



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

Today's Prayer

"Be still and know that I am God."

Lord, Your words lead us to the calmness and greatness of your presence.



"Our hearts are restless, rest in you"

September 23rd and
September 24th 2017

25th Sunday in Ordinary
time A

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St. Thomas Church

TWENTY-FIFTH ORDINARY SUNDAY

Today's gospel reading is an extended *parable* which is commonly defined as *a short story usually allegorical with a moral or spiritual lesson*. The storyteller, in this case, Jesus of Nazareth, simply takes some situation in everyday life and molds it into a short tale with an implied spiritual or moral lesson. However, when listening to the gospel parables we must avoid trying the vain task of laboriously "identifying" all the story's pieces or details with some spiritual or moral value. In the same breath we should not hold up for cautious scrutiny the social or institutional language of the past for some "hidden" or "esoteric" teachings. Remember the basic purpose of the narrator is to clothe his teaching with the familiar only as an aid for the listener of good will.

Today's gospel lesson could be entitled variously as the parable of "the workers in the vineyard," "the generous employer" or the more contemporary "the affirmative action employer." The timeframe corresponds to the typical Hebrew "day" which began at six or the "first" hour. 12 noon was the "sixth" hour; 3 o'clock was computed as the "ninth hour" while 5 o'clock or one hour before six in the evening- the conclusion of the work day- was the "eleventh hour." It was within these time frames that the owner went out to hire workers and since he could not keep their salaries over night (*Leviticus* 19:13), there had to be an accounting before they were dismissed. The upshot of the matter was that all the workers hired at the various hours of the day were all equal in the eyes of the vineyard owner. In brief, Jesus tells us in biblical language that the *vineyard* refers both to the chosen people of Israel and to those other "outsiders"(see *Isaiah* 5:1 ff. and *Jeremiah* 12: 10). The same Lord repaying workers in his vineyard "at the end of the day" symbolizes the *eschaton* or *final reckoning* when each and everyone no matter when called will stand in judgment before God. It is not so much length of time in service as love expended *in service* that matters.

FIRST READING

Even before the return of the exiles from Babylon, religious thinkers within Judaism tried to reconcile two notions: First, the faithful "remnant," those who remained true to Jesus, were the Chosen. They were a proud sign of God's presence simply because they survived the "bad" times and the "bad" people.

Second, Jesus was the only God. Before the exile, the Jewish God was the national deity, one God among many. A strict relationship with Jesus precluded a relationship with any other god. But, during the exile, Jews were confronted with deities of the regional superpower, Babylonia. Because Jews were a conquered people, they were a weak nation, which reflected on the power of their God. In the face of such power and critique, Jews asked themselves the question: which god is God? Jesus! He was not only the God of the Jews. He was the only God. Not only did the other gods not matter, they did not exist! While this road to a pure monotheism took centuries, the Babylonian exile was a turning point from a parochial view of God among the Jews to a universal one.

SECOND READING

Like Paul, sometimes we might feel the weight of the world bearing down on us. Like Paul, we might feel "imprisoned" by people or events out of our control. We might desire life with God over our present circumstances. In these times, let us remember that we are not our own masters. We live for the Lord. If we find life closing in on us, let us reflect on our place in God's design. He wants us to be where we find ourselves, so we can serve others. In Buddhism, the bodistava is a monk that stands at the doorstep of Nirvana, but does not enter so he can help others to enter. Paul was like the bodistava; he desired a life with God, but remained behind to help his brothers and sisters come closer to eternity. How can we emulate Paul in our service to others? How can we postpone the prize so others can enjoy the fruits of our labor? In Buddhism, the bodistava is a monk that stands at the doorstep of Nirvana, but does not enter so he can help others to enter. Paul was like the bodistava; he desired a life with God, but remained behind to help his brothers and sisters come closer to eternity. How can we emulate Paul in our service to others? How can we postpone the prize so others can enjoy the fruits of our labor?

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 serve as a lector or Eucharistic minister at the Sunday mass please contact Ann at dalyaann@hotmail.com

The choir is looking for new members. If you like to sing, we'd like to have you join us!

Please contact Frank Jicha at frankjicha1@gmail.com or 602.441.201 for more information.

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

Bible Study sessions are held each Tuesday evening at 6:30pm/18:00 in Tagaste room. All are welcome to join and reflect on the Word of God.

Religious education for adults sessions are held each Wednesday evening at 6:00pm/18:00 in Tagaste room.

On Sunday 24th meeting of the **Parish Council** after 11:00am Mass.

The association of mexicans in Czech republic proudly invites you to „Kermés“ (charity carnival) that will take place on October 1st 2017 at 13:30 after the mass in Spanish in the cloister of the Saint Thomas Church. The event is organized in order to raise funds for the help of the communities in Mexico suffering from the latest earthquakes. All volunteers willing to help preparing refreshments or any other form of help please contact Gloria Huerta through the e-mail:huerta-angeles@contipro.com

Any funds collected will be donated to the most suffering communities in Oaxaca state of Mexico, in order to purchase goods and construction materials.

Rule of St. Augustine

Chapter Seven

44. You should obey superiors as fathers or mothers with the respect due them so as not to offend God in their persons. Much more should you obey the priest who bears responsibility for all of you.

45. It shall pertain chiefly to superiors to see that these precepts are all observed and, if any point has been neglected, to take care that the transgression is not carelessly overlooked but is punished and corrected. In doing so, they must refer whatever exceeds the limit and power of their office to the priest who enjoys greater authority among you.

46. Your superiors, for their part, must think themselves fortunate not because they rule in virtue of their office, but because they serve in love. In your eyes they shall hold the first place among you by the dignity of their office, but in God's sight let them lie beneath your feet in fear. They must be a model of good works for all. Let them admonish the unruly, cheer the faint-hearted, support the weak, and be patient toward all (1 Thessalonians 5:14). Let them love discipline and instill respect for it. And though both are necessary, they should strive to be loved by you rather than feared, ever mindful that they must give an account of you to God.

47. It is by willing obedience, therefore, that you show mercy not only toward yourselves, but also toward superiors, whose higher rank among you exposes them all the more to greater peril.

Chapter Eight

48. The Lord grant that you may observe all these precepts in a spirit of charity, as lovers of spiritual beauty, and may spread abroad the sweet odor of Christ by a good life, not as slaves living under the law but as men and women living in freedom under grace.