



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

Today's Prayer

The more we call on God
the more we can feel God's
presence.
Day by day we are drawn closer
to the loving heart of God.

February 04th and 05th 2017

The Fifth Sunday in
Ordinary Time – Year A

St. Thomas Church

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GOSPEL REFLEXION

Salt was, and still is, one of the most valuable foods. It is used to preserve food and in some cases employed as a medication (to gargle, for example). In ancient times, new born children were often rubbed down with salt as a precaution against disease; soldiers and workers were often paid in salt hence our own word “salary” is derived from *salarium* (literally the Latin for “a salt block”).

Today's gospel reading brings to mind some of these connotations. Discipleship entails being “the light of the world” and “the salt of the earth”; our faith in Jesus Christ is not a private or totally “personal matter.” We should be a “light” or at least a directional signal for others. Should they not be able to identify us as followers of Christ, what good are we? What good is salt “should it lose its flavor?” As always we are to look to Jesus for “the way.” Some become so distraught over the imminent advent of the kingdom of God that they forget that this rule or kingdom is already established among us through and in Jesus Christ.

Please contact, Fr. William Faix, OSA if you want to add announcements to the bulletin at “wfaix@yahoo.com” or juan@augustiniani.cz

STUDY OF THE SECOND READING

All of us like to hear a great speaker, a person who can instruct, entertain, and enlighten all at the same time. Many times we have high expectations when we go to see a well-known speaker. And, many times we come away from a talk disappointed. The speaker might not have fulfilled all three criteria for a good presentation.

Imagine if a speaker was proud of the fact he was not inspirational or entertaining. Paul was. In fact, Paul claimed he was not good at delivery, nor did he claim to have great insight. (We do not know if Paul was a good orator, but he was very insightful. So his claims were far too modest for his ability!) Instead, Paul insisted his ministry and message were based on the activity of God. Such a claim was rooted in his calling. Paul did not aspire to preaching; he claimed it was God's will for him. Indeed, his charism might not have laid in oral delivery but in the work of the Spirit (healing, speaking in tongues, prophecy, etc.) Nevertheless, Paul held he did not try to promote himself. He always preached “Jesus Christ and him crucified.”

Some share their faith (“Jesus” small talk or the jewelry they wear) as a form of self-promotion. They would like known as “good” Christians. Others share their faith from their hearts. The former share what they want others to know about them. The latter share what they think others need to hear. Some use Jesus as a means of self-promotion. Others promote Jesus. Depth and sincerity really reveal the intention of the person who shares their faith.

Announcements and 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.
- **Lectors and Eucharistic ministers:** If you would like to be a lector or Eucharistic minister at mass on Sundays please contact Ann at dalyaann@hotmail.com. A new schedule will be prepared soon.
- **Bible Study** takes place every Tuesday from 18:30-19:30 in Tagaste room. Everyone is welcome to come and learn more about our sacred scriptures.
- Wednesday at 18:30. Tagaste room takes place **Adult Religious education**.
- **Song books/Missals.** On several Sunday's we have been short of song books for the congregation. If you have one of the song books at home could you please bring it in when you are next at St. Tomas.
- **Fr. William** will be away on Order affairs in USA beginning 23th January to the end of February.

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 **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.

St BLAISE **February 3**

The Blessing of the Throats that take place on this day. Two candles are blessed, held slightly open, and pressed against the throat as the blessing is said.

PRAYER TO SAINT BLAISE

O Blessed St Blaise, you received from God the power to protect men from throat diseases and other maladies. Take away the illness that afflicts me, keep my throat healthy and perfect so that I can talk correctly and be able to proclaim and sing praises to God.

I promise you, St Blaise, that the words coming from my mouth will always speak:

The truth and not lies; justice and not calumnies; goodness and not harshness; comprehension and not intransigence; forgiveness and not condemnation; pardon and not accusation; respect and not disparagement.

Conciliation and not intrigue; calmness and not irritation; unselfishness and not egotism; edification and not scandal; enthusiasm and not defeatism; conformity and not complaint; love and not hate; joyfulness and not sadness; faith and not disbelief; hope and not despair.

St Blaise, keep my throat free from illness so that I can praise God, my Creator, and thank you, my protector.

Amen.

SAINT BLAISE

Many Catholics might remember Saint Blaise's feast day, February 3, because of the Blessing of the Throats that take place on this day. Two candles are blessed, held slightly open, and pressed against the throat as the blessing is said.

Very few facts are known about Saint Blaise. It is believed he was a bishop of Sebastea in Armenia who was martyred under the reign of Licinius in the early fourth century.

The legend of St. Blaise tells us that he was born into a rich and noble family who raised him as a Christian. He became a bishop. Later, a new persecution of Christians began. He received a message from God to go into the hills to escape persecution. Hunters discovered a cave surrounded by wild animals who were sick. Blaise walked among them unafraid, curing them of their illnesses.

The hunters recognized Blaise as a Bishop, so they captured him to take him back for trial. On the way back, he talked a wolf into releasing a pig that belonged to a poor woman. When Blaise was sentenced to be starved to death, the woman, in gratitude, sneaked into the prison with food and candles. Finally, the governor had Blaise killed.

Saint Blaise is the patron of physicians, sick cattle, wax-chandlers, woolcombers, and of wild animals because of his care for them and of those with throat maladies. He is invoked against afflictions of the throat (Bentley, Roeder).