



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

# St. Thomas Church

## Today's Prayer

Say this prayer today

My soul longs for your presence, Lord.  
When I turn my thoughts to you,  
I find peace and contentment.

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September 6th -7th, 2014

23<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Sunday

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## The Reflection of the Gospel

Today's gospel reading is one of four "discourses" given by Jesus and is concerned with discipline or good order in the community. Drawing its inspiration out of the Old Testament (the Bible of the early Church), the underlying principal is, how can an erring member be forgiven his offense and so be readmitted to the community.

There are three steps to this process. It should be noted that the offense, though not named, is grave enough to involve the community and as such has to be forgiven by the community either individually or collectively. The *first instance* is self-explanatory. When a brother or sister sins, a private but firm fraternal correction is regarded as the ideal recommended by Leviticus 19:17: "You shall reason with your neighbor, lest you sin because of him." In those cases, however, when such an ideal is unrealizable than the *second instance* drawn from Deuteronomy 19:15: "Only on the testimony of two or three witnesses, can a charge be upheld," is to be employed. Obviously, the charge must be more grave to warrant such a correction. The *third*, or *final instance*, is most grave. When all else fails and the brother or sister remains incorrigible, then with the full authority given its leaders (Matthew 16:18) and the community itself (Matthew 18:18), the Church is to expel the recalcitrant from its midst. Until proper repentance is demonstrated, such a one shall be treated "like a pagan or a tax collector"; in other words, "like an outsider."

Matthew concludes this somber but "emergency" passage with the reminder that to implement these painful remedies the community must seek agreement in prayer. Only with the authority of Jesus prayerfully present in such decisions will the good of the errant brother or sister be paramount.

## Study of the Today's Readings

### FIRST READING

In these few verses, Ezekiel realized his calling. He was to be the watchman at the city gate. Like other watchmen, he delivered news and orders from the king. Unlike other watchmen, he was not the gatekeeper who allowed the king's friends access to the city, while keeping his enemies at a distance. Ezekiel was to call the sinner to repentance. He called those leaving God's city (i.e., the community) to return. There is strength in numbers. But for the Church, we are not talking about a body count, but the number of sincere, sorrowful hearts. If we hear God's watchmen, like Ezekiel, and return, our presence will make a difference. For we show others the kind of God we follow and the type of people with whom we associate.

### SECOND READING

How are Christians to act in areas not covered by civic laws? Here, Paul used the Torah (especially the Ten Commandments) as a backdrop to promote a popular rabbinic interpretation:

**Coffee, Cookies & Conversation** follows Sunday's 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

## Project "Back to school 2014"

Its Back to School time! As you know, the St. Tomas Religious Education Program takes a special interest in kids in need in our community. We are now holding our third School Supplies Drive to collect much-needed school supplies for the children of our parish school, those in foster care or orphanages, and in shelters or safehouses in Prague. During the next 2 weeks – till Sunday, September 7th, please bring new unused school supplies, such as colored pens or pencils, paper, notebooks, kid's safety scissors, glue sticks, backpacks or even new clothes, sports shoes, etc, to the basket under the English Community's bulletin board in the courtyard. Cash donations are very welcome and will be put towards whichever items are most needed (if you would like to donate cash, please do so in person to Mary Beth Hlavsá or Fr. Juan, or via a sealed envelope in the collection basket clearly labelled "For School Supplies Drive". PLEASE DO NOT leave cash donations in the donation bin). Thank you!

## Activities

-If you would like to receive a copy of the **bulletin** by email, please contact [osaprag@augustiniani.cz](mailto:osaprag@augustiniani.cz)

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

-We **welcome** our visitors and invite you to join us for refreshments immediately after Mass in the summer refectory of the monastery.

- If you would like to serve as a lector or Eucharistic minister at the Sunday mass please contact Ann at [dalyaann@hotmail.com](mailto:dalyaann@hotmail.com). Training will be provided for those who have not previously served in these ministries.

- **Religious Education is starting from the 21<sup>th</sup> of September at 9:45am.** If you wish to enrol your children please contact Mary Beth at [redirector@augustiniani.cz](mailto:redirector@augustiniani.cz)

- **Help at Sv. Dobrotiva** in Zaječov. Saturday September 20<sup>th</sup>. Meeting in front of St. Thomas Church at 09:30am. We will be back at 05 pm. Thanks for your help to the oldest Augustinian Marian place in the Czech Republic.

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

- Parish Council meeting. Sunday September 7<sup>th</sup> at 12:15 pm

## FEASTS and ANNIVERSARIES: September

**07. Melchior, Marek and Stepan**(+1619) the Martyrs of Kosice, Slovakia.

-Brazil Independence Day (1822)

**08. Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.**

**10. Nicholas of Tolentine, OSA** (+1305), "the Wonder Worker" and devoted helper of the poor. On his feast day bread is blessed and distributed to the sick and needy.

### Blessing of St. Nicholas of Tolentine Bread

**On one occasion, when St. Nicholas was very ill, it is related in his life that the Blessed Virgin appeared to him in a vision and told him to procure a little bread and eat it, moistened with water, and he would be cured. The saint did so, and he was instantly restored to health. From this fact the Blessed Bread of St. Nicholas had its origin. [From the Augustinian Prayer Book]**

#### Presider:

Let us pray to Christ, the Lord, who went about doing good and curing all those who were sick, that he may bestow upon his body, the Church, the gifts of his love.

Almighty and eternal God, who are Lord of all things, bless + this bread and those who receive it with true devotion in honor of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, and grant them health of mind and body. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*[Sprinkle the bread with holy water and invite all to come and take a piece of blessed bread]*

#### All recite together:

Almighty God,  
in Saint Nicholas of Tolentine  
you show us the ideal of the apostolic life.  
He brought comfort to the sorrowful,  
reconciliation to the estranged,  
relief to the poor,  
gifts of healing to the sick,  
not for his own glory  
but for the glory of your Son.  
In hope of that vision of your splendor  
promised to the clean of heart,  
Saint Nicholas spared no pains  
to give himself to the way of the Gospel.  
Your glory has shone upon the Church  
through the holiness and miracles  
of Saint Nicholas of Tolentine.  
Through his intercession  
keep your holy people in peace and unity.  
Amen.