

1456  
1889

Monday Prayers - 997

18. 10. 84  
18. 10. 90.

There's A Wider World (Love Dis. 19)  
Earthen Vessels

id. 2'

In the first part of my work, *Theophilus*, I wrote of all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen, He was taken up to heaven. He showed Himself to them near after His death, and gave ample proof that He was alive: over a period of 40 days He appeared to them and taught them about the Kingdom of God. While He was in their company, He told them not to leave Jerusalem. "You must wait," He said, "for the promise made by my Father, about which you have heard me speak: John, as you know, baptised with water, but you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit, and within the next few days. So, when they were all together, they asked Him 'Lord, is this the time when you are to establish once again the sovereignty of Israel?' He answered, 'It is not for you to know about dates or times, which the Father has set within His own control. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will bear witness for me in Jerusalem, and all over Judea and Samaria, and away to the ends of the earth.' — The familiar opening sentences of the New Testament Bk. of the Acts of the Apostles. Together with the also unusual opening sentences of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of the 4 gospels, the "first part of his work" to which the author refers, this is the only part of the New Testament that is primarily addressed and written for not just internal use in the Christian community but for outsiders as well. And here we are listening to it today, 1900 yrs later, 'away at the ends of the earth'. And we keep today, 18<sup>th</sup> Oct. as the feast day of St Luke, the gentle author of the 3<sup>rd</sup> gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, Luke who was a disciple of St Paul and went with him on some parts of his apostolic travelling around the eastern Mediterranean, who probably came from Antioch himself (the place where, as he comments, the disciples

were first given the name of "Christians"). Luke is mentioned in St Paul's letters as a companion and colleague: he sends greetings to the Christians at Colossae from "our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and from Demas: to his own helper Timothy, later, he wrote that Demas had deserted him because his heart was set on this world, that "I have no one with me but Luke": and in greetings to another colleague, Philémon, he mentions Luke again, together with other fellow-workers. That this Luke is also the man who wrote the Acts of the Apostles and the eye-witness, first-person descriptions of some of Paul's travels including his journey to Rome, as well as the Gospel book that is evidently from the same pen — this identification of Luke has been traditionally accepted from the very earliest years of Christianity. But, these are matters for scholars — it is the gospel itself, the inspired Word of God that matters and that should be the starting-point of prayer and meditation. And in St Luke's writing, in particular, you will find an emphasis on prayer, on the action of the Holy Spirit, on compassion and concern for the weak, the poor, the defenceless. It is only in St Luke's gospel that you will find some of the best stories that Jesus told — the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son: some of the most touching and human incidents: the most references to women: the most sharply-observed detail in descriptions: and, of course, the whole of the tradition about the birth of Jesus and the events surrounding that, as well as the great canticles or hymns contained in those first two chapters of his gospel. So in reading a meditation on the gospel of Luke, let's also give thanks to God for this particular scribe of His whose special insights and ways of putting things reveal to us the human-ness and compassion of Jesus, and different facets of the Word which is made flesh for us in the person of Jesus and in the human words in which the



Peace with Father

scriptures are written. For our prayer is music today. Then, let's now listen to a version of

one of St Luke's Canticles. <sup>the Magnificat</sup> **MUSIC - PRAYERS**

"My Soul Proclaims"

The old

tradition that St Luke was a medical man, a physician, is of course the reason why he's the patron of doctors and surgeons. And that's why we have now occasions like this coming Sunday, which is observed by many churches and Christian institutions like hospitals and health-services as Medical Sunday or Hospital Sunday. This will be another opportunity to pray to God through the intercession of St Luke, and to give thanks for him and for the aspects of Christian care for others and Christian understanding of life which he, in his gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, has highlighted for us. But St Luke is also the patron of artists — and this comes from the unproved earlier notion that he was a painter, and that he painted an icon of the Blessed Virgin. He certainly was an artist with words: but there's no proof that any <sup>picture</sup> ~~painting~~ of Our Lady was painted by him, though a number of such claims have been made, and some of the earliest representations of Luke himself show him either writing or painting a picture of the Blessed Virgin. Whether he speaks to us of healing, reconciliation in Christ, or gives us a picture of the Saviour of the world come to gather all the world's people into the one community of service, worship, prayer, may St Luke today help each of us understand a bit better the word of God we hear, take our place more firmly in the companionship of the disciples and apostles of Jesus — and pray more constantly and fervently, trying to find [as was the pilgrim I quoted to you last week] how to pray at all times necessarily: [the pilgrim's story I'll continue with you, please God next Monday]

God, the Father of light, called us to the true faith thro' the gospel of His Son. We pray to him now for all his holy people: Remember your Church, O Lord.

Father, you raised your Son from the dead to be the great shepherd of the sheep — make us his witnesses to the ends of the earth. Remember your Church O Lord.

You sent your Son into the world to proclaim the good news to the poor — grant that we may bring his gospel into the darkness of people's lives: Remember your Church O Lord.

You sent your Son to plant in people's hearts the seed of imperishable life — may we labour to sow his word, and reap a harvest of joy:

You sent your Son to reconcile the world with yourself by the shedding of His Blood — let us become his fellow-workers in restoring people to your friendship: remember your Church O Lord.

You placed your Son at your own right hand in heaven — receive the dead into the happiness of your kingdom: Our Father who art in heaven . . . .

Lord God, you chose St Luke to reveal the mystery of your love for the poor in his preaching and his writings. Grant that those who already acknowledge your name may continue to be one in mind and heart, and that all the nations may see your salvation. We make this prayer thro' O.L.T.C. your Son who lives & reigns with you. Amen.