

**The Word of God
(31st Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A)**

1 Thessalonians 2:7-9, 13—Paul’s Preaching of the Word of God

⁷ But we were gentle among you, like a nurse taking care of her children. ⁸ So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us. ⁹ For you remember our labor and toil, brethren; we worked night and day, that we might not burden any of you, while we preached to you the gospel of God...¹³ *And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.* (1 Thessalonians 2:7-13)

1. Gospel: “good news” (Greek *euangellion*) (1 Thess 1:9)

¹ Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to *Thessalonica*, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ² *And Paul went in, as was his custom, and for three weeks he argued with them from the scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.”* ⁴ And some of them were persuaded, and joined Paul and Silas; as did a great *many of the devout Greeks* and not a few of the leading women. (Acts 17:1-4)

2. Word of God: not “the word of men” but rather “the word of God” (1 Thess 2:13)

Living Tradition

Catechism: Christ the Lord, in whom the entire Revelation of the most high God is summed up, commanded the apostles to preach the Gospel, which had been promised beforehand by the prophets, and which he fulfilled in his own person and promulgated with his own lips. *In preaching the Gospel*, they were to communicate the gifts of God to all men. This Gospel was to be the source of all saving truth and moral discipline.”

In the apostolic preaching ...

In keeping with the Lord’s command, the Gospel was handed on in two ways:

— *orally* “by the apostles who handed on, by the spoken word of their preaching, by the example they gave, by the institutions they established, what they themselves had received—whether from the lips of Christ, from his way of life and his works, or whether they had learned it at the prompting of the Holy Spirit”;

— *in writing* “by those apostles and other men associated with the apostles who, under the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit, committed the message of salvation to writing” (CCC 75-76)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (31th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year A)

1. Nowadays, when we hear the expression “word of God,” we think primarily of the Bible. What does Paul mean when he speaks of the “word of God,” which is not the “word of men” (1 Thess 2:13)?

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).