

Council Sermon 2007

Prov. 3:1-7; Psalm 23; 2 Timothy 1:1-8 John 10:1-10

Timothy and Titus

Saints, as in St. Paul or St. Mary or St. Francis, are the heroes of our faith. We look to them as models of how to lead the Christian life. They inspire us to be better Christians.

Tonight we celebrate the Feast of Saints Timothy and Titus.

The Book of the Acts of the Apostles tells how Timothy and Titus accompanied St. Paul on portions of his Mediterranean journey as a first century travelling evangelist, on a world-wide church planting expedition. It is appropriate that, as yesterday was the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, today we observe the feast day of his companions.

We know little about these men beyond what a few verses in The Book of the Acts of the Apostles tell us. In additions, there are two Epistles of Paul to Timothy and one to Titus. Titus is mentioned in the Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

The two men sometimes made journeys on their own. Timothy was entrusted with missions to the Thessalonians, to encourage them under persecution, and to the Corinthians, to strengthen the converts to the faith. Titus was sent on urgent missions to Corinth. Tradition tells us that Timothy became the first Bishop of Ephesus and that Titus became the first Bishop of Crete.

The Collect recognizes Timothy and Titus as evangelists and teachers. They are also remembered as administrators.

They were good shepherds of their flocks, following the words of Jesus in the Gospel for tonight and the image of the Twenty-third Psalm.

When we are baptized, and again at confirmation, we are commissioned as evangelists. The question asked at every baptism and at every confirmation is "Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?" To which we answer, "I will, with God's help."

Episcopalians tend to be little shy about sharing our faith. But, evangelism, my friends in Christ, is not something for "other" Christians to attend to. At home, at work, and in the public square, by word and by deed, by what you say and by what you do, you are the evangelism sermon.

Remember, too, the words of that old hymn:

*If you cannot preach like Peter,
If you cannot pray like Paul,
You can tell the love of Jesus,
And say, "He died to save us all."*

By word and deed you tell the story of God's love for us through Christ. Claim the evangelism.

Through the life and witness of Timothy and Titus we recognize the value of teachers. We remember that Jesus himself was a master teacher. Teachers mold the future. Teachers help us in our

formation for Christian life. Teachers strengthen us to fulfill the promises we make at baptism. Without teachers, the story and the skills of our faith are lost.

The word administration means “with ministry.” We honor administrators, remembering that administration is an essential ministry in the life of every organization. Thoughtful and loyal administration can be the difference between life and death for an organization. Without good administration, ministry drifts and flounders. Administration is like the bones in the body of Christ. You don’t see them, but the body couldn’t hold up without them. When faithful administration is done as a servant ministry, it is of Christ.

Tonight, in this Eucharist, when we eat the bread and drink the wine, we are we are figuratively and literally joined to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Tonight, in this Eucharist, we are joined to each other and with those who have gone before and with those who are yet to come. Tonight, in this Eucharist, we are joined with two heroes of the faith. We join with Timothy and Titus at Christ’s Eucharistic table. We join Timothy and Titus, inspired to claim our evangelism, to recognize those who teach, and to honor those who administrator. Amen.