



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

Today's Prayer

How great a good was conferred on humankind by the handing over of Christ! God had in his thoughts our salvation by which we are redeemed; Judas had in his thoughts the price for which he sold the Lord.

March 29th and 30th 2014

The Fourth Sunday of Lent
– Year A

St. Thomas Church

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THE FOURTH LENTEN SUNDAY-A, in Laetare

In contrast to the other three evangelists, John, the author of the fourth gospel, presents Jesus' teachings in a rather novel manner. Instead of an expected "narrative style" he theologially focuses on eight specific *miracles* or *signs* to strengthen his community now troubled with internal dissension and external political pressures. The evangelist at once identifies *Christ's mission* through potent signs and extensive teaching passages. Today's gospel of the blind man's healing is a case in point. The act of healing- an amalgam of traditional "folk medicine" and Jesus' word-passes us by quickly with the hostile opposition of religious leaders. Bitter recriminations leveled progressively at the healed man and his parents end with invectives directed at Jesus himself. The cause was simple. Using the Sabbath as an occasion for this healing Jesus patently "broke the Law" by performing two of some 39 actions forbidden on a holy day: first, he mixed mud and second, he applied said mud as a salve. But there is something more implied than a sabbatarian infraction. By the time this gospel was written (ca. AD 90), Jewish Christians now no longer welcomed in and often forcibly expelled from synagogues, had to explain, defend and demonstrate their faith in Jesus of Nazareth. Who was he and what were his credentials "proving" his messianic origin and mission. The narrative of the healed blind man reflecting back some 50 years into the public ministry of Jesus was used as a faith-*sign* for those beleaguered Christians in their struggle with an increasingly exclusive Synagogue. Since only God heals, it was Jesus by divine authority who set aside the sanctity of the Sabbath for this merciful action. In so doing, the Christians would see him as divinely commissioned. But a paradox remains. The man cured certainly came to faith in Jesus while the religious authorities- though they claimed to see- remained spiritually blind. In our lives we, too, can become so inured to an obtuse spirit or religious blindness that we may feel not only self-justified but even hostile to the presence of God's healing gifts when offered. Let us keep open the eyes of faith.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

CLEARING THE WORRY FROM MY MIND

Jn 9:1-41; Jn 3:14-21; Lk 15:1-3, 11-32 I cannot be afraid to be bold or worry about what others think of me. The man born blind didn't worry about the outcome of his case; he stood up to the Jewish leaders and lectured them. Pray this week to have that attitude and to trust God no matter what.

MONDAY: TAKING JESUS AT HIS WORD

Is 65:17-21; Jn 4:43-54 The royal official who asked Jesus to heal his son lived a day's journey away. He headed home, believing, but he must have worried. Can I relate? Have I ever trusted God but had to wait to see the outcome?

TUESDAY: DO I WANT TO BE MADE WELL?

Ez 47:1-9, 12; Jn 5:1-16 Jesus could ask me the same question. Do I really want to trust God in everything? What would life be like if I did not worry?

WEDNESDAY: THE SON ACTS NOT ON HIS OWN

Is 49:8-15; Jn 5:17-30 If Jesus could do "nothing on his own," surely I am even more dependent on God's grace to overcome my problems. If worry (or anything else) is cluttering my life, I ask for God's help. I, too, can do nothing on my own.

THURSDAY: ACCEPTING GLORY FROM OTHERS

Ex 32:7-14; Jn 5:31-47 Jesus accuses the Jewish leaders of caring more for one another's approval than for God's. Is that a problem in my life? I ask Jesus to help me seek God first.

FRIDAY: THE GOSSIPS OF JERUSALEM

Wis 2:1a, 12-22; Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30 The pilgrims in Jerusalem were having a great time gossiping about Jesus. Do I worry about what others are saying about me behind my back and want to "set the record straight"? I discuss this with Jesus, who experienced the same problem.

