

Homily based on the readings from October 18, 2025 (Romans 2.1-11;
Luke 11.42-46)

As you are probably aware, today is the Feast of Saint Luke the Evangelist – the author both of the Gospel that bears his name and of the Acts of the Apostles. As it happens, our first reading was not taken from either of these two books, but from Saint Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy. The reason this passage was selected, I am sure, is that it is one of only three instances in the New Testament where Saint Luke is mentioned by name. Without any further comment, Saint Paul simply remarks that “Luke is the only one with me.” Although we do not know for certain, it is commonly believed that Saint Luke was among the seventy-two disciples appointed by Jesus to go from town to town proclaiming the Kingdom of God – as we heard in today’s Gospel reading. It is also presumed that Saint Luke must have had a close personal connection with the Blessed Mother, as there are so many essential aspects of her story that only appear in his Gospel.

The books of the New Testament – both the Gospels and the epistles – provide us with an unparalleled window into the origins of our faith. We have access to firsthand accounts of every major event, detailed transcripts of the most important teachings, and incisive commentaries from the most influential figures. Even though Saint Luke was not among the twelve Apostles, he was still physically present for most of the pivotal moments. What he did not witness himself, he was able to learn directly from the men and women who were actually there. It would be an act of *unbelievable* foolishness for us not to take full advantage of this astounding resource.

There is a false notion – sadly common among both Catholics and non-Catholics – that the Bible is somehow less important to Catholics than it is to other Christians. This idea is not only wrongheaded, but dangerous. To quote the fathers of the Second Vatican Council:

The Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the body of the Lord, since, especially in the sacred

liturgy, she unceasingly receives and offers to the faithful the bread of life from the table both of God's word and of Christ's body.

She has always maintained them, and continues to do so, together with sacred tradition, as the supreme rule of faith, since, as inspired by God and committed once and for all to writing, they impart the word of God himself without change, and make the voice of the Holy Spirit resound in the words of the prophets and Apostles.

Engagement with Holy Scripture is not optional, just as receiving the Holy Eucharist is not optional. It is absolutely *fundamental* to our lives as Christians.

Our task, as individual Catholics, is always to look for ways to incorporate Scripture more deeply into our lives. Coming to Mass, particularly daily Mass, is a good starting point – but it should not be the totality of what we do. We are blessed to have many forms of prayer – the Stations of the Cross, the Liturgy of the Hours – that are built on a Biblical bedrock. To cite one particularly important example, Pope

Saint John Paul II frequently referred to the Holy Rosary as the “compendium of the Gospel.” In addition, we should never underestimate the value of reading Scripture in a disciplined and comprehensive way. Bible studies sometimes have the reputation of being a Protestant activity, but they are a vital component of Catholic life as well. The point is that all of us are expected to grow in the knowledge of Christ – every day of our lives, in whatever ways we can. God is constantly calling out to each of us. We need to allow ourselves every possible opportunity to listen to his voice.