January 24, 2016

The new liturgical year that began in Advent follows the Gospel according to Luke. Here are a few fun facts about him. St. Luke is the only evangelist who wrote a companion piece, *Acts of the Apostles*. Luke is the patron saint of doctors, artists and butchers. His symbol is the ox or bull. His feast day is October 18th. Tradition has it St. Luke was the first painter of icons. His relics are divided in three cities: rib in Thebes, body in Padua and head in Prague.

Luke’s Gospel is known for its eloquent Greek style. He was clearly someone steeped in the Hellenized culture of the eastern Mediterranean. Some of the beloved stories found only in Luke are the Annunciation to Mary, the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan and the Road to Emmaus.

A number of themes permeate his telling of the Good News. One is the importance and presence of the Holy Spirit. Today we hear that, “Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is a prominent feature of the story. Keep in mind Luke also begins his second book with the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. May the same Spirit given in power to Christ and the Church at its birth, fill us in 2016.

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