SATURDAY: COMMITTING MY CAUSE TO GOD

Jer 11:18-20; Jn 7:40-53 Jeremiah was thrown into a cistern, and Jesus was made fun of for doing God's work. Doing and saying what is right often lead to persecution and ridicule. Today, I ask God to help me be strong and bold. If I am persecuted, I am in good company.

Holy Week Schedule 2014

April 13th, PASSION (or PALM) SUNDAY, there will be a joint service with the Czech and Spanish communities beginning at Infant Jesus of Prague Church- Karmelitska street- at 11:00 am.

April 16th, Spy Wednesday, in Holy Week, Confessions and Mass at 18:00/06:00 pm in Saint Barbara's Chapel.

April 17th, HOLY THURSDAY.

At 9:00am Mass with the Cardinal in the Cathedral of St. Vitus.

At 06:30/18:30 Mass of the Lord's Supper with the Washing of Feet, the Transfer of the Sacrament.

At 09:00/21:00 Adoration.

April 18th , GOOD FRIDAY.

At 06:00/18:00pm the *Stations of the Cross*. At 06:30/18:30 the *Liturgy of the Death and Burial of the Lord*.

April 19th, HOLY SATURDAY.

From 10:00 – 12:00 Confessions will be heard and Easter food will be blessed.

08:00/20:00 the *VIGIL OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD, MASS followed by the OPENING OF THE TOMB, THEOPHORIC PROCESSION.*

April 20th, EASTER SUNDAY. Mass at 11:00am followed by the THEOPHORIC PROCESSION and the ENCUESTRO

*****The 17th Annual Marian Pilgrimage** to the Shrine of the **Gracious Madonna**, at sv. Dobrotiva-Zajecov, will be held on May 31st . We meet in front of St. Joseph's church on Josefská Street, at 08:30 am, Saturday morning, June 4th . 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

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

**Last Sunday we organized a collection of English children's books to benefit the ZŠ nám. Curieových school library in Prague. Sadly, many of the donated books disappeared from the box left in the church courtyard during mass. If anyone mistakenly took some books please get in touch with Aurelia Kálovcová (contact below) to arrange to pick them up. TEL: 724 182 470 email: backatya@gmail.com

****Clothing Drive for Kids and Adults.** Cleaning out your closet? Moving? We are taking donations of new or gently used kids and adults clothing and bedding, as well as new (unopened) personal care items to benefit those in need in our community through the St. Tomas Clothing Charity. Donation bins will be located in the courtyard, under the English-speaking community's bulletin board, until Easter. Tell your school, work and friends that their donations are welcome!

Special medical service for expats in St. Francis Hospital, Prague

Since the beginning of this year, St. Francis Hospital, in the city centre of Prague, has been operating a new special medical service for foreign expats and patients from abroad. The hospital is faced daily with a high demand of tourists who, due to holidays, move to the city center of Prague where the hospital is located. The hospital also provides extra services for foreigners and expats who travel to Prague to work and stay in the Czech Republic. These foreigners and expats, from time to time, need specialized medical care. Doctor Tomáš Šebek, MD, who regularly attends international health projects, leads a new inhouse consultation service and has a rich experience of this area. Sister Veritas of the Congregation of St. Charles Borromeo provides counseling along with him as an experienced clinical psychologist and former member of a team for former president Václav Havel. The project is supported by the district of Prague 1, the founder of St. Francis Hospital.

. **Contact:** St. Francis Hospital - Nemocnice na Františku, Na Františku 123, Praha 1, Tomáš Šebek, MD tamas.sebek@gmail.com, tel.: +420 222 801 343, +420 728

*****Lenten Services*****

-**Wednesdays.** Bible studies from 06:30 7:30 pm. An opportunity to explore the Word of God.

-**Thursdays.** Mass will be offer at 06:15 pm in St Barbara's Chapel. Confession will be heard before and after Mass.

- **Fridays.** Stations of the Cross at 06:00 pm. Follow by devotions to Saint Nicholas of Tolentine. Confession will be heard immediately afterwards.

- **Saturdays.** Mass at 06:00pm follow by Confessions.

* *Please note:* Confessions will also be heard upon request at anytime