



St. Thomas Church: established July 1, 1285 by King Vaclav II

St. Thomas Church

Josefska 8, Mala Strana, Prague 1, 118 01

Tel: 257 530 556, 602 643 365

Fax: 257 530 556

Today's Prayer

Say this Prayer Today:

"Be still and know that I am
God."
Lord, Your words lead us to
the
calmness and greatness of
your presence.

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July 09th and July 10th 2011

15th Sunday in Ordinary
time A

FIFTEENTH ORDINARY SUNDAY

Today's Gospel reading from Matthew is the first of Jesus' seven great parables dealing with the reign of God. First of all, it is necessary to identify some of the figures of speech used by Jesus in his teaching. A *parable* is a short, simple story with a moral lesson; it is usually an *allegory*. An *allegory*, in turn, is a story in which persons, things, events presented have another meaning. A *metaphor*, like the above, is a figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another, different thing by being spoken of as if it were that other (e.g., all the world is a stage). A *simile*, is a figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another dissimilar thing by use of *like, as* (e.g., he is as big as a house). Obviously, Jesus did not confine himself to any one "figure of speech"; in fact, as the gospel narratives amply demonstrate, Jesus used a variety of images designed to make even the most profound teachings comprehensible. Our parable of the seed is an example. We should first note two points. Jesus' listeners would have recognized the familiar sower who in contrast to modern methods of agriculture first broadcast the seed on the soil and then plowed. Second, his audience would have been amused with Jesus' unusual *metaphor* for the kingdom or reign of God being "likened" to humble seed trampled, eaten by birds or chocked by thorns! All the more reason which would have made Jesus such a riveting teacher.

In the final verses of Matthew's reading we have the explication of the parable which some scholars see as a later edition accommodating, perhaps, more sophisticated converts or those who would not have recognized such homey images from rural Palestine. The ending is as simple as it is profound: the seed cast on the hardened soil of the road is compared to the indifferent on whom the "good news" has no impact; the "birds of the air" broadly symbolize distracting evils which "steal" the message of hope from the hearts of the hearers; while the "thorns" aptly designate those cares chocking the message of eternal life from the unwary and pleasure seekers. Do we or where do we fit in this eloquent schema?

"Our hearts are restless, O Lord, until they rest in you."

Excerpt from *Confessions*, Book I, Chapter I

"Great art thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is thy power, and infinite is thy wisdom." And man desires to praise thee, for he is a part of thy creation; he bears his mortality about with him and carries the evidence of his sin and the proof that thou dost resist the proud. Still he desires to praise thee, this man who is only a small part of thy creation. Thou hast prompted him, that he should delight to praise thee, for thou hast made us for thyself and restless is our heart until it comes to rest in thee. Grant me, O Lord, to know and understand whether first to invoke thee or to praise thee; whether first to know thee or call upon thee. But who can invoke thee, knowing thee not? For he who knows thee not may invoke thee as another than thou art. It may be that we should invoke thee in order that we may come to know thee. But "how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe without a preacher?" Now, "they shall praise the Lord who seek him," for "those who seek shall find him," and, finding him, shall praise him. I will seek thee, O Lord, and call upon thee. I call upon thee, O Lord, in my faith which thou hast given me, which thou hast inspired in me through the humanity of thy Son, and through the ministry of thy preacher"

Coffee, Cookies & Conversation follows Sunday's Mass in the Monastery Refectory off the Cloister Garden. **All are invited, especially our visitors.** Please contact, Fr. William Faix if you want to add announcements to the bulletin at "wfaix@yahoo.com" or contact Dias Fernando at Dias.Fernando@pbschool.cz Please send at latest by the Friday of the week as it has to be added to the bulletin.

Announcements and Ongoing Activities

-If you would like to receive a copy of the bulletin by email, please contact osaprag@augustiniani.cz

-To **everyone!** The new rota for refreshments is on the notice board in the refectory. Please sign up for a week - it's easy and a great way to meet other parishioners! Any questions see Jim Willetts

-Anyone interested in teaching **Religious Education Classes** next year (starting in September) - please contact Monika Shaheen at mshaheen@iol.cz

-*HAVE A HAPPY AND BLESSED SUMMER. Until we meet again, God bless!*

-We welcome our visitors and invite you to join us for refreshments immediately after Mass in the summer refectory of the monastery.

