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In the Epistle today, from St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle speaks of the brother "who is famous among all the churches for his preaching of the gospel," — the same brother who was "appointed by the churches" to travel with the Apostle in his missionary journeys. This brother was St. Luke, to whom St. Paul refers as his "most dear physician." St. Luke not only took part in the work of doing all that his medical expertise could do to protect and sustain the physical strength of the ardent Apostle who was willing "to spend and be spent" if only Christ might be known and loved by all.

We know that St. Luke was the author of the Acts of the Apostles and also of the Third Gospel — so precious because of its details concerning the Annunciation, the Visitation and the infancy and childhood of Christ. Beyond that there is little that can be established with any appreciable degree of historical certitude concerning St. Luke. But in that little that is known with certitude there is one detail that speaks volumes concerning Luke's character, his loyalty, his fidelity.

We find it in another of St. Paul's Epistles — in the Second Letter to Timothy, written at the close of Paul's life from the Mamertine prison in Rome where St. Paul awaited his final witnessing to his Lord. After warning Timothy that there will be false teachers "holding the form of religion but denying the power of it," and after exhorting Timothy to preach the word, (to) be urgent in season and out of season, (to) convince, rebuke and exhort, (to) be unfailing in patience and teaching," the Apostle St. Paul speaks of himself: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his coming." (2 Timothy, 4:2,4,7-8)

Then St. Paul expresses his human longing with some who will stand with him and console him. He mentions one Demas, who, he says, "in love with this present world, has deserted me." He mentions two others who have departed. Then he refers to Luke: "Luke alone is with me." (4:9-11)

"Luke alone is with me." Luke the dear physician, faithful to the end — faithful and loyal to the Apostle Leader, supporting and counseling him in tribulation, unto the end.

That was nineteen hundred years ago when Luke the faithful physician remained with Paul the Apostle in the Roman prison. How greatly the world has changed since then! There is not a surviving trace of the seemingly impregnable imperial power of that ancient world; all that remain are ruins and dead monuments. They are only museum pieces and tourist attractions! Whole civilizations and cultures have made their appearance, have flourished and declined, and disappeared.

But throughout all this process of historical development and change there is one living Presence that has endured — one authoritative Voice that has spoken through the centuries, and that still speaks — one trans-historic Power of the Spirit, that alone is not overcome and displaced by the inexorable march of time. This Presence is the presence of Christ, speaking in the Voice of the Apostolic authority which he — Christ — illumines and sustains by the same strength today with which he sustained Paul in his prison. Listen to the words which the Apostle wrote from prison to Timothy: "At my first defense no one took my part; all deserted me. May it not be charged against them! But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength to proclaim the word fully, that all the Gentiles might hear it." (2 Tim. 4:18-19)

When we hear these words, I wonder if our thoughts turn to another Paul who today exercises the supreme authority of the Apostolic See, and who, strengthened by the Lord, must bear the burden of proclaiming the word fully before a resisting world.

"You will know the Truth," Christ said to the crowds in Jerusalem, "and the Truth will make you free." (John, 8:32). The Truth of Christ, steadfastly witnessed to and proclaimed by the teaching authority of his Church, has led our fathers down through the Christian centuries. It has led them out of darkness into light, out of every threat of slavery — personal, social, economic, political, spiritual — into an ever developing freedom of the sons of God. Hilaire Belloc was not exaggerating when in his famous epigram he expressed his conviction that European civilization was the fruit of the Christian gospel proclaimed and set forth by the teaching Church: "The Faith is Europe, and Europe is the Faith."
Proposed Abortion Laws

"Slaughter of the Innocents"

John B. Gest

We are at war—a war in which Catholic laymen are called on to join in the defense of the City of God against the City of this world and the forces of evil. One of the principal attacks we must meet is the attack on life and on the divine positive law and the natural law for its protection.

The attack has drawn up its lines in the form of proposed laws for "justifiable" abortion, liberalized divorce, euthanasia, artificial insemination, birth control and contraceptive sterilization of the unfit. The particular salient in the line of battle with which we are now concerned as Catholic laymen is in the field of abortion, in which the proposed laws have been dramatically and justly characterized by one writer as authorizing "the slaughter of the innocents."

Abortion is the directly intended termination of pregnancy otherwise than by a live birth. It has always been recognized as a crime in civil law, and almost all of our states have for years had laws making abortion a crime. (In many of the statutes there is an exception where the abortion is to save the life of the mother. This will be discussed later).

MODEL PENAL CODE

The movement for so-called "liberalized" abortion laws, or "justifiable abortion," springs largely from the work of the American Law Institute, a research organization of considerable influence. In 1962 it promulgated its "Model Penal Code" containing provisions for "Justifiable Abortion." Organized propaganda for such provisions stems from various groups all over the nation and indeed, the world. (See "Abortion on Trial" by Russell Shaw, Pflaum Press, 1968).

The American Medical Association House of Delegates, the 242-member policy-making body of the 216,000-member association, at their convention in Atlantic City in 1967 approved a number of broad exceptions to their long standing opposition to abortion. Liberalized...