



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

Today's Prayer

All of us have become members of Christ. How do you fail to sin against Christ when you sin against a member of Christ? Thus, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has anything against you, leave your gift before the altar.

God seeks you rather than your gift. Christ seeks the one whom he has redeemed by his Blood rather than what you have found in your storeroom.

March 2nd and 23rd 2014

The Third Sunday of Lent
— Year A

St. Thomas Church

THE THIRD LENTEN SUNDAY-A

For those who first read or heard the gospel of John preached to them, the story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman must have been shocking or in contemporary terminology "culturally innovative." First, the woman in question would not have gone to the well alone at noon; such public areas as the well or market were reserved for woman either early in the morning or early evening certainly never high noon! Further, with strict separation of genders, no decent woman would have been seen talking with male strangers on no less such highly charged religious matters as "messiah" or the "true faith." Further, Jesus was Jewish and the woman, a Samaritan, who were regarded by orthodox Jews as a mixed breed and religious "degenerates." In brief, everything- religion, cultural, history- doomed this encounter from the start. But, Jesus turned in another direction. His conversation with "the Samaritan woman" consisting of seven sections carefully challenged her life and widened her faith. So impressed, this divorcee once enlightened transcends many of her encoded ethnic or religious inhibitions. By now the most catechized woman in the New Testament- she *leaves* her water jar by the well, *runs* back to the village and there *announces* the "good news" (in Greek, *evangelion*) to her villagers. Curiously going out, they see and hear for themselves. Once convinced they successfully induce Jesus (much to the consternation of his staid apostles) to stay with them for two days. The mission so unique in the gospel story becomes a paradigm for all seeking the truth. Is this true with ourselves? No matter where we come from, our background, our past (shady or innocent) all such things are the *mise on scene* upon and through which the grace of God acts and takes effect. The only question is, are we ready to accept the challenge offered us. *Now is the time to wake up, the hour is at hand*, says Saint Paul. (Romans 13:1 ff.)

When was the last time you got in a conversation with a stranger? What was the conversation about?

Many well-traveled Europeans complain about Americans. We, Americans, like to have conversations with strangers we meet anywhere unfamiliar to us. Usually the conversation is "small talk," discussions about the weather or a favorite sports team, or about family. Europeans find this American trait an annoying habit, a waste of time, and an invasion of their privacy. Small talk with stranger is not part of Continental culture.

Even more than Europeans, people in the time of Jesus frowned upon strangers sharing small talk. So, the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman would have shocked the ancient reader. But, like so many other times, Jesus willingly stepped over social convention to evangelize. Even the hated foreigner. Even the woman. Even the one of questionable morals.

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.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

CLEARING UNFORGIVENESS FROM MY HEART
Jn 4:5-42; Jn 2:13-25;

Lk 13:1-9 Jesus told the woman at the well that God's life is like "a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." If I am unwilling to forgive, this acts like a dam that blocks the flow of God's grace. This week, I will consider whether there is anyone whom I need to forgive. God wants me to forgive them and pray for their healing.



MONDAY: JESUS' HOMETOWN REJECTS HIM

2 Kgs 5:1-15b; Lk 4:24-30 Does it ever seem that those closest to me are the ones who respect me the least? Jesus experienced this in Nazareth. Forgiveness often has to start with those in my immediate family.

TUESDAY: HOW OFTEN SHOULD I FORGIVE?

Dn 3:25, 34-43; Mt 18:21-35 The parable of the two servants helps me put forgiveness in perspective. My debt to God far exceeds what anyone owes me. I thank God today for all the times God has forgiven me.

WEDNESDAY: FOR MY CHILDREN

Dt 4:1, 5-9; Mt 5:17-19 Passing on instruction about God's ways to my children, grandchildren, or any children God puts in my path, is essential. Am I teaching the children around me how to forgive and love?

