

Saint Luke

Feast day: October 18th

Today we celebrate the feast of St. Luke, born in the first century in Syria.

St. Luke is primarily known as one of the four evangelists; he wrote the Gospel of Luke as well as the Acts of the Apostles. Together, they make up over 25 percent of the New Testament. The early church believed he was a physician. It is clear from his writings that he was an educated man. St. Luke could have been Greek or an “Hellenized Jew.” There is also a tradition that he was an artist. St. Luke has been acknowledged as the founder of Christian iconography although some scholars question that tradition. What is clear, but less celebrated, is his work as a missionary.



It is important to remember Luke was not present during Christ’s ministry, but he learned from the apostles. He was a companion to St. Paul, a missionary he accompanied on various journeys after Pentecost. Records place St. Luke with St. Paul in Greece during the Greco-Rome period between 60-65 AD. Scholars believe that St. Luke was with St. Paul when St. Paul was martyred in Rome.

His Gospel preserves the most extensive history of Jesus of all four Gospels. The Acts of the Apostles chronicles their mission to spread the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire and, modestly, his participation in those missions. Scholars estimate he died at 84 years old in Greece.

St. Luke is represented by a winged ox – the ox considered to represent the sacrificial aspect of Jesus’ ministry and the wings considered to represent the Gospel traveling throughout the world. He is the patron saint of artists, physicians, butchers, brewers and surgeons. St. Luke continues to be a missionary through his Gospel and his desire to spread the Gospel “to the ends of the earth.”

St. Luke, pray for us.

Question for Reflection:

How do you spread the Gospel to others?

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