

The Faith of the Thessalonians (30th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A)

1 Thessalonians 1:5-10—The Good News of Salvation

⁵ [F]or our *gospel* came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶ And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, *for you received the word in much affliction*, with joy inspired by *the Holy Spirit*; ⁷ so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸ For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but *your faith in God has gone forth everywhere*, so that we need not say anything. ⁹ For they themselves report concerning us what a welcome we had among you, and *how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God*, ¹⁰ and *to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come*. (1 Thessalonians 1:5-10)

1. Gospel: not just preaching (“word”), but in “power” (miracles) (1 Thess 1:5)
2. Conversion: Thessalonians became an “example” to other believers (1 Thess 1:7)
3. Idolatry: conversion from paganism to the “living and true God” (1 Thess 5:9)

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. ³“*You shall have no other gods before me*. ⁴ You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; ⁵ you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of *those who hate me*, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to thousands of *those who love me* and keep my commandments. (Exodus 20:2-6)

4. Eschatology: “to wait for his Son” from heaven (1 Thessalonian 1:10)
5. Resurrection: whom “he raised from the dead” (1 Thess 5:10)
6. Last Judgment: “the wrath to come” (1 Thess 5:10)

The Living Tradition

I believe in *God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth*.

I believe in *Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord*.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of the saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (30th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year A)

1. If you had to sum up the “gospel” that Paul had preached to the people of Thessalonica, how would you do it?

For Further Reading

1. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letters of Saint Paul to the Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon* (trans. F. R. Larcher, O.P.; eds. J. Mortensen and E. Alarcón; Lander, WY: Aquinas Institute, 2012).
2. Peter Gorday, ed. *Colossians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon* (Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament IX; Downers Grove, IL.: IVP, 2000).
3. Nathan Eubank, *First and Second Thessalonians* (Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2019).