

### ***A Story to Tell!***

Isaiah 35<sup>3-6</sup>; Psalm 147<sup>1-7</sup>; 2 Timothy 4<sup>15-17</sup>; Luke 10<sup>1-9</sup>

*Do the work of an evangelist  
[2 Tim 4<sup>5</sup>]*

Today the Church celebrates St Luke.

- ✦ We know that Luke was a companion of Paul, someone who kept him company and shared the work of the great Apostle [Col.4:4; Phil.24] (at one point, his only companion [2 Tim.4:11]).
- ✦ We also know that Luke was a physician, who probably took responsibility for Paul's physical wellbeing.
- ✦ He presents himself in the introduction to both Gospel and the Acts, of which he is the author, as an historian: someone who has a story to tell - the story of Jesus and the story of the early Church. The facts about Jesus and the ongoing reality of the Church are part of the same story for Luke - for a Christian the Church is not an optional extra.

The Church is still trusted with the same story - so that people know about Jesus, the message of salvation and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

From the readings today we learn about the message we share:

Isaiah tells us about the difference that God makes to life. **Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those of fearful heart, 'Be strong. Do not fear! Here is your God.** At the time it was said to the nation of Israel anticipating a long walk through the wilderness to get back home, but for any for whom life seems just too much the people of God are trusted with this message: God is with us and God will give us the strength we need.

The Psalmist tells us that God **heals the broken-hearted and binds up all their wounds.** The contrast is made observing that the same God who holds the universe in his hands and has unlimited power takes time to be involved with the lives of individuals: we proclaim the message that such a God can be trusted.

Paul is coming towards the end of his life and is keen to focus on the message that faith makes a difference to how we die. **The time for my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.** He is confident and anticipates a reward from God. The Church is still

glad to proclaim that God makes a difference to how we die and to how we mourn.

The Gospel is clear enough - the work of all Christians to prepare for Jesus to be received:

- ✦ There is plenty to do as the message is largely unheard and not understood, so Jesus says: **the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few.**
- ✦ There is a realism about how easy this is going to be: **I am sending you out like lambs in the midst of wolves.**
- ✦ There is a challenge not to create our own comfort zone - practically for the disciples it was to be dependent on those who would host them as a sign of their trust in God (to be dependent for food, hygiene and shelter isn't what we would plan). How easily we insure our faith - if we can't be vulnerable then we have some way to go to learn about the message Jesus teaches.
- ✦ The focus is on establishing the **Kingdom of God.** That means living under God's rule in life so that heaven won't be a surprise to us.

Luke, in the opening chapters of the Acts, records the rapid growth of the Church - 3000 being baptised on the Day of Pentecost. That happened because the Church (embryonic as it was) had the confidence to proclaim the message about Jesus.

Luke, as an Evangelist, is still a challenge to us. We need to have the courage to pass on the message of hope, comfort, forgiveness and faith to those who are around us.