

Imagine you're a kid again. You're at a family reunion, and you ask your parents what their wedding was like. When they start to tell the story, it's impossible for grandma not to chime in and explain how nervous mom was when she was getting ready. Your dad talks about the reception, and Uncle Luke interrupts dad to add the detail about dad's brother getting locked outside the reception hall in 20 degree weather. Before you know it, your Uncle Matt is talking about how grandpa had an allergic reaction to the shrimp and he had to do the father-daughter dance pounding Benadryl and practically fell asleep dancing with mom.

Your mom and dad's wedding day isn't simply their story to tell. It belongs to the whole family and the friends that were there too. When Grandma or Uncle Luke, or Uncle Matt interrupt the story to add their details, they aren't telling a different story, they're adding a deeper dimension to the one reality that is your mom and dad's wedding. It's the same story from different perspectives.

Critics argue the Bible is full of contradictions. They point to the Gospels and say how can it be that there's four different stories of the same event. Can't they get their facts straight?! However, the four evangelists aren't telling a different story, they're each adding a deeper dimension to the one reality that is your mom and dad's wedding.

We have our own "Uncle Luke" as we gather here today on the Sunday of the Passion. Luke, the writer of the Gospel of Luke was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write an account that contributes to the overall story of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection. As we hear this account, look for the ways in which "Uncle Luke," properly called Saint Luke the Evangelist chimes in.

Listen for these details in the upcoming reading. Only Saint Luke mentions a second cup at the Last Supper, giving us details that align with what historians know about how the Passover was traditionally celebrated.

Only Luke mentions the fact that the disciples carried two swords into the Garden and Jesus' subsequent dismissal of such a

show of force. **“It is enough.”** In other words, “That’s enough, you guys.”

Luke alone mentions the presence of an angel in the Garden strengthening Him. Just as an angel announced the birth of Christ to Mary earlier in Luke’s Gospel, just as an angel announced the birth to the Shepherds, an angel strengthens Jesus to carry on His greatest act of love for me and for you.

We learn from Matthew, Mark, and John that a disciple cuts off the ear of the servant of the high priest, but without Dr. Luke chiming in, we wouldn’t know that Jesus healed that servant’s ear.

Throughout Jesus’ trial, Luke is at pains to demonstrate to His hearers that Jesus is innocent. Pilate declares Jesus innocent three times. Luke alone mentions Jesus being brought before Herod Antipas, and he too is unable to condemn Jesus. In Matthew and Mark, the soldiers see Jesus die and proclaim, **“Truly this was the Son of God!”** Only Luke informs us that a soldier also said, **“Certainly this man was innocent!”**

Finally, Luke contributes to the story by giving us intimate details of Jesus as He hung on the cross. Luke tells us that Jesus said, **“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”** He gives the account of the thieves on the cross. The one asks Jesus to save them. The other acquits Jesus, saying that we deserve to die, but Jesus deserves to live. The thief asks Jesus to remember him when He comes into His kingdom, and Jesus promises, **“Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”**

Uncle Matt, Uncle Luke, grandma, mom, and dad each have their own emphases of what happened on the wedding day. As we consider St. Luke the evangelist, he is at pains to emphasize to me and to you how innocent Jesus was, and how guilty we were, but that absolute innocence becomes mine and yours as Jesus takes on our sins and forgives them. What a blessing it is to have Luke’s Gospel. Let us take time to listen to these words and have our lives by changed by the inspired, inerrant, Word of God!