



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.

June 08<sup>th</sup> and 09<sup>th</sup> 2013

SOLEMNITY OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

# St. Thomas Church

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## The Reflection

Devotions in the church often begin in a climate of deep religious crisis. For example, veneration of Mary received its impulse at the council of Ephesus (431) after her divine motherhood had been called into question. Eucharistic devotion, the stations of the cross- not to mention a multitude of other Catholic practices of piety, spontaneously developed among the faithful as an affirmative response to some belief taught by the Church. Popular piety grounds and serves to familiarize us with the profound.

This is most true of today's liturgical remembrance of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. A biblical symbol for love and fidelity, the heart was regarded by ancient peoples as the deepest repository of one's uniqueness and "humaness". Following the disastrous wars of religion in the 16th and 17th centuries, cries for church reform were common place. Some, taking the lead of such extremists as Michael Bajus and his disciple, Cornelius Jansen (+1638), taught that since Jesus died only for a select few, the rest [of us] were created for condemnation. These "Jansenists" believed that the Church had not gone far enough in repressing errors; hence, God's justice had to be emphasized by forbidding among other practices frequent reception of the Eucharist. It was into this pessimistic atmosphere that devotion to the Sacred Heart broke in on a divided Church. Prompted by the insistence of a simple nun, Margaret Marie Alacoque (+1690) and a timid priest, Claude de Colombiere, devotion to the merciful Heart of Jesus spread rapidly due, in part, to the following revelatory promises made by Jesus himself. Paraphrased they read as follows.

**1.** I will give those devoted to my Heart all the graces they need. **2.** I will grant peace in their families. **3.** I will console them in trial and pain. **4.** I will be their refuge in life and in death. **5.** I will bless their work. **6.** Sinners will find infinite mercy in my Heart. **7.** Lukewarm souls will grow more fervent. **8.** Fervent souls will grow more holy. **9.** I will bless every house where the image of my Sacred Heart shall be exposed and honored. **10.** I will grant priests the grace to move the hardest hearts. **11.** Those who spread devotion to my Sacred Heart will forever be written in my Heart. **12.** I promise final perseverance to all who receive Holy Communion on nine consecutive First Fridays.

## Congratulations and thanks P. William!

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fr. William's Priest ordination will be on Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> of June at 11:00am Mass.



**"Lord, give me what you ask of me  
and ask me what you will."**

**St. Augustine**

## Fr. William's 50<sup>th</sup> Priest anniversary

I have tried to put this into perspective. I guess I start with the fact that even I do not quite have that many years on this earth; and I feel often times like I am an antique.

1963: What was the world like and what changes have occurred?

For those of you from the UK: The Prime Minister was Harold Macmillan and he tendered his resignation that year due to ill health; Elizabeth II was the Monarch, a testimony to the fact some things never change; The winter was terribly cold, Charles De Gaulle exhibited the true European Family Spirit by vetoing the United Kingdom's entry into the EEC; The US agreed to sell Nuclear powered subs to the UK, under the Polaris agreement, Everton wins the football league First Division title, and Tottenham Hotspur becomes the first British football team to win a European Trophy, taking the European Winner's Cup 5-1 over Atletico Madrid. A new band released their first album titled Please Please Me, the Album saw three singles rise to number one, and was knocked out of the number one album position some 30 weeks later by the release of their second album With the Beatles... Yes the Fab Four had arrived.

In the twilight of that year a great author C.S. Lewis of Narnia fame passed, but this event was overshadowed the next day as the American President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

For those of you in the United States:

Segregation was alive and well and in January, George C Wallace became the Governor of the State of Alabama putting the segregation issue on a path for a showdown. Thousands protest in Birmingham and the nation is divided. Later in the year almost a half a million people would gather and hear Dr. Martin Luther King give his famous "I have a Dream" Speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C.

Jim Brown was playing in the NFL, Walt Chamberlain in the NBA and Sandy Koufax was pitching in Major League Baseball.

Around the world, a country was formed and given a name, that name was Malaysia. The people of West Berlin got to hear President Kennedy announce "Ich bin ein Berliner"; something lost in translation but the sentiment was good. A little known and as yet unsigned band got to meet the Beatles, their name was the Rolling Stones. The Baath party and tanks were rolling through the streets of Iraq in order to overthrow the Kasseem regime. The first woman Valentina Tereshkova went into Space aboard Vostok 6. Kenya achieved its independence and the Vietnam War was heating up again, but this time with US Participation, not French.

In the Church, Pope John XXIII dies (June 3), and is succeeded June 21 by Cardinal Montini, who becomes Paul VI. A 28 year old man named William Faix is ordained a Catholic Priest.

Since those days, we have put a man on the moon, invented the calculator and later the computer; satellite communications; color television and later digital broadcasting; built space stations; brought down the wall in Berlin; heart and organ transplants; cloning; mapping the genome; synthetic skin; the walk man; the iPod; the mobile phone; nanotechnology and artificial intelligence all have become reality.

Our world and many of us in it, have seen momentous change.

Father William has served under no less than SIX Popes. He was a living witness to Vatican II and multiple reforms and unfortunately scandals in the church.

He has taught hundreds of students, he has ministered to tens of thousands, he served behind the Iron Curtain and experienced first hand the oppression of communism. He has fulfilled the role of pastor, priest, mentor, teacher, student, and friend.

I cannot begin to fathom the depth of commitment that one must have to stick with one career for 50 years. I also cannot imagine the patience, energy, and steadfast commitment needed to minister to a congregation. To be able to do both at such a high level of excellence is living proof of a great man who is filled with the Grace of God.

When I see Father William today, I see a young man's smile, I am caught by a bright twinkle in his eye. Although the world has changed significantly, his belief and faith have not. He believes he is an instrument of God and that through him God provides some measure of help to those who seek it. Some are given strength, others relief, and still others peace and all are given the promise of God's Love, through Christ. He loves each of us; he gives unselfishly of his time and of his wisdom and extensive knowledge.

Let us celebrate today...Let us celebrate God's Grace and the Resurrection of Christ. Let us count our blessings, and today more than any other let us count among those, the gift we have in our Priest Father William Faix. Thanks be to God.