

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Sep 20th 2017

Memorial of Saints Andrew Kim Tae-gon, Priest, and Paul Chong Ha-sang, and Companions, Martyrs

The segment of St. Paul's letter to Timothy, from which today's reading is taken, is part of a group of on-going communications about pastoral matters. Paul defines the proper place and the importance of the church in our lives. He also underlines the core of our belief in Jesus Christ. The church of the living God is formed by its members, the believers, the pillars of the church. Paul further helps us to define who it is that we believe in: He is the one who was shown to us in the flesh; vindicated by the Spirit; seen by angels; proclaimed by the Gentiles; believed in throughout the world, and taken up in glory.

Jesus, in the gospel, according to Luke, speaks directly to us. What is our generation like? Are we children who never seem to be happy or satisfied? Are we perverse and difficult? Do we reject the word of God in almost any form in which it is presented? Jesus seems to almost muse aloud...they rejected John because he was too austere; they reject me because I do eat, drink, and associate with anyone that can be saved. The wisdom of God and the church may be presented in many ways. Do not close your mind to it. Be like the reverent children of God, and spread the words of wisdom.

This day is also the memorial day of Saints Andrew Kim Tae-gon, and Paul Chong Ha-sang and their companion Korean Martyrs. St. Andrew was the first Korean-born Catholic priest. They were among the thousands who were persecuted, tortured, and killed in Korea in the nineteenth century. Andrew and Paul, in the light of today's gospel reading, could be considered the children of wisdom and courage. They revered and believed in the word of God. Father Andrew's last words were: "My immortal life is on the point of beginning. Become Christians if you wish to be happy after death, because God has eternal chastisements in store for those who have refused to know him." Father Andrew had certainly taken the words of the alleluia for this day to heart. "Your words, Lord, are spirit and life. You have the words of everlasting life."

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