THURSDAY: A KINGDOM DIVIDED CANNOT SURVIVE

Jer 7:23-28; Lk 11:14-23 We are the Kingdom of God, the Body of Christ. Jesus warns that a kingdom cannot survive if it is divided against itself. Refusal to forgive others in the Church promotes disunity and division. Is there anyone in my Christian family I need to forgive?

FRIDAY: LOVING THE LORD WITH ALL MY HEART

Hos 14:2-10; Mk 12:28-34 There is no room for unforgiveness in my heart if I am loving God with all my heart. One sign that I am forgiving is when I can pray for those who hurt me. Today, I write down the names of anyone I need to forgive and ask God to bless them.

SATURDAY: COME, LET US RETURN TO GOD

Hos 6:1-6; Lk 18:9-14 Regardless of the problems I have with unforgiveness, God invites me to return to him and be healed. If I have discovered any deep problems in this area, I ask God today how to be healed. The Sacrament of Reconciliation? Professional counseling? I will not be afraid to seek help; God is faithful and wants to help me.

Ongoing Activities

** Coffee, Cookies & Conversation follow Sunday Mass in the Monastery Refectory off the Cloister Garden. All are invited, especially our visitors.

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

****MARCH FOR LIFE.** March 29, 2014 Since the last March for Life 30,000 more children were legally killed before birth. And this is because of indifference and much silence from us who have escaped such fate. The law hence forth makes it possible for more and more women to kill their children and unfortunately experience deep wounds. Mass 26.3. 12:30 St. Giles Cathedral, Husova 8, Praha 1. March for Life 29.3. 14:15 - 16:00 from Mariánské náměstí. For more information: Movement for Life Czech Republic, Hlubočepská 85/64, 152 00 Praha 5, e-mail: info@prolife.cz

****Clothing Drive for Kids and Adults.** Cleaning out your closet? Moving? We are taking donations of new or gently used kids and adults clothing and bedding, as well as new (unopened) personal care items to benefit those in need in our community through the St. Tomas Clothing Charity. Donation bins will be located in the courtyard, under the English-speaking community's bulletin board, until Easter. Tell your school, work and friends that their donations are welcome!

Special medical service for expats in St. Francis Hospital, Prague

Since the beginning of this year, St. Francis Hospital, in the city centre of Prague, has been operating a new special medical service for foreign expats and patients from abroad. The hospital is faced daily with a high demand of tourists who, due to holidays, move to the city center of Prague where the hospital is located. The hospital also provides extra services for foreigners and expats who travel to Prague to work and stay in the Czech Republic. These foreigners and expats, from time to time, need specialized medical care. Doctor Tomáš Šebek, MD, who regularly attends international health projects, leads a new inhouse consultation service and has a rich experience of this area. Sister Veritas of the Congregation of St. Charles Borromeo provides counseling along with him as an experienced clinical psychologist and former member of a team for former president Václav Havel. The project is supported by the district of Prague 1, the founder of St. Francis Hospital.

Typical patients for this new service of surgery are those with acute or chronic disease of the gastrointestinal tract. St. Francis Hospital is specialized in this matter. A wide range of interventions are provided by miniinvasive techniques, such as laparoscopic gall bladder, hernia, or colorectal cancer surgeries. The surgical care builds specialized care gastroenterologists, who in addition to conventional endoscopic examination of the stomach and colon also carry a wide range of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. Another bonus for foreign patients may be that the hospital is also the national reference center for Long's method, which today is one of the most advanced surgical treatments of hemorrhoids. Similarly, the same proactive approach of hospital service can be seen in a fracture clinic focused on acute injuries and chronic diseases of the musculoskeletal system, especially the upper and lower limbs. The new clinic for foreigners promises integration of care to simplify the orientation of a patient who doesn't know the local health system. **Contact:** St. Francis Hospital - Nemocnice na Františku, Na Františku 123, Praha 1, Tomáš Šebek, MD tamas.sebek@gmail.com, tel.: +420 222 801 343, +420 728 052 472