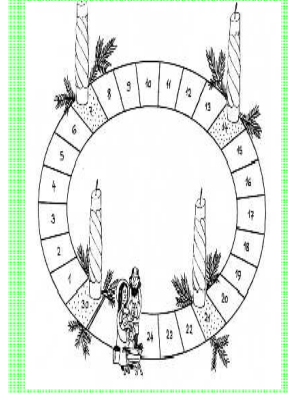




St. Thomas Church: established July 1, 1285 by King Vaclav II

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.



November 27th and 28th 2010

The First Sunday of Advent-Year A

St. Thomas Church

Josefska 8, Mala Strana, Prague 1, 118 01

Tel: 257 532 675, 602 643 365

Fax: 257532677

Reflection on the Gospel

Advent, a word derived from the Latin "coming", is that season of the year in which we not only celebrate the feast of Christ's nativity in Bethlehem but also two other equally important *comings* or *advents*. The wholesale marking of Christmas which means "the Mass of Christ" has dulled our religious perceptions as to the true inner meaning of not only Christmas but of Advent. The anomalous situation of shops blaring out *Silent Night* before Thanksgiving only confuses the issue. In order to appreciate the lessons of this beautiful time of quiet preparation we can divide Advent into two distinct time frames. The first extends from the first Sunday of Advent to December 16 and is followed by the last half from the December 16 to the Vigil of Christmas on December 24. The first half of the season is somewhat grim and foreboding. The Gospel readings remind us of judgment and urgent contingency measures in face of the Lord's sudden appearance. As in the past, these crisp gospel passages have been subject to endless interpretations both within and without the Church. The more recent Jehovah Witnesses, for example, had been forced to recalculate the final day "of reckoning" as occurring in 1875, 1915 and finally in 1975. The early Christian community of Mark the evangelist did believe that Jesus was on "his way" with the destruction of Jerusalem and wholesale deportation of Israel following the disastrous *Jewish War* (AD 66-72). The end did not come and the later evangelists (Matthew, Luke and John) now read back into Jesus' word; what they found was that he did enjoy watchfulness and prayer in face of the encroaching judgment. Neither the day nor the hour was the subject of discussion, prayerful vigilance was. But, there is still a third advent amidst the historical commemoration of Jesus and the dark day of the Last Judgment.

The Third advent is that which we experience in the reception of the sacraments, since it is Jesus who creates the community of the Church through and within the Eucharist. As we begin our Advent let us keep in mind all three comings of the Lord: in the past at Christmas, in the future through judgment and each day with prayer, the scriptures and the sacrament of the altar. May we never grow lax or indifferent "on the watch" no

Study of the Second Reading

Paul shared the early Christians' expectation of Christ's imminent return. He may have been one of the first apostles to proclaim this apocalyptic gospel drawn from late Jewish traditions. In this passage he urged the Romans to be unceasingly aware of the new order Jesus came to bring. They were to mirror his life in word and action. At the same time, as C.H. Dodd pointed out, the idea of the imminent "Day of the Lord" may have been fading in Paul's mind because this is the only passage in his Roman letter where he wrote of it. Instead he had begun to think those who believe in and follow Christ already live in the new Age. "The ethics of crisis," to adopt Dodd's phrase, "gave point to his moral exhortations." (Hodder & Stoughton. *Romans. The Moffatt New Testament Commentary*, 1932, 209.)

The contrast of light and darkness in vss.12-13 reflected the dramatic change of behavior and character which their newly acquired faith brought to those early Christians. Paul's earlier Letter to the Galatians 5:16-25 had made this same sharp contrast where Paul had compared the life of the Spirit and the life of the flesh.

In vs. 14 the phrase "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" may refer to the new garments put on the newly baptized as a symbol of the new spiritual life God had given them through faith in Christ. Paul used this favorite image several times in his correspondence. It meant simply following the moral example and character of Jesus into whose Body they had been mystically incorporated by baptism.

No less a saint than Augustine of Hippo confessed that this passage brought about his historic conversion. Christians still witness to the life-transforming experience of an encounter with Christ, though perhaps some do not experience it as dramatically as others.

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

- 30 *Andrew* the first called apostle is particularly venerated as the special Patron of Scotland and the Ukraine. Legend has it that he was crucified on an X shaped cross in Patras, Greece.
- 01 *Edmund Campion*, an English Jesuit priest, was cruelly murdered for the profession of faith during the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1.
- 03 *Francis Xavier*, the famous Jesuit missionary, who died on the frontier of China, is the Patron of Missions.
- 04 *Barbara of Nicomedia* is celebrated as the Patroness of our Chapel. In her honor Mass will be offered at 06:45am and at 12:15 pm.

Sv Tomas English Speaking Community Calendar Autumn 2010

November

- Sunday 7th Lunch for those recently married at St Tomas
- Saturday 13th Youth Day
- Sunday 21st Thanksgiving dinner

December

- Saturday 4th Advent Retreat
- Saturday 11th Youth Day

Regular

- Coffee after church – Every Sunday
- Taize evening – first Thursday of each month at 07:30 pm
- Sunday School – Sunday 9:45 (before mass)
- Children's Mass – 1st Sunday of the month
- Lectio Divina – 2nd Tuesday of every month at Jim and Emily's
- Marriage Prep = Monthly on 3rd Saturday – please contact for details
- St Tomas has a strong choir made up from all the communities. Please ask for more information
- Work service in Sv. Dobrotivá. 3rd Saturday of every month

www.augustiniani.cz • tel 257530556, 602643365 • osaprag@augustiniani.cz

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

We welcome all our new parishioners to St. Thomas Church. Please introduce yourselves, if you wish, at refreshments after the 11:00 am Mass on Sundays or just call us or visit at your convenience.

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:

Saturday evening at 5:30pm and after Mass or by appointment.

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. 12 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 next Sunday December 05, at 11:00 am Mass.

St. Nicholas Visit follows Mass on 5 December. Parents are asked to bring a gift for your child (make sure name is on the gift) and a small gift for the orphanage. Gifts will be collected outside the Religious Education classrooms or in the Sacristy before Mass

Thanksgiving Day, in the Archbishop's Palace Nov. 28st

Saint Augustine's School A Comprehensive School with a heart open to wisdom Hornokrčská 3, 140 00 Praha 4 – Krč www.skolasvatehoagustina.cz

Augustinians schools seeks to educate young men as they pursue learning within the context of the Catholic faith in a community comprising parents, staff and students past and present, who strive to be "of one mind and heart on the way towards God".

(St Augustine)

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