



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

St. Thomas Church

Very often we hear the lament that *Mass* or *Church* or *Religion* “does nothing for me.” The once a week gathering for liturgy in a cold church compounded with difficulties in trying to gather *meaning* out of the readings or sermon can be a severe test of faith for some people many times and for many, some times. It is understandable. Just as every priest is not a consummate pulpit orator with impressive powers of persuasion so every church building- as lovely as it occasionally can be- can ever measure up to the “perfect” atmosphere conducive to prayer and spiritual empowerment. At best, most of us with varying degrees of openness can come together and reflect on our common faith with understanding for each other’s sensitivities and cultural differences. After all, the word *catholic* comes from the Greek meaning *universal* or *all embracing*.

Today’s reading reflect this spirit. Paul, the empowered charismatic, openly enters into dialogue with his Jewish co-religionists in the remote province Pisidia (now central Turkey). His electrifying presentation of the “good news” of Jesus of Nazareth provokes mixed reviews. The leaders, in particular, are hostile and Paul then turns to the gentiles (the *goyim* or non-Jews). The second reading from the mysterious book of *Revelation* again tell the same story. The gospel was preached throughout the Roman Empire. Various emperors such as Nero (+68) and the mad man, Domitian (+96) had embarked on a sanguinary extermination campaign “to rid the world of the Christian pest”. The survivors of these pogroms told the tale in the *Acts of the Apostles* and the later *Revelations*. The third reading is taken from John’s gospel which is among the last of 27 books written in the second or New Testament. Among the symbols used by John to portray Jesus as a source of help and guidance during these terrible days of persecution and falling away is that of the *good shepherd*. In the first or Old Testament, the shepherd was a designation given to kings, leaders and even to God himself. As we read, the allusion was not lost on Jesus’ adversaries. The *sheep*, that is, those who heed the gospel are assured *eternal life* and will not *perish* because Jesus is *one* with the Father from whom no one can snatch or steal. This implicit recognition of Jesus’ *divine status*, a sheer blasphemy for Jesus’ orthodox hearers was, if anything, reason for his own execution. Today as we share the joy of our young parishoners who are approaching the Eucharistic table for the first time, let us look into our lives and ask the simple question, are we convinced followers of Jesus or does the mettle of discipleship still rest on conditions of atmosphere, climate or aesthetic entertainment?



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.

April 20th and 21st 2013

The Fourth Sunday of Easter Year C

Josefská 8, Malá Strana, Prague 1, 118 01

Tel: 257 530 556, 602 643 365

Pancakes for Breakfast

This reading is in support of the St Thomas mission to support the Year of Faith and the Emeritus Pontiff’s call for mission.

Six-year-old Brandon decided one Saturday morning to fix his parents pancakes.

He found a big bowl and spoon, pulled a chair to the counter, opened the cupboard and pulled out the heavy flour canister, spilling it on the floor. He scooped some of the flour into the bowl with his hands, mixed in most of a cup of milk and added some sugar, leaving a floury trail on the floor which by now had a few tracks left by his kitten. Brandon was covered with flour and getting frustrated.

He wanted this to be something very good for Mom and Dad, but it was getting very bad. He didn't know what to do next, whether to put it all into the oven or on the stove (and he didn't know how the stove worked)! Suddenly he saw his kitten licking from the bowl of mix and reached to push her away, knocking the egg carton to the floor. Frantically he tried to clean up this monumental mess but slipped on the eggs, getting his pajamas white and sticky.

Just then he saw Dad standing at the door. Big crocodile tears welled up in Brandon's eyes. All he'd wanted to do was something good, but he'd made a terrible mess. He was sure a scolding was coming, maybe even a spanking. But his father just watched him.

Then, walking through the mess, he picked up His crying son, hugged him and loved him, getting his own pajamas white and sticky in the process.

That's how God deals with us. We try to do something good in life, but it turns into a mess. Our marriage gets all sticky or we insult a friend or we can't stand our job or our health goes sour. Sometimes we just stand there in tears because we can't think of anything else to do. That's when God picks us up and loves us and forgives us, even though some of our mess gets all over Him.

Just because we might mess up, we can't stop trying to "make pancakes," for God or for others. Sooner or later we'll get it right, and then they'll be glad we tried....

It is not in the falling down that we define ourselves as Christians but in the getting up to try again and walk in the path of Christ.

The Fifteenth Annual Augustinian Week:

"St. Augustine a Man of Faith and the Eucharist"

April 22 to April 26, 2013.

St. Thomas Monastery, Josefska 8, Prague 1-
Mala Strana

The Program

Monday, April 22

6:00 The opening conference: The Law dealing with church property compensation with the Augustinian Order: conditions for the property and future visions. Fr. Juan B. Provecho, OSA, Lic., M.A. (in Czech)

6:30 St. Augustine and his search for truth in chaotic times. Vit Machálek, PhDr.

Tuesday, April 23

6:00 St. Augustine and the Eucharist. Fr. Antonio F. Rivas, OSA, Lic., MA, Doc(Cand.) (in Czech)

Wednesday, April 24

7:00 The Feast of the Conversion of Our Holy Father, St. Augustine
Fr. Vit Marciniec, OSA, Festival Preacher, "St. Augustine, Man of Faith" (in Czech)

Thursday, April 25

6:00 Fr. Jan Houkal, Th.Dr., "From Admirable Exchange to Admirable Relationship: or Augustinian Christology in practice." (in Czech)

Friday, April 26

12:15 Mass on the Feast of Mary, Mother of Good Counsel (in Czech)

6:00 Veronika Sladka: "The Monastery Library of St. Thomas in Prague: an unknown Treasure" followed by a tour.

*****The 16th Annual Marian Pilgrimage** to the Shrine of the **Gracious Madonna**, at sv. Dobrotiva-Zajecov, will be held on May 11. We meet in front of St. Joseph's church on Josefská Street, at 08:30 am, Saturday morning, May 11. If you do not have a ride please contact Fr. Juan Bautista for details. In keeping with our tradition, please bring a lunch, which you can share with another person on pilgrimage. Whatever is left over (if you so will) is given to the poor. There is a brochure, which explains the origins and traditions behind this beautiful 700-year pilgrimage, which has been renewed after forty years of communism. SIGN UP: In the sacristy of St. Thomas Church

osaprag@augustiniani.cz

Ongoing Activities

*We **welcome all our new parishioners** to St. Thomas Church. Please introduce yourselves, if you wish, at refreshments after the 11:00 am Mass on Sundays or just call us or visit at your convenience.

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

*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!

*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



9 May 2013

18:30 v kostele Sv. Tomáše (Josefská 8, P1)

Enjoy the amazing and unique talent of Indian musician Dr. K. Benny Prasad. He holds the world's record for being the 'fastest to travel to all 245 nations in 6 years. The concert will benefit Magdala who help victims of human trafficking. His music is spiritual, reflective and inspirational.



www.augustiniani.cz