



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

## Today's Prayer

Eternal Father, I offer you the body and blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in atonement for our sins and the sins of the whole world. Through your most sorrowful passion, have mercy on us and the whole world. To fittingly celebrate this feast sincerely repent of all sin, place complete trust in Jesus Christ, go to confession, receive Holy Communion on the feast of Mercy, venerate the image of divine mercy and above all be merciful to others, through our actions, words and prayers on their behalf.

April 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017

The Second Sunday of  
Easter – Year A

# St. Thomas Church

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## THE FEAST OF DIVINE MERCY

With the promulgation of the papal letter entitled *Rich in Mercy* (1981) which, in turn, had been spurred by the writings of Sister Faustina Kowalska of the Congregation of Mercy, devotion to the Mercy of God has been rapidly spreading throughout the Catholic world. Among the very strong requests expressed by Our Lord, according to this nun, was that the first Sunday after Easter be observed universally as the Feast of Divine Mercy. Citing his words: *This feast of Mercy emerged from the very depths of my mercy and it is confirmed in the very depths of my tender mercies... it is my desire that it be solemnly celebrated on the Second Sunday of Easter... I desire that the feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls and especially for poor sinners. On that day the very depths of my tender mercies are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fountain of my mercy... I want to grant a complete pardon for souls who will go to confession and receive Holy Communion on the feast of my Mercy... Whoever approaches the fountain of life (that is, receives Holy Communion) on this day (today, the Second Sunday of Easter) will be granted complete forgiveness of sins and punishment... On that day all the divine floodgates through which graces flow are opened.*

Commenting on these profound words, St. Faustina remarks: *That the feast of Mercy be a true refuge for all, the very depths of Jesus' generosity are opened this day in order to pour out upon souls, without holding back, graces of every type and degree. This generosity is... the motive for calling upon Divine Mercy with great and limitless trust, for all the gifts of grace Our Lord wants to squander on this Sunday.* Why delay? Let us confidently approach our merciful Lord with confidence. Remember the *A B C* of mercy: Ask for mercy; Be merciful and Completely trust in Jesus.

## Study of the First Reading

In the early chapters of Acts, Luke painted an ideal portray of the Church in Jerusalem. Early Christians created this "ideal" more out of need than out of some sense of utopia. After all, many of believers left their extended families to become Christians. They banded together and shared their possessions/incomes. This was not a commune, as many liberal scholars would like to think, but more like a fraternal organization, with friend helping friend. [32] The Apostles were spiritual and organization leaders of this group. They were the ones who distributed goods to the poor in the community, so everyone could live. Eventually, the Apostles ordained deacons to care for the poor (i.e., the widows and the orphans who were homeless), again out of necessity. [33, 35] The spirit of unity was expressed in financial outreach. The "haves" shared with the "have-nots." Notice that those with property were not forced to sell their possessions for the Church; the offerings were made freely. This point would be made later in Acts 5:1-10. [34] Like the early Christian community, our parishes or assemblies are quilt works with different people from different backgrounds earning different salaries having different needs. This diversity creates a tension that can tear the community apart. Or it can spark a growing together. The resources for growth are usually present. Openness is needed to make that growth happen. Openness to others. Openness to the Spirit.

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### *Let us pray*

*Eternal Father, I offer you the body and blood, soul and divinity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in atonement for our sins and the sins of the whole world. Through your most sorrowful passion, have mercy on us and the whole world.*

**To fittingly celebrate this feast sincerely repent of all sin, place complete trust in Jesus Christ, go to confession, receive Holy Communion on the feast of Mercy, venerate the image of divine mercy and above all be merciful to others, through our actions, words and prayers on their behalf**

### 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](mailto:osaprag@augustiniani.cz)

**4 leaders** needed for an English summer camp from July 9. - 22. More information see Fr. Juan or ask at [juan@augustiniani.cz](mailto:juan@augustiniani.cz)

**Augustinian week** from April 24<sup>th</sup> till April 28<sup>th</sup>. A opportunity to know more about Saint Augustine and his teachings.

St Thomas' English Speaking Community now has a presence on **facebook**. Please 'like' our page and if you want to get more involved with the community, join our group!

**The 20th Annual Marian Pilgrimage** to the Shrine of the **Gracious Madonna**, at sv. Dobrotiva-Zajecov, will be held on May 27<sup>st</sup>. We meet in front of St. Joseph's church on Josefská Street, at 08:30 am, Saturday morning. If you do not have a ride please contact Fr. Juan Bautista for details. In keeping with our tradition, please bring a lunch, which you can share with another person on pilgrimage. Whatever is left over (if you so will) is given to the poor. There is a brochure, which explains the origins and traditions behind this beautiful 700-year pilgrimage, which has been renewed after forty years of communism. **SIGN UP:** In the sacristy of St. Thomas Church

### Coming soon:

**29.4.2017 First Communion Sunday**

**21.5.2017 Confirmation Sunday**

**09.6.2017 The Night of the Churches from  
18:p00 till 00:00**

**The 14th PARISH FESTIVAL  
3. June 2017.**

# Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska

## The Humble Instrument

Sister Faustina was a young, uneducated nun in a convent of the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Poland during the 1930s. She came from a poor family that struggled during the years of World War I. She had only three years of simple education, so hers were the humblest tasks in the convent, usually in the kitchen or garden. However, she received extraordinary revelations — or messages — from our Lord Jesus. Jesus asked Sr. Faustina to record these experiences, which she compiled into notebooks. These notebooks are known today as the *Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, and the words contained within are God's loving message of Divine Mercy.

Though the Divine Mercy message is not new to the teachings of the Church, Sr. Faustina's *Diary* sparked a great movement, and a strong and significant focus on the mercy of Christ. Saint John Paul II canonized Sr. Faustina in 2000 making her the "first saint of the new millennium." Speaking of Sr. Faustina and the importance of the message contained in her *Diary*, the Pope call her "the great apostle of Divine Mercy in our time."

Today, we continue to rely of St. Faustina as a constant reminder of the message to trust in Jesus' endless mercy, and to live life mercifully toward others. We also turn to her in prayer and request her intercession to our merciful Savior on our behalf. At the National Shrine of The Divine Mercy in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, we include the following in our 3 o'clock prayers:

### **Saint Faustina,**

you told us that your mission would continue after your death and that you would not forget us. Our Lord also granted you a great privilege, telling you to "distribute graces as you will, to who you will, and when you will." Relying on this, we ask your intercession for the graces we need, especially for the intentions just mentioned. Help us, above all, to trust in Jesus as you did and thus to glorify His mercy every moment of our lives. Amen. **Amen**