October 18th: Feast of Saint Luke, evangelist

Gospel text (*Lk* 10:1-9): The Lord Jesus appointed seventy-two disciples whom he sent ahead of him in pairs to every town and place he intended to visit. He said to them, “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest. Go on your way; behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals; and greet no one along the way.

Into whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this household.’ If a peaceful person lives there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you. Stay in the same house and eat and drink what is offered to you, for the laborer deserves payment. Do not move about from one house to another. Whatever town you enter and they welcome you, eat what is set before you, cure the sick in it and say to them, ‘The Kingdom of God is at hand for you.’”

“The Kingdom of God is at hand for you.”

Fr. Lluc TORCAL Monk of Santa Maria de Poblet
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Today, on the Feast of St. Luke —the Evangelist of Christ's gentleness and meekness— the Church proclaims this Gospel in which the main traits that Christ's apostles must have, are established.

In the first place, the apostles have been directly called by the Lord, and mandated by Him, to go out on His behalf: it is Jesus Himself who calls whom He wants to entrust with a concrete mission! “The Lord Jesus appointed seventy-two disciples whom he sent ahead of him in pairs to every town and place he intended to visit” (Lk 10:1).

And, because the apostle has been delegated by the Lord, he is, on top of everything else, entirely dependent upon Him. “Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals; and greet no one along the way” (Lk 10:4). Jesus' prohibition to His disciples mostly implies they must completely rely on their Lord Jesus, abandoning themselves to Him, even to the point of leaving in His hands whatever is most essential for their lives: the Lord, who takes care of the iris flowers in the prairie and feeds the little birds, wants His disciples to look, in the first place, for the Kingdom of Heaven and, “do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not worry anymore. All the nations of the world seek for these things, and your Father knows that you need them” (Lk 12:29-30).

The apostles are still those who prepare the path for their Lord, by announcing His peace and healing the sick, thus, providing evidence of the coming of His Kingdom. The apostle's task is, therefore, of paramount importance in and for the life of the Church, because the welcoming of the Master amongst men in the future will depend upon it.

The best testimony of the feast of an Evangelist —who has narrated the announcement of the Good News— is to make us think of the apostolic and evangelizing dimension of our Christian life.

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "Everyone who loves God believes that the Gospel has been written for him and that it has been given to him as a gift, with the mission of keeping this precious jewel" (Saint Bede the Venerable)

- "Luke leads us to knowledge of the discreet yet penetrating light that radiates from it, while illustrating the reality and events of history" (Saint John Paul II)

- "Three principal parables on prayer are transmitted to us by St. Luke: The first, "the importunate friend," (Cf. Lk 11:5-13) invites us to urgent prayer: ... The second, "the importunate widow," (Cf. Lk 18:1-8) is centered on one of the qualities of prayer: it is necessary to pray always without ceasing ... The third parable, "the Pharisee and the tax collector," (Cf. Lk 18:9-14) concerns the humility of the heart that prays..." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, nº 2613)