



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



**YEAR OF FAITH: oct.
11, 2012-NOV. 24, 2013**

"The 'door of faith' (Acts14:27) 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.

August 31st and September 1st
2013

Solemnity of Saint
Augustine – Year C

St. Thomas Church

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THE SOLEMNITY OF SAINT AUGUSTINE,

Church Father, the Patron and Founder of the Augustinian Way of Life and Co-Patron of our Parish Community.

As an Augustinian parochial community we have reason to celebrate this feast of our father founder and Parish co-patron. Augustine wrote a deceptively brief *Rule* consisting of some eight chapters on ten printed pages. Composed for a community of brothers he was leaving upon his appointment as bishop of Hippo Regius (mod. Annaba, Algeria) in 395 he stressed basic biblical principles drawn largely from the *Acts of the Apostles* and the *Gospels*. It is this same blueprint of life that the Augustinian community strives to live *one in heart and mind intent on God*. Augustine was born on 13 November 356 in the north African town of Tagaste (mod. Souk Ahras, Algeria) to a family of mixed race and religion. His mother, Monica, of aboriginal Berber and Phoenician (mod. Lebanese) stock, was Catholic and his father, Patrick, a hot-tempered Roman colonial official, was pagan. Raised in this mixed religious atmosphere, Augustine soon lost any scruples and took up with his girlfriend who bore him a son Adeodatus. Since Roman law did not recognize such unions he could not marry her but he did remain faithful. Later moved by the words and example of Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, he converted and was baptized in 387. Returning to his native Africa after his mother's death he lived in a monastic community and was pressed on to ordination and the bishopric of Hippo Regius mod. Annaba, Algeria) in 395. From that time on he became the leading light of the Church torn by dissension. His surviving writings fill something like 35 closely printed tomes touching a myriad of topics. Yet, there is another side to this intellectual: his warm hospitality, fraternal concern and strong affections coupled with a thirst for truth reveals a vibrant sensitive human being. One of his most famous aphorisms *Our hearts are restless until they rest in God* still touches many.

Saint Augustine, said...

You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.

Increase my faith, Lord, increase my hope, and increase my love! How wonderful and unmatched is your goodness!

Let us leave a little room for reflection, room too for silence. Enter into yourself, and leave behind all noise and confusion. Look within yourself.

You were with me, but I was not with you. They kept me far from you, those fair things which, if they were not in you, would not exist at all!

Instruct me, Lord, and command what you will. But first heal me and open my ears that I may hear your words.

For you first loved me, so that I might love you. By loving you, I love myself, and thus I am wisely able also to love my neighbor as myself.

Once and for all, a short rule is laid down for you: Love, and do what you will. If you keep silence, do it out of love. If you cry out, do it out of love. If you refrain from punishing, do it out of love.

Beg God for the gift to love one another. Love all people, even your enemies, not because they are your brothers and sisters but that they may become such.

Please contact, Fr. William Faix if you want to add announcements to the bulletin at "wfaix@yahoo.com" or contact Fr. Juan at "juan@augustiniani.cz" Please send at latest by the Friday of the week as it has to be added to the bulletin

Mission 2013

Road to Damascus

This week the British Government spoke loudly in saying that it will not support sending troops or operations going into Syria. Other traditional allies of the United States also took very conservative stances to the intervention into the civil war.

The civil war has been going on in Syria for more than two years now. The most recent push for intervention is a result of a second chemical attack on the civilian population. This one with Phosphor Gas Bombs and there are reportedly 1300 victims, in a suburb of Damascus.

The first suspected attack was a suspected Sarin Attack that claimed 36 lives last year.

We have each Sunday for as long as I can remember, prayed for the people of Syria. Today, we hope and pray for their safety and an easing of their suffering, which will hopefully bring a quick and peaceful solution to the fighting there.

Currently there are 10 active conflicts in the world, which have 1000 or more fatalities. There are another 32 conflicts that take lives around the world still active, at some level. The oldest one of these started in 1964 and continues today. This is the conflict in Columbia that claimed 4,692 victims last year.

Syria by far is the most tragic current conflict. In Syria there were 41,900 fatalities in 2012 and an estimated 30,000 so far this year.

The Bible talks of war and of just war; God commands that we defend our families and our lands. David wrote Psalms of how the lord trained his hands for war (Psalm 144:1). In Deuteronomy 20, Moses tells us not to fear our enemies, because God is with us.

Ecclesiastes 3:8 is the foundation of the Byrd's timeless anthem of the 1960s stating that there is a "time to love, and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace."

But I find many more references in the scriptures for peace. References to war are focused on the war against evil, fighting Satan's efforts to wrestle our souls away from righteousness. Jesus states, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God" (Matthew 5:9) In Matthew, as he entered into his passion, Christ said to the follower who had struck one of the guards sent to seize him "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

Our world around us challenges us as Christians. The question whether to intervene or not to intervene is not a simple one. We have members of our parish, who are not likely but could possibly be called to participate in such an intervention. We have many in our midst who have participated in such actions in the past.

We pray today not only for the people of Syria and the ongoing conflicts in the world; we pray for the leaders of our governments, that they find the wisdom and strength to guide our policies.

We pray that the information that is being spread throughout the media is true and honest information, as we have been deceived in the past. We hope our leaders have the elimination of suffering and good Christian Ethos at the center of their decision-making.

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

❖ Those interested in signing their children up for RE classes for 2013-2014 please bring a completed registration form to Mary Beth Hlavsa or JoAnn Manzano, or by email. Forms are available at the back of the church or at www.augustiniani.cz, please feel free to ask questions or email completed forms to Mary Beth at redirector@augustiniani.cz. Thank you and we look forward to seeing your children in RE this year!

❖ **WONDERING HOW YOU CAN GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY?** St. Thomas provides free English classes as part of their community outreach activities. Classes will be beginning 16 of September. And we are in need of native English speakers who can give of their time to teach classes. If you are interested or want more information, please contact Fr. Juan at juan@augustiniani.cz

❖ Parish Counsel meeting will be on Sept. 15th after 11:00am Mass

Congratulations to **Fr. Miroslav Pio Orel, OSA.** Today at 09:30 am Mass has emitted his first vows in the Order of St. Augustine in our Church. He will be this year in our community and will study the first course of Theology.

Saint Augustine's School A Comprehensive School with a heart open to wisdom

"The obligation to teach is impelled by love; the obligation to learn is impelled by the love of what is true" (St. Augustine)

Open course ceremony: September 1st at 08:30 am
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