiction to the Gospel and the doctrine of the Church, which we cannot accept, reinterpret or relativise.

As the Holy Scriptures teach us, the proclamation of the Gospel is a command of the Risen Christ to the Apostles (Mt 28:19-20) so that men might be saved, for "*there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved*" (Acts 4:12).

The nascent Church took up this mission and fulfilled it down through the centuries, right up to the present day. It was always clear that the Lord's words that 'no one comes to the Father except through me' were to be understood as they were spoken. The Holy Spirit took the lead in the work of evangelisation and impelled so many missionaries to be willing to make enormous sacrifices in order to carry the Word of the Lord to the ends of the earth and to administer the sacraments. Countless Christians gave their lives for the sake of the true faith, professing that there is no salvation except in Jesus Christ. As the psalm says, they were to "*making known your mighty deeds to the children of Adam, the glory and majesty of your kingship. Your kingship is a kingship for ever, your reign lasts from age to age*".

God's unsurpassed work is to send His own Son to redeem mankind through His atoning death on the cross, thus paying the ransom price for men to free them from sin and Satan's dominion.

If the Church were to cease to proclaim this truth with all wisdom and authority, it would lose its divine mission and begin to transform itself into a merely human institution or, in the worst case, into a kind of anti-church. On the other hand, if it continues to proclaim authentically the Gospel and all that derives from it, it would continue to be the light of the world, even if it is rejected by men.

The Lord sent His disciples to proclaim the Gospel, even 'in season and out of season' (2 Tim 4:2). His message cannot be accommodated and reinterpreted to the point that it is only presented as words of wisdom from which everyone can draw something of benefit. This is not enough! The Gospel confronts us with a decision: Do we want to follow the Son of God or not?

There is no doubt that the proclamation of the Gospel cannot be accompanied by physical or psychological coercion. The messenger must also have the virtue of prudence and a certain empathy, so that he can understand the reality of people's lives or use their religious or philosophical convictions as a hook to evangelise them. However, the fire of the Holy Spirit, who wants all people to 'come to the knowledge of the truth' (1 Tim 2:4), must never be extinguished in him. The Spirit of the Lord, who reminds us of all that Jesus said and did, wants nothing else. He will zealously see to it that the Gospel is not distorted and will take care that the proclamation of the truth is not replaced by a human or even Luciferian spirit that often wants to intrude and put itself in His place.

Again and again He will remind us of the essence of the Gospel message and bring to mind these strong words, which can provoke a “separation of spirits”:

*“Even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, If any one is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed”* (Gal 1:8-9).

What we need is a proclamation of the Gospel to all people, full of clarity and charity. If the truth is proclaimed to them in the power of the Holy Spirit, perhaps they will respond to the Lord's invitation.