

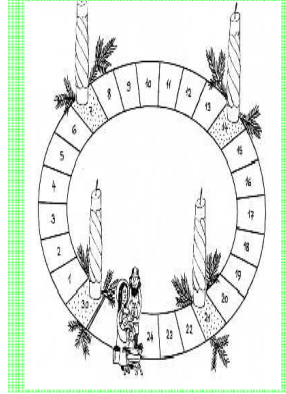


St. Thomas Church: established July 1, 1285 by King Vaclav II

St. Thomas Church

Today's Prayer

Dear Jesus, as I call on you today I realise that I often come asking for favours. Today I'd like just to be in your presence. Let my heart respond to Your Love.



December 04th and 05th 2010

The Second Sunday of Advent-Year A

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THE SECOND ADVENTSUNDAY-A

The figure and message of John the Baptizer was harsh and yet attractive. Living a solitary existence John emerged from the desert (now in Transjordan), clothed in the rough garb reminiscent of the ancient prophets, preaching a startling simple message: *Reform your lives because the reign of God is at hand!* Unpolished, straightforward as his criticism of contemporary society, John's spreading reputation *from Jerusalem, all Judea and the Jordan region* certainly challenged and shook his listeners. Noting that members of the religious establishment, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, approached him for the ceremonial cleansing or *baptism*, on them John vented his full prophetic indignation. In contrast to the usual repeatable purification rituals- often perfunctorily performed- John's baptism was to be a sign of *inner conversion of heart*. But, this was to be only a beginning, a preparatory rite. Indeed, the gnarled prophet at once foresaw the advent of *one more powerful* than himself who would *baptize in the Holy Spirit and fire*. This "powerful one" would glean, sift, winnow and clear ground, all prophetic images of judgement, depicting, however feebly, the inevitable coming judgement of the Lord.

This is not a popular theme in any religious tradition and can easily be dismissed in favor of something more congenial. However, we all stand before the Word of God in its stark demands for a true conversion. The word, *conversion*,_scripturally derived from the Hebrew word *shubh* and translated by the Greek *metanoia*, means "that one has taken a wrong path and being aware of this detour, the individual returns to God." The Greek *metanoia* "not just a static remorse but a dynamic and determined, positive commitment to a new way of life; it is not just a human response but a human response to the prior initiative of God." How do we stand before the prospects of this coming judgment of God?

The Story of the Jesse Tree

The Jesse Tree is named from Isaiah 11:1: "A shoot will spring forth from the stump of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots." It is a vehicle to tell the Story of God in the Old Testament, and to connect the Advent Season with the faithfulness of God across 4,000 years of history. **The Branch** is a biblical sign of newness out of discouragement, which became a way to talk about the expected messiah (for example, Jer 23:5). It is therefore an appropriate symbol of Jesus the Christ, who is the revelation of the grace and faithfulness of God.

The Israelites through the descendants of Abraham were chosen by God to be a light to the nations. When they were imprisoned by the Egyptians, they cried out to God for deliverance from their oppression. And God responded: "I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt, and I have heard their cry . . . I have come to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them to a good land" (Exod 3:7-8). And so He entered history in a marvelous way to deliver them and bring them into a place where they could worship God and serve Him in peace and joy instead of serving Pharaoh in hard service. God promised to be with them and to be their God, and they would be His people.

But as they settled into the land that God had given them, "they forgot God, their Deliverer, who had done great things in Egypt" (Psa 106:21). As they grew secure in the land, they began to believe that "my power and the strength of my own hand have gotten me these things" (Deut 8:17). Even though God had raised up godly leaders like David, later kings and religious leaders served their own interests, and the people began to worship the false gods of the land. They even gave offerings to the idol ba'al, supposedly the god of rain and fertility of the land, thanking him for the prosperity they enjoyed.

