



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

### 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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April 7<sup>th</sup> and April 8<sup>th</sup> 2018

Second Easter Sunday,  
The Feast of Divine Mercy

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# St. Thomas Church

## Reflection on the Gospel

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: **A**sk for mercy; **B**e merciful and **C**ompletely trust in Jesus.*

## Study of the First Reading

In the early chapters of Acts, Luke painted an ideal portrayal 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.

**Coffee, Cookies & Conversation** follow Sunday 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](mailto:wfaix@yahoo.com)" or contact Fr. Juan at [juan@augustiniani.cz](mailto:juan@augustiniani.cz) Please send at latest by the Friday of the week as it has to be added to the bulletin.

## XX. AUGUSTINIAN WEEK

23.4-27.4

Saint Thomas Monastery , Josefská 8. Prague 1

### Saint Augustine a vocation

#### April 23, 2018

6:00pm Readings frm saint Augustine book "Soliloquia".

#### April 24

07:00pm Holy Mass commemorating the Conversion of Saint Augustine (AD 387)

#### April 25

06:00pm Conference presented by Fr. William S. Faix, OSA, "Augustinians in Czech Republic"

#### April 26

06:00pm Conference presented by P. David Voprava. "St. Augustine and the preparation for bapstism"

#### April 27

6:00pm Concert

### Study of the Second Reading

These verses were covered in some detail with the study of 1 John 5:1-9 on the Baptism of the Lord (Cycle B). In that study, I mentioned the practical nature of Christianity. It was a religion that integrated prayer with acts of charity. It was not an esoteric religion such as many contemporaries of the author and his audience wanted. They were Gnostics, those who believed Jesus came as a spirit (in some non-material body) that gave a secret knowledge that led to salvation. With this knowledge (and its practice), one could "save" himself from the evil of the material world. The author of the letter opposed this view with his emphasis on "water, blood, and the Spirit," a clear indication of his belief that God worked in the physical world. (Please see that study for more details.) In this season of Easter, the reading reaffirms our belief that the Risen Lord is still present and at work in our material universe. HE shares his struggle of water (his Baptism) and blood (his death), and everything in between. He also shares the Spirit, the gift of his resurrection. The Risen Lord is with us in a very real sense.

## 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)

\***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.

**Parish dance.** Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup>. Tickets will Michael Rayney.

The **21st Annual Marian Pilgrimage** to the Shrine of the Gracious Madonna, at sv. Dobrotiva-Zaječov, will be held on May 12. We meet in front of St. Joseph's Church on Josefská Street, at 08:30 am, Saturday morning, May 12. 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.

### Coming soon:

*17.5.2015: First Communion Sunday*

*25.5.2018: The Night of the Churches from 18: 00 till 00:00*

*2. June 2018: The 15th PARISH FESTIVAL.*