

OCTOBER 18, 2019
Feast of St. Luke, Apostle
Luke 10: 1-9

PRAISE IS DUE TO GOD NOT TO OURSELVES

To become a priest was my childhood dream. I wanted to become a priest because at that time, I was thinking priesthood was “my choice and my like”. Fortunately, as I grew up in the seminary, I discerned what was really my calling: it’s my choice or God’s choice, my own desire or God’s willing? Until I realized, this is not my own decision, but it is my own way of answering His call and His invitation, not I chose this alone, but He chose me, unworthy I am. That’s why when I was ordained, I chose the passage from John 15:16 “You did not choose me, but I chose you...” and I keep reminding myself, I must cooperate to His grace to become less unworthy.

In our gospel for today, Jesus appointed seventy disciples to the ministry of the word. In biblical times, this number seventy was a significant number. In the Old Testament, Moses who lead the people through the wilderness, chose seventy elders to help him as they walked to the promised land. In the New Testament, the Sanhedrin, the governing council for the nation of Israel, was composed of seventy members and in Jesus' times seventy was known as the number of nations throughout the world. This was the reason why Jesus appointed seventy and commissioned them to a two-fold task: to speak in His name and to act with His power.

This was the life of St. Luke. Luke is the writer of the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. In Colossians 4:14, he was identified by St. Paul as Luke, the beloved physician. It is believed that Luke was born a Greek and a Gentile.

What makes St. Luke different from the other evangelists? “Luke's unique perspective on Jesus can be seen in the six miracles and eighteen parables not found in the other gospels. Luke's gospel is the gospel of the poor and of social justice. He is the one who tells the story of Lazarus and the Rich Man who ignored him. Luke is the one who uses "Blessed are the poor" instead of "Blessed are the poor in spirit" in the

beatitudes. Only in Luke's gospel do we hear Mary's Magnificat where she proclaims that God "has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty" (Luke 1:52-53). Luke also has a special connection with the women in Jesus' life, especially Mary. It is only in Luke's gospel that we hear the story of the Annunciation, Mary's visit to Elizabeth including the Magnificat, the Presentation, and the story of Jesus' disappearance in Jerusalem. It is Luke that we have to thank for the Scriptural parts of the Hail Mary: "Hail Mary full of grace" spoken at the Annunciation and "Blessed are you and blessed is the fruit of your womb Jesus" spoken by her cousin Elizabeth. Forgiveness and God's mercy to sinners is also of first importance to Luke. Only in Luke do we hear the story of the Prodigal Son welcomed back by the overjoyed father. Only in Luke do we hear the story of the forgiven woman disrupting the feast by washing Jesus' feet with her tears. Throughout Luke's gospel, Jesus takes the side of the sinner who wants to return to God's mercy." www.catholic.org.

So, my brothers and sisters, like St. Luke, we are also called and commissioned to carry out our ministry. As priests, readers, cantors, choir, eucharistic ministers, altar servers, CWL, Knights of Columbus, St. Vincent de Paul, or any other organizations, or even as parents, employees, whatever position we are in, we are all called to be humble servants of the Lord. This is not own work, this is God's work, we are just instruments to fulfill His kingdom here on earth. We cannot say that I achieved this, my credit is for me, I'm serving for how many years or even I donated a large amount of money to the Church. Remember, all of these are not ours, we are just caretakers of God's grace, we are just giving it back to Him. Whatever we do good things here on earth, the reward is not here but in heaven, in God's time not in our time. The praise is not to us but to Him who is the source of everything.

So, let us ask the intercession of St. Luke that we may serve our Lord with love and humility, and give glory to God not to ourselves. St. Luke, pray for us.