



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

St. Thomas Church

Today's Prayer

Say this Prayer Today:

Dear Jesus, I come to you today
longing for your presence.
I desire to love you as You love me.
May nothing ever separate me from You.

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February 7th and February 8th
2015

The Fifth Sunday in
Ordinary Time -B

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The Reflection of the Gospel

Today's gospel reading from Mark, a continuation of last week's narrative gives us a glimpse of Jesus' daily life. Drawing freely from the prophet Isaiah, the evangelist portraying Jesus as the messianic teacher, expositor of the Law and the healer of infirmities nevertheless shows great literary restraint in relating his miraculous deeds. Not one for enthusiastic overlay or verbal embroidery Mark is confronted with the fact that the majority in Israel had rejected Jesus. And to explain this mystery he utilizes an interpretive device termed *the messianic secret*, supposing that Jesus' identity and mission "had been concealed" as it were from his contemporaries until the very moment of death when he is proclaimed "the Son of God" by none other than a pagan official. And this was for good reason. At the time of the gospel's composition between AD 65 – 75- an era teeming with political messianic expectations- the Roman imperial army cut a bloody swath through the Jewish rebellion commandeered in its later stages by radical fundamentalists. These Zealots (their preferred name) believed that once the wholesale massacre of pagans (=Romans) had been accomplished God would only then set up his rule on Mount Zion with such miraculous signs reminiscent of Israel's earlier deliverance from Egypt (see *Exodus* 7 – 14). In face of such upheavals the early followers of Jesus knew no reprieve: the militant Zealots persecuted them for perceived disloyalty during the rebellion; orthodox Jews growing increasingly suspicious of their teachings excommunicated while the ever paranoid Roman authorities subjected them to police surveillance. The very last shred of publicity that Christians needed or wanted was the sensational or spectacular claims to miracles at the hands of a wonder-working Jesus. Mark's gospel message was simple: *the kingdom of God had already broken into human history with Jesus' message of repentance and conversion. Convert, then, and live*

Study of the First Reading

Scholars are uncertain when Job was composed. Dates from the tenth to the third centuries have been proposed. There are two problems with dating the text. First, nothing in the text alluded to a historical event. Second, the poetry is so stylized and condensed that the question of a single composer or multiple composers cannot be answered. The book of Job could have been edited and supplemented over the centuries. While the text cannot be dated, ancient Hebrews could easily recognize the position and lifestyle of Job. He was a patriarch of a family clan. He worried over the family, his livestock, and his lands. Job, a faithful Jew, received what he believed was a God-given inheritance. He and his contemporaries firmly held it was their duty to pass that inheritance along to the next generation. When Job lost his family, his livestock, and his holdings in spite of his religious fidelity, he lost the opportunity to pass along his legacy. His friends questioned his allegiance to God and the wisdom of Job's primary question: "Why me, God?" "Why me, God?" Job did not ask this question out of self-pity. He asked it because his adversity challenged everything he knew about his station in life. As long as he followed God's Law, he would know God's will with confidence. But, now that confidence was shaken to its core. Job had been faithful, despite his friends comments. Where was God's fidelity? Without it, life seemed so futile and empty, without direction. Job felt alone. He worked hard, but had not found rest. 7:6-7 Job commented on brevity of life. Yes, life was short, but he could not see God's timing. God would show his faithfulness and generosity in his own time. No matter how we try, poor humans cannot demand God's intervention. Yes, life is short, *and God is faithful*. He may not show his concern in ways we expect. And his concern may interfere in daily routines, hopes, and ambitions. Ultimately, we, like Job, cannot answer the question "Why me, God?" We cannot answer it simply because only God can provide the answer.

Coffee, Cookies & Conversation follows Sunday's Mass in the Monastery Refectory off the Cloister Garden. **All are invited, especially our visitors.** Please contact, Fr. William Faix if you want to add announcements to the bulletin at "wfaix@yahoo.com" juan@augustiniani.cz Please send at latest by the Friday of the week as it has to be added to the bulletin

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST WORLD DAY OF THE
SICK(11 FEBRUARY 2015)

Sapientia Cordis

“I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame”(Job 29:15)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On this, the twenty-third World Day of the Sick, begun by Saint John Paul II, I turn to all of you who are burdened by illness and are united in various ways to the flesh of the suffering Christ, as well as to you, professionals and volunteers in the field of health care.

This year's theme invites us to reflect on a phrase from the Book of Job: “I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame” (Job 29:15). I would like to consider this phrase from the perspective of “sapientia cordis” – the wisdom of the heart.

1. This “wisdom” is no theoretical, abstract knowledge, the product of reasoning. Rather, it is, as Saint James describes it in his Letter, “pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity” (3:17). It is a way of seeing things infused by the Holy Spirit in the minds and the hearts of those who are sensitive to the sufferings of their brothers and sisters and who can see in them the image of God. So let us take up the prayer of the Psalmist: “Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom” (Ps 90:12). This “sapientia cordis”, which is a gift of God, is a compendium of the fruits of the World Day of the Sick.

2. Wisdom of the heart means serving our brothers and sisters. Job's words: “I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame”, point to the service which this just man, who enjoyed a certain authority and a position of importance amongst the elders of his city, offered to those in need. His moral grandeur found expression in the help he gave to the poor who sought his help and in his care for orphans and widows (Job 29:12-13).

Today too, how many Christians show, not by their words but by lives rooted in a genuine faith, that they are “eyes to the blind” and “feet to the lame”! They are close to the sick in need of constant care and help in washing, dressing and eating. This service, especially when it is protracted, can become tiring and burdensome. It is relatively easy to help someone for a few days but it is difficult to look after a person for months or even years, in some cases when he or she is no longer capable of expressing gratitude. And yet, what a great path of sanctification this is! In those difficult moments we can rely in a special way on the closeness of the Lord, and we become a special means of support for the Church's mission.

3. Wisdom of the heart means being with our brothers and sisters. Time spent with the sick is holy time. It is a way of praising God who conforms us to the image of his Son, who “came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mt 20:28). Jesus himself said: “I am among you as one who serves” (Lk 22:27).

With lively faith let us ask the Holy Spirit to grant us the grace to appreciate the value of our often unspoken willingness to spend time with these sisters and brothers who, thanks to our closeness and affection, feel more loved and comforted. How great a lie, on the other hand, lurks behind certain phrases which so insist on the importance of “quality of life” that they make people think that lives affected by grave illness are not worth living!

Announcements and Ongoing Activities

Every Saturday at 9:00am feeding of the homeless, as a social service

Fr. William, the pastor will be away for January 27th till March 2nd month. Fr. Juan B. will be the ordinary pastor in his absence. In cases of emergency I can be reached either through Fr. Juan at 602684538

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

If you would like to serve as a lector or Eucharistic minister at the Sunday mass please contact Ann at dalyaann@hotmail.com. Training will be provided for those who have not previously served in these ministries.

Post-confirmation youth group: For 14-17 year olds who would like to meet to discuss and share views on issues of faith today and enrich their own faith. The time and dates will be decided depending on those interested. Please contact Ann at dalyaann@hotmail.com or see me after mass.

Social Media at St. Thomas Church, Prague

Keep up with the Parish, Religious Education calendar, Parish Events, photos or the latest quote from the Vatican and Pope Francis. Follow us on Facebook at:

St. Thomas Church - Prague's English-speaking Catholic Community

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Thomas-Church-Pragues-English-speaking-Catholic-Community/298895753494190?ref=hl>

So, please be sure to take the minute to join us on FaceBook – and be sure to share the photos you take at parish events and celebrations with others as well. Remember, we are only as good as the sum of our community --- so join in, helping to keep our Parish the welcoming and dynamic group that we are. Michael Rainey Mobile: +420 608 606 501

Feasts

09 *Maron*, the Patron and Apostle of Lebanon, is venerated this day.

-*Apollonia* (+249), a deaconess of Alexandria, first had her teeth bashed in and then was thrown into the fire. She is the Patroness of dentists.

-Today, Fr. William Faix, OSA, the pastor, celebrates his 50th **priest ordination day**. Please pray for him and all priests.

10 *Scholastica* (+543), the sister of *Benedict of Monte Cassino*, supported him in the establishment of monastic life for women, a precedent for later founders.

11 *Our Lady of Lourdes* is venerated under this title from apparitions in that site. Beginning this day to Bernadette Soubirous in 1858. The Pope has designated this day as a day of prayer for the sick.

-The *Lateran Pact* recognizes the sovereignty of the Vatican State in 1929.

-Japan celebrates *Foundation Day* or the founding of the Japanese nation in 660 BC with the accession of Emperor Jimmu.

13 *Christina of Spoleto* (+1453), after leading a rather disordered life, became a Tertiary of Saint Augustine and devoted herself to works of charity.

14 *Valentine* (+3rd century), a Roman priest, who after his arrest for performing illegal marriages, was executed. That incident along with the tradition that birds mate and sing this day exalted this Saint as the *Patron of Lovers and Engaged*. .