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" or contact Dias Fernando at diasfernando04@gmail.com

Please send at latest by the Friday of the week as it has to be added to the bulletin

Feasts

- 05** –Today **Johann Chrysostom Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (+1791), the musical genius and beloved composer of such masterpieces as *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Magic Flute* and the initial movements of the immortal *Requiem*, died in Vienna. Today also died *Alexandre Dumas* (+1870) and *Claude Monet* (+1926). **A Children's' Concert will be held in Svaty Mikulas Church at 04:15/16:15. Saint Nicholas will arrive with gifts! All are welcome.**
- 06** **Nicholas of Myra** (+ca. 345), the bishop and almsgiver, who has come down in history in some countries as “Santa Claus” devoted his life to aiding the poor and children. **Ambrose** (+397), was a noted bishop of Milan whose writings, sermons and influence on the affairs of his day merited him the title *Father of the Church*. In 387 he baptized the future St. Augustine.
- 07** **THE SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.** This dogma was proclaimed in 1854. Under this title Our Lady is Patroness of the USA, Spain, Tanzania and Zaire.
- 08** **Juan Diego** (16TH century) was a Chichimeca Indian favored by visions of Our Lady at Tepayac (Guadeloupe) in 1531.

Saint Augustine's School

A Comprehensive School with a heart open to wisdom

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The Augustinians are an order of Catholic educators with a rich heritage of traditions and experience. Their history reaches back to an illustrious founder, St. Augustine, whose profound mind formulated and gave written expression to the very foundations of Catholic thought and culture. St. Augustine was born in the fourth century and devoted his life to the monastic ideal of nurturing and spreading Christ's way of life.

For fifteen centuries the Augustinians have patterned their lives after St. Augustine. Great saints, scholars, educators, and missionaries represent a glorious pageant of Augustinian triumphs through the centuries.

A famous scholar of our day characterized St. Augustine as “the greatest modern man.” He meant that, after fifteen centuries, St. Augustine's thought is modern. In St. Augustine's voluminous works one finds an astonishing clarity of thought upon the vexing problems of the present. Ancient in wisdom, yet up-to-date in its application – this likewise is a keynote of the Augustinian system of education.

Collection Appeal

We would like to inform you that we have budgeted expenses of 9000CZK per week. We request you to continue to contribute generously during the Saturday/Sunday Masses. Anyone wishing to view the details of expenses should contact Mr. Jose Fernando by email (jose@jaitex.cz) or by phone (602 293 867).

Bank account of the English Speaking community:
155523359/0800

Ongoing Activities

To **everyone!** The new rota for refreshments is on the notice board in the refectory. Please sign up for a week - it's easy and a great way to meet other parishioners! Any questions see Jim Willetts

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

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

New Times for Confession:

Every Monday from 06:30 pm in St Barbara's Chapel and any time upon request

Prayer & worship

Each Sunday we are beginning with a prayer & worship from 10a.m. till 11a.m. in St. Barbara's Chapel. We will also be seeking people who would be willing to come and play an instrument while we worship and/or pray. We pray that the Lord moves more of our members to take action in prayer and worship, as there is much to pray for.

The Giving Tree. A Giving Tree is dedicated to fulfilling wishes of children who would otherwise go without gifts during the holidays. This is made possible with the help of generous individuals who donate gifts and energetic volunteers to make it work.

Are you interested in making a child's holiday wish come true? Our Parish is having their sixth annual Giving Tree. Here's how the Giving Tree works.

- Select a child from the list (it will have an orphan's age, gender, code and wish on it).
- Buy gift specified on ornament (new, not used).
- Bring unwrapped gift to the church in the refectory after Mass no later than Dec. 17 with a tag with the name of the child and code attached.

Please see Fr. Juan after Mass every Sunday to be assigned to a child or deliver your gift.

The feast of Saint Nicholas, from whom the legendary ‘Santa Claus’ is derived, will be celebrated Monday December 06, at 06:00 pm in St Nicholas' Church

Ecumenical service of carols in English and Czech on December 9th at 17.30hrs. It would be a charity event with all of the proceeds going to parish projects – we would continue to support our Congolese orphanages.

Today **Second Collection for the seminary.** Thanks for your generosity!

Next Saturday from 09:30 till 01:00 pm **Advent Retreat**

Next Sunday the Spanish Community invites all of us for the typical **Pastorela**, a Mexican Advent celebration at around 01:30 pm in the Refectory of the monastery