

PREFACE

Gospel of St. Luke/ Acts of the Apostles

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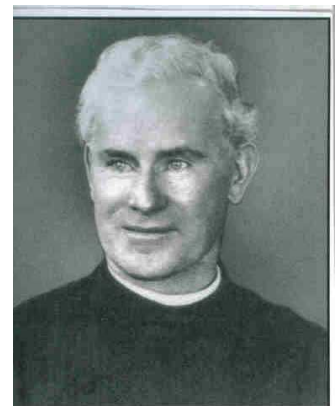


Our studying, praying and discussing the books of St. Luke are meant to guide us in our own lives as believers, messengers and missionaries of Jesus. They are to help us adapt the message of Jesus to our present day realities and world. At the same time, focusing on the mission of the Church through St. Luke's Gospel and The Acts of the Apostles we will highlight the major themes and methods of Fr. Thomas Judge and how we apply them today.

ST. LUKE AND FR. JUDGE:

Many themes that are vital to St. Luke's presentation of Jesus are likewise essential to Fr. Thomas Augustine Judge's call of all the baptized to mission. As we reflect upon the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles we will make specific notice of Fr. Judge's interpretation of following Jesus into mission. Some of the common themes of Luke and Fr. Judge are:

- **The Holy Spirit.**
- **Incarnation.**
- **Preference for the poor and marginalized.**
- **Formation of missionaries among work-a-day followers.**
- **Apostleship.**
- **Central role of Mary.**
- **Eucharist.**
- **Centrality of Prayer.**
- **Visiting as essential to the missionary method.**
- **Role of women in the Church.**
- **Cenacle - dynamic of gathering and sending.**





METHOD FOR REFLECTING UPON LUKE'S WORK:

This guide is principally to be used in small group reflection. This is important for three reasons:

1. **Support:** Commitments are made to others to meet weekly to reflect, study and pray the scriptures.
2. **Inspiration:** In the environment of small faith sharing groups, the Holy Spirit opens minds and hearts of the participants to reveal God's word in testimony and

insight.

3. **Accountability:** The group is committed to one another to grow together in God's word and mission.

There is a general format to the weekly meetings:

●**Prayer:** The meeting should be initiated with prayer to ask for God's guidance and inspiration.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit would be most appropriate, especially in following this predominant theme in Luke. Song is encouraged in this prayerful format. The use of *Lectio Divino (Praying with Scripture)* may be helpful in guiding the daily reflections of St. Luke's writing. (*see below*).

●**Preparation:** Each weekly meeting will have daily reflections and questions to be completed for the session. It is important that all participants complete the designated scripture readings and write down responses to the daily questions. For this reason the daily reflection guides begin each chapter.

●**Application:** It is important that the reflections and sharing are applied to one's personal experience and life. Such questions as "What difference should this passage make in my life?" "How does my own experience relate to this passage?" "How does this passage guide or challenge me in the mission with Jesus and his Church?"

Wrap up: The wrap up is a time to bring the discussion to a focused end and designate the next chapters for the daily reflections. Likewise, specific prayer of thanksgiving should be included.

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

LECTIO DIVINO

The Word of God gives great joy, inspiration, guidance and strength to those who esteem it. We love the gospels, in particular, because they describe Jesus through his words, actions and deeds in his journey to the Father. Reflecting on the Word of God in our daily life brings to life God's abiding presence in our midst.

Before beginning the time of reading and reflection pray to the Holy Spirit to be your guide. *“Come Holy Spirit fill my heart with the FIRE of your love.”*

DURING THE TIME OF PRAYER

READ each passage slowly. Then re-read it again

THINK about what you read. What attracts, challenges, encourages or upsets you. Consider the passage in the light of your own experience and your present life.

IMAGINATION: At times it helps to use your imagination to place yourself in the scene.

- What is happening in the scene?
- Who are the people? What are they saying and doing?
- Who and where are you in the scene?
- *Use your senses.* What are the sounds, smells, sights?
- *Use your feelings.* For example, attraction, fear, rejection, love, gratitude, anger, apprehension, happiness. How do you feel?

TALK to God about it. Whatever is on your heart—concerns, hopes, dreams, anger, joy, and thanksgiving—open it up to God. What is important is to be as honest as possible in open your heart to God.

REST awhile and let God fill your heart and speak to you in the quiet.

After finishing the time of prayer ask the Holy Spirit to teach and guide you in your day.