



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 3rd and February 4th
2018

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

Saint Blase February 3rd

Saint Blase was the bishop of Sebaste in Armenia during the fourth century. Very little is known about his life. According to various accounts he was a physician before becoming a bishop. His cult spread throughout the entire Church in the Middle Ages because he was reputed to have miraculously cured a little boy who nearly died because of a fishbone in his throat. From the eighth century he has been invoked on behalf of the sick, especially those afflicted with illnesses of the throat.

Details regarding the miraculous healing of the boy vary. One account relates that the miracle occurred during the journey to take Blaise to prison when he placed his hand on the boy's head and prayed; another that the miracle happened while Blaise was in prison when he picked up two candles provided to him and formed a cross around the boy's throat.

The candles may be joined together by a red ribbon, the color of martyrdom. Although it is the general custom to touch the throat with the candles, it is not required, especially if the candles are lit. The candles may be held over the person.

If all cannot be blessed individually, the celebrant, without candles, extends his hands over the assembly and says the prayer of blessing.

The following blessing is said:

“ Through the intercession of Saint Blase, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from every disease of the throat and from every other illness: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” ”

Parish Pilgrimage to Holy Land.

St. Thomas Parish is organizing a trip to the Holy Land. It will take place from Monday April 30th to Wednesday May 9th. The itinerary includes visits to all the important biblical sites in the following areas: Jaffa, Galilee, Nazareth, Tiberias, Holy Mountain, Capharnaum, Judea, Jericho, Bethlehem, Ein Karem, Qumran, Jerusalem, Mount Zion, Gethsemane and Bethania.

April 30th –May 9th. If you are interesting please contact Fr. Juan at: juan@augustiniani.cz.

Announcements and Ongoing Activities

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

*Please note: This week not **Bible Study and Religious education for adults.**

*Fr. William, the pastor will be away for January 23rd till March 2nd month. Fr. Imann, OSA will be the ordinary pastor in his absence. In cases of emergency I can be reached either through Fr. Imann at 730817348

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

Help for Philippines!

The youth organization in our Augustinian Parish of Sto. Niño de Cebu in Philippines are asking for help.

They are planning to go to Naval, Biliran Leyte the area where typhoon "Urduha" devastated the region, this area is closer to Cebu. They started to gather school supplies and they are planning to share to almost 500 hundred school children as part of their apostolate this coming summer, 2nd week of May 2018, before school year opening.

These are the school supplies they needed; (Grades 1 to 6)

1. Notebooks
2. Elementary papers
3. Pencils/ball pens for grades 4 to 6
4. Crayons
5. Erasers

Thank you very much for your help.

The school supplies you can bring anytime to the monastery reception or on Sundays you can leave in Tagaste room.

May Señor Sto Nino blessed you through these little ones in need. *More information with Fr. Juan*

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.