



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

Today's Prayer

The more we call on God
the more we can feel God's
presence.
Day by day we are drawn closer
to the loving heart of God.

February 12th and 13th 2011

The Sixth Sunday in
Ordinary Time – Year A

St. Thomas Church

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GOSPEL REFLEXION

Jesus commented on two, interrelated commands on oaths: 1) do not take false oaths and 2) keep an oath to the Lord. The majority of the discussion in 5:34-36 focused on the false oath, basing an oath on something that has no value (so the oath could be taken lightly). By relating creation and Jerusalem to God, Jesus basically asserted there is no such thing as an "oath taken lightly." Every oath is an oath made to God, so must be taken seriously. People are better off just answering "Yes" or "No" and meaning it than to make idle oaths.

What of serious oaths? Father Meier in his tome "A Marginal Jew, Volume Four" applied the injunction of Jesus to any oath made to God. He pointed out the almost weekly use of non-trivial oaths to God. According to Meiers, Jesus opposed such oaths, even those commanded in the Torah! Yet, St. Paul swore oaths to the Lord, even for his apostolic ministry (see Acts 18:18 and 21:17, for example). Why Jesus would oppose a common, but pious act remains a mystery. Personally, I cannot think of any theological reason to defend the "Yes, yes, no, no" injunction beyond the condemnation of false or trivial oaths.

Jesus' commentary on Torah precepts continue in 5:38-48 (Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A). As we continue the study, let's keep in mind the reason for the commentary in Matthew's gospel: Jesus sought to teach the purest notion of the Law. Such purity was meant to lead the adherent into a fuller relationship with God. These interpretations were idealistic, so they were meant as goal to reach.

How do you try to live out God's Laws? How has the effort brought you closer to God?

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

STUDY OF THE SECOND READING

Sometimes, we post-moderns are swept up in our own hubris. We think we live in a golden time, or, at least a n enlightened time. "If people in the past only knew what we know," the logic goes, "they would have (fill in the blank)." The past was blind, but now we can see. We are so much wiser than they were, based upon our knowledge. We could never make the mistakes they made. We're superior.

Of course, such prejudice is pure hubris. We might know more, but we are still blind, because we are ignorant of so much more. A truly wise person is humbled by the fact that the more he knows, the more he realizes what he doesn't know. He also realizes that contemporary knowledge does not automatically leads to a better life, either ethically or spiritually or psychologically. What we know does not make us better people.

In these short verses to the community at Corinth, St. Paul implicitly gave them that message. Information, even spiritual gnosis, along with spiritual charisms, does not make them superior people. In fact, Paul explicitly undercut any such argument by shifting to a Jewish notion of wisdom. The wisdom of the Living God could only be gleaned from his