



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

Today's Prayer

At any time of the day or night
we can call on Jesus.
He is always waiting, listening
for our call.
What a wonderful blessing.

July 1st and July 2nd 2017

The Thirteenth Sunday in
Ordinary Time – Year A

St. Thomas Church

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READINGS AND GOSPEL STUDY

“What is my relationship with my family of origin? How do I relate to my parents, my sisters, my brothers and to my extended family? How do I relate to friends? How do I relate to those in authority over me?” These are the challenges from the readings this week.

We begin with the first reading, from the Second Book of Kings. This is such a wonderful reading! We see the concern of the Prophet for this woman who has no son. The Prophet, like many religious leaders, is able to benefit from the love and care of those who are relatively well off. Now it is a question of how to thank such people. Most of us would not be thinking of promising a baby! On the other hand, the Prophets have more resources than we do! We also know that later, when this baby is a young man, he dies unexpectedly and the woman turns again to the Prophet. The gifts of Prophets and of God Himself are not always without suffering!

The second reading is from the Letter to the Romans. Here we find a strong theology for ourselves. If we have died in Christ, then we must embrace that death so that we can live in Christ. We must become dead to sin. That is so easy to say or to state, yet the reality implies for us and for all who seek the Lord that we must enter the spiritual combat and remain in combat all the days of our lives. The life of Jesus is a wonderful gift and yet always comes with the condition of death to sin in ourselves. We are invited to embrace the struggle against sin each day so that we can live more and more in the Lord.

The Gospel, today from Saint Matthew, brings the first two readings together. We must love God more than anything or anyone. We must love Christ more than our parents, our sisters, our brothers, our children—more than anyone. This statement never implies not loving our parents, sisters, brothers, children, etc., but simply tells us that God is more important.

If we are looking for our own life, we shall lose that life. If we are seeking the life of Jesus, we shall have our own life. It is only in giving up our lives that we are given life. This is one of the great challenges of following Jesus. The more we deny ourselves, the more life of Jesus we have. Again the strong reminder: when we deny ourselves, we are doing this out of love and not out of any other motive. If we judge others, then we condemn ourselves. If we seek simply what the Lord asks of us today and every day, we are blessed—over and over and over.

May we seek the face of the Lord and respond to His love! May we accept the gifts of the Lord and know that in those gifts there is also hardship. May we die to ourselves in the very best way, but loving God first and always.

Please contact, Fr. William Faix if you want to add announcements to the bulletin at “wfaix@yahoo.com”. Please send at latest by the Friday of the week as it has to be added to the bulletin

Announcements and Ongoing Activities

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

-Anyone interested in teaching **Religious Education Classes** next year (starting in September) - please contact Mary Beth

-HAVE A HAPPY AND BLESSED SUMMER. Until we meet again, God bless!

FEASTS and ANNIVERSARIES: JULY

03 Thomas, "One of the twelve," the patron of our parish community, is venerated as the Apostle of India. Over the main altar, Peter Paul Rubens's masterpiece, *The Martyrdom of Saint Thomas*, which was taken from our Church and never returned, in sweeping baroque terms depicts the Saint's heroic death.

04 Prokop the Abbot (+1053) was one of the earliest Czech saints and founder of the Sazava monastic community which celebrated the Liturgy in Slavonic.

-Venerable John Baptist Jossa, OSA (+1828), an Augustinian secular, who lost his job because of his profession of faith and spent his later years administering to prisoners in Neapolitan jails.

05 CYRIL and METHODIUS (+869 and +885) were two brothers from Thessalonika, Greece, who evangelized the Slavs in what is now the Czech Republic and Slovakia. They created an alphabet (*Cyrillic*) in which the Bible and other literature could be read by their converts and developed Church patterns which heavily influenced nascent Czech culture for centuries. Also on this day in 1985 during the now celebrated *Velehrad Pilgrimage* that the Communist party officials were publicly confronted.

06 This day in Constance in the year 1415 Master Jan Hus, the Rector of Charles University, despite letters of imperial protection, was put on trial and burnt at the stake for heresy. A popular preacher much influenced by the ideas of John Wycliff of England, he became after his death a symbol of violent resistance during the devastating Hussite wars (1420-1437).

ST. THOMAS CHURCH IN PRAGUE

ORGAN

The Augustinian church of St. Thomas is one of the oldest churches of Prague. The first note of the organ is indirect, from the beginning of the 15th century: In 1414 is mentioned among Augustinian's friars "Matěj from St. Benigna" as organist. Unfortunately, we don't know anything about the organ played by friar Matěj. Following the disastrous fire of 1509 work was done for the restoration of the badly damaged organ. This apparently was the same organ later mentioned during the reign of Emperor Rudolf II (1576 - 1607).

In the year 1637 under the aegis of Prior Jan Krtitel Svitavský this organ was replaced by another which lasted for only 31 years. In 1668 it was, in turn replaced by an instrument with 21 stops and 1242 pipes built by Mathias Kehler with Hans Heinrich Mundt who had constructed the organs of St. Mary Tyn Church and St. Nicholas in Old Town. Unfortunately, this organ was also destroyed by fire within 55 years in 1723.

Once the Church was rebuilt by Krystof Dienzenhofer and his son Kilian Ignac, it was decided that this (presumably restored) older organ was not suitable for the newly baroquized Church. The Prior Serafin Melzer then signed a contract with Jan František Fassman in 1728 for constructing an organ in keeping with the recently redrawn architectural lines of the Church. This instrument containing 24 stops and 1350 pipes, completed in 1730 was with some minor changes used in St. Thomas Church for the next 197 years.

This organ after surviving various invasions and World War I (1914-1918) was considered "outmoded and useless" by inexperienced advisors to equally uninformed Augustinians and disaster struck once again. This time, in 1923 the venerable instrument was broken into parts, during which many component parts were badly damaged and the metal pipes were sold as scrap. Fortunately, the valuable organ case was saved. Within it; was built a pneumatic instrument by the Bohumil Pastika from Stara Boleslav. Unfortunately, the technology used by B. Pastika is short-lived and has proven to be unreliable. Since that time with the exceptions of some general repairs undertaken by the Igra Company in 1968, everything has remained the same. In brief the lifespan of the present organ has come to an end.

A rising list of chronic problems has made temporary repairs both impractical and expensive. The Augustinians, therefore, in consultation with the Parish Councils of both the Czech and English communities are seeking with the expertise direction of Dr. Petr Koukal, Ing. Marek Čihař, Mr. Antonín Brčák, Mr. Štěpán Svoboda and Dr. Martin Stránský the best methods to restore the organ fitting the sacred precincts and liturgical requirements of St. Thomas, one of Prague's noblest churches. All this, of course, will cost much (about 4-5 mil. Kč, 150-190 ths \$) but hopefully with characteristic generosity funding will be available from our many friends and benefactors.

Please make your donations payable to bank account:
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