-We are looking for an **English teacher** for our school. If you are interesting, please see Fr. Juan

FEASTS and OTHER ANNIVERSARIES: JULY

11. **Benedict of Nursia** (c.+547), the eponymous founder of the *Order of Saint Benedict* and the great Abbey of Montecassino, was named "*the Patron of Europe*" by Paul IV in 1964.

12. -In Northern Ireland *Orangeman's Day* is celebrated in memory of the defeat of King James II by his son-in-law, William III of Orange, at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.

13. **Henry and Cunigunda** (+1024/1033), "the Imperial Couple," known for their charities and sanctity, are co-patrons of married life.

-Margaret of Antioch (+304), a young woman who resisted enticements and torture to apostasize and died for her faith.

14. -*Hroznat* (+1217) was a Norbertine priest **who was unjustly murdered.**

-*Katerei Tekatwitha* (+1680), the first native North American beatified, was for her holiness, called *the Lily of the Mohawks.*

-Bastille Day or the Fall of the Bastille in Paris, 1789, is *Le Quatorze Juillet*

15. *Vladimir* (+1015), the Apostle of the Rus (the Ukrainians) and "Equal to the Apostles" with his grandmother Olga brought the Christian faith to what is present day Ukraine.

-*Bonaventure* (+1274) was a Franciscan cardinal and prominent theologian.

16. *Our Lady of Mount Carmel* has been venerated under this title as patroness of the Carmelite orders and congregations since the thirteenth century. The scapular has been ever associated with this spirituality.

In 1054 the separation of the Eastern and Western Churches began which succeeding Popes and Patriarchs have tried to heal.

The Ukraine celebrates Independence Day.

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ST. THOMAS CHURCH IN PRAGUE

ORGAN

The Augustinian church of St. Thomas is one of the oldest churches of Prague. The first note of the organ is indirect, from the beginning of the 15th century: In 1414 is mentioned among Augustinian's friars "Matěj from St. Benigna" as organist. Unfortunately, we don't know anything about the organ played by friar Matěj. Following the disastrous fire of 1509 work was done for the restoration of the badly damaged organ. This apparently was the same organ later mentioned during the reign of Emperor Rudolf II (1576 - 1607).

In the year 1637 under the aegis of Prior Jan Krtitel Svitavský this organ was replaced by another which lasted for only 31 years. In 1668 it was, in turn replaced by an instrument with 21 stops and 1242 pipes built by Mathias Kehler with Hans Heinrich Mundt who had constructed the organs of St. Mary Tyn Church and St. Nicholas in Old Town. Unfortunately, this organ was also destroyed by fire within 55 years in 1723.

Once the Church was rebuilt by Krystof Dienzenhofer and his son Kilian Ignac, it was decided that this (presumably restored) older organ was not suitable for the newly baroquized Church. The Prior Serafin Melzer then signed a contract with Jan František Fassman in 1728 for constructing an organ in keeping with the recently redrawn architectural lines of the Church. This instrument containing 24 stops and 1350 pipes, completed in 1730 was with some minor changes used in St. Thomas Church for the next 197 years.

This organ after surviving various invasions and World War I (1914-1918) was considered "outmoded and useless" by inexperienced advisors to equally uninformed Augustinians and disaster struck once again. This time, in 1923 the venerable instrument was broken into parts, during which many component parts were badly damaged and the metal pipes were sold as scrap. Fortunately, the valuable organ case was saved. Within it; was built a pneumatic instrument by the Bohumil Pastika from Stara Boleslav. Unfortunately, the technology used by B. Pastika is short-lived and has proven to be unreliable. Since that time with the exceptions of some general repairs undertaken by the Igra Company in 1968, everything has remained the same. In brief the lifespan of the present organ has come to an end.

A rising list of chronic problems has made temporary repairs both impractical and expensive. The Augustinians, therefore, in consultation with the Parish Councils of both the Czech and English communities are seeking with the expertise direction of Dr. Petr Koukal, Ing. Marek Čihař, Mr. Antonín Brčák, Mr. Štěpán Svoboda and Dr. Martin Stránský the best methods to restore the organ fitting the sacred precincts and liturgical requirements of St. Thomas, one of Prague's noblest churches. All this, of course, will cost much (about 4-5 mil. Kč, 150-190 ths \$) but hopefully with characteristic generosity funding will be available from our many friends and benefactors.

Please make your donations payable to bank account:
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