



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



YEAR OF FAITH:
OCT. 11, 2012-NOV. 24, 2013
"The 'door of faith' (Acts 14:27) is always open for us, ushering us into the life of communion with God and offering entry into his Church."---Pope Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter Porta Fidei for the Indiction of the Year of Faith.

January 26th and 27th 2013

The Third Sunday in Ordinary Time - C

St. Thomas Church

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The Reflection of the Gospel

This Sunday commences what is called in the liturgy "Ordinary Time." Ordinary meaning in this case that span of the Church's calendar which does not celebrate some specific feast or season such as Advent-Christmas or Lent-Easter. The gospel begins logically enough with the first days of Jesus' "public ministry" which lasted over a period of two year or more sometime between the years AD 24/25 and after. Today's gospel reading is a shortened description of his ill-fated return to his hometown of Nazareth. Initial admiration for his eloquent teaching soon evaporates into progressive dismay and murderous rage when this young upstart self-taught rabbi dares to insinuate the necessity for conversion of heart; worse, yet, when he dares to praise the pagan Phoenician widow and the Syrian general blessed by God for their faith. What today's gospel does not mention is the attempt on Jesus' life in consequence. Certainly, according to Luke, there was no openness of heart for these townfolk. During the past week we had observed throughout the Church and in many Christian communities *Unity Octave Prayer for Christian Unity*. Originally initiated by Fr. Peter Paul of Graymore, Garrison, N.Y., the octave from the 18th through the 25th of January has been set aside as special days of prayer for the union of all believers in and through the Name of Jesus Christ. In today's world we can easily see the untold damage done by so-called "religious" or "pious" people. Often, common people are put off by violent religion. Memories of past conflicts not easily forgotten or forgiven remain to haunt the most tolerant. The Moslem will speak of the Crusades; the Jew of the Holocaust or *Shoah*; the Orthodox of 1204; the Catholic of Cromwell or Hitler. History can be compared to our common house of haunted memories. So before we write off the Nazarenes, how do we face up to our own prejudices? Do we shout so loud that we cannot hear the voice of conscience? As Jesus said: *A prophet is without honor in his/her own country.*

FIRS READING

Sometimes our sadness turns to joy when people celebrate the good news of freedom. This edited version of the passage celebrates the re-institution of the religious and civil life in Jerusalem after the return of the exiles from Babylon and the rebuilding of the city walls. (Rebuilding of the walls was the first order of business, since the top priority of the city was defense.) Standing at an official height and surrounded by the city officials (edited out of the passage), Ezra addressed the people. [2-5] After Ezra's blessing, the people responded with approval in voice and posture. [6] Then Ezra read and commented on the Law; it is possible he translated the Law for those returning descendants who did not speak Hebrew, but Aramaic, the language of the Babylonians. [7] At hearing the Law, the people wept. [8] This is a social response to the devastation the city endured. It was seen as God's punishment for the nation's infidelity; weeping was a means of sorrow and repentance. But the city leaders declare a day of rejoicing, for the city is secure and the people are now free to practice their religion and way of life. [9-10] As Americans, we cherish our freedom and our way of life. Let us not forget they are gifts from God. We should not take them for granted or presume they are the fruit of our own hands. For many people in the world, they are good news!

Ongoing Activities

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

*We are looking for a **professional English teacher** to teach English to children from 3 till 7 years old. Please contact Fr. Juan if you are interested

*Please, pray for the **Mission** in our Parish!

*St Thomas' English Speaking Community now has a presence on **facebook**. Please 'like' our page and if you want to get more involved with the community, join our group!

*Fr. William will be in USA for the next month. Fr. Juan will be taking care of the community: 602684538

* If you interested in seeing our former ballet parishoners, Camille and Radim, in LUCIDOR A ARABELA at the National Theatre on Tuesday 29th Jan, please see Jim Willetts or contact jimwill@email.cz

*If you are interested in studying the Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies, a course run by the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales, please see the website <http://brs-ccrs.org.uk> and contact Jim Willetts on jimwill@email.cz

* Next Thursday, January 31st at 7:00pm Mass in the chapel of St. Barbara with the enthronization of the Blessed Mother of Guadalupe. Main celebrant will be the cardinal Dominik Duka, OP. All are welcome!

Join us for the

Marriage Course Taster

A candle-lit evening for couples, introducing the full course and how to easily run it...



A romantic dinner for two + a short sample talk + sharing time in couples + how to run a course

Where and When:

St. Thomas refectory, Josefská 28/8, 11800 Praha 1
Friday, 1 February 2013, 5pm-7pm

Contact and Signup:

Jakub and Dagmar Guttner
CZ coordinators, jakub.guttner@gmail.com

John Mullen, +420 608 243 788
relationshipcentral.org

Price:

Free with a voluntary contribution for meals
Please sign up by 25 January

The Taster:

A candlelit dinner for two
Free babysitting for ages 3+
Practical talk on time together
No personal sharing in groups

Running a course:

The Marriage course as outreach
Leading a course in Prague
DVDs, transcripts, handbooks
Marriage prep, parenting courses

Mission 2013

This reading is in support of the St Thomas mission to support the Year of Faith and the Holy Father's call for mission.

Often in RE class, I am asked how to pray. We have so many beautiful prayers in the Catholic Church. Sometimes one feels the need to be eloquent and scholarly in order to hold one's own to the saintly prayers we have all around us.

I offer today far more simple thought process when praying; A prayer technique that we all can remember and can be taught to our children. It is not a prayer so much as it is a thought process for what we should pray for. It is called the five-finger prayer.

1. Your thumb is nearest you. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C. S. Lewis once said, a 'sweet duty.'

2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and clergy. Our priest and RE teachers could certainly use a good word with the big guy. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.

3. The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, Prime Minister, Members of Parliament, Congress, the House of Lords, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nations and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.

4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger, as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night.

5. And lastly comes our little finger - the smallest finger of all which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, 'The least shall be the greatest among you.' Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

You can find out more about the mission and catch up on the readings online at <http://www.augustiniani.cz/en>.