



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

St. Thomas Church

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Today's Prayer

Say this Prayer Today:

Dear Lord as I come to you
today
Fill my heart and my whole
being
with the wonder of your
presence

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March 7th and March 8th 2015

The Third Sunday of Lent

The Reflection of the Gospel

The Old or First Testament in the Greek *Septuagint* version consists of 45 accepted (designated as "canonical") books. Of these, the first five, called in Hebrew *Torah* ("the Law") or in Greek *Pentateuch* ("five scrolls"), are regarded as the most important in the bible. *Genesis*, begins with the theologically interpreted stories of creation, the fall, the flood and Israel's earliest ancestors. *Exodus*, the second book, relates Israel's dramatic redemption from Egyptian slavery and the "giving of the Law" on Sinai, a theme, which we shall momentarily consider. *Leviticus*, is a ceremonial and ritual code followed by *Numbers* describing Israel's tribal structures and anecdotes of its desert experience. The final or fifth book, *Deuteronomy*, is a summary of divine Law ending with Moses' death prior to the conquest of Canaan. The *Hebrew* version of our Old Testament consists only of 39 books according to an arrangement called **TANAKH**, "an acronym that brings together the initial Hebrew terms for the three principal parts of Sacred Scripture: **TA** (the Law or Torah), **NA**(the Prophets or Nevi'im) and **KH**(the Writings or Khetuvim)". As mentioned in today's first reading, the *declogue* (literally "ten words" as in the "Ten Commandments") was according to tradition given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai in the desert. Although framed in the manner of fifteenth century B.C. covenants or agreements, these commandments are unique in religious history. Of particular importance are the precepts of the Sabbath day of rest (Commandment three) and the avoidance of idolatry (Commandment one). In the history of the Church, *catechumens* or those under instruction before baptism, on the third Sunday of Lent were "given" these divine precepts both to be learned by heart and to be lived in moral commitment. To the Jewish people these commandments were meant to insure the survival of their community. As a religious and moral inheritance it is easy to see why Jesus acted with such burning zeal in today's gospel of the cleansing of the Temple, the house of God, in Jerusalem.

Study of the First Reading

[1-2] The Commandments came from God with the reminder of his fidelity to the people. God is God because he takes the first step. The Hebrews were the first to believe in a God of history. God was not just the creator or preserver of nature; God was active in the lives of people. For the Hebrew, God was God because he first called, then people responded. [3] The commandments are in descending order of importance. The first commandment called for complete fidelity on the part of the believer. The believer can in no way attribute power or life and nature to anything else than the Hebrew God. God was to be first in the life of the believer. [4] Our society has reduced this commandment to swearing and cursing. In our society, both are considered to be tactless, but not ultimately harmful. This was not the intention of the commandment. Ancient people believed that a name revealed the power and purpose of the person or thing named. This commandment was meant to avoid abusing the name of God for purposes of manipulating God through excessive prayers. God's name was to be used in a loving relationship with him, not in trying to use him. Note the use of "Lord" in the passage. The Hebrews replaced the name of God (spelled YHWH) with Lord so they could keep the letter of the commandment. The Hebrews ultimately lost the name of God; we can only speculate its original meaning. [8] "To keep holy God's day" means more than going to church. Holiness means to do what God does; on the seventh day God rested, and people should as well. Rest means recreation: doing those things that refresh the person for another week. [12] The extended family was so important in the ancient world that fidelity to parents is more important than murder. In our society, family values have less weight. The third and fourth commandments were the only positive ones of the ten. These two were meant to define a society as faithful to God and to family. [13-15] These commandments affected our relationships with our neighbors. Taken in a positive manner, all could be reduced to one saying "Respect others." [16-17] These commandments encouraged a single-hearted intent. Ethical conduct demanded an honest character.

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" 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

CHARITY MARCH CLOTHING SWAP!

You are all invited to a benefit clothing swap on Saturday, March 14th, from 1-4 pm, at downtown Friends Coffee House. This event is to raise money for the YWAM ministry for women caught in the sex trafficking industry. Bring your gently used and fashionable clothing, shoes, and accessories to trade, or just come find some new clothing. Men's, women's, and children's clothing will be accepted.

At 1 pm, please bring your used clothing to the large meeting room at the back of Friends Coffee House to be sorted where you will receive credit towards purchases. The swap officially starts at 2 pm. Clothing is also being accepted if you can't be at the swap.

For questions, contact: Anneke Stafford,
mrsstafford@gmail.com

Lenten Suggestions

During this season of Lent in preparation for the great feast of Our Lord's Resurrection, Christians are urged to participate in this great season through daily prayer, fasting and almsgiving to those in need. Here at Saint Thomas we recommend that

1. You participate in the Stations of the Cross each Friday at 6:00 PM.....
2. You avail yourselves of the sacrament of reconciliation (confession) after each Sunday Mass;
3. You attend a short Eucharistic service on Thursdays from 6:00 pm to 6:30pm. This service consists of a short gospel passage, quiet reflection, the recitation of the Our Father and the reception of the Eucharist. Confessions will be heard immediately afterwards for those who wish.
4. You attend the Adult Christian Education discussion group meeting each Wednesday evening at 6:30p in the Tagaste room.

Above all we warmly recommend that you read Sacred Scripture- particularly the gospel of Saint John. Saint Augustine once said: "If you cannot fast from food then fast from complaining, gossip and anger, impatience. If you cannot afford to give alms then thank others for what they do for you and even give a good word for those being talked about. And when you pray, thank God for the gift of change and newness that opens doors closed by monotonous routine and bad habits."

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
- ❖ Every Saturday at 9:00am feeding of the homeless, as a social service.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ **Marriage preparation** next Saturday March 14th from 09:30 am.

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

Lenten prayer:

“Jesus, make our hearts like yours”

(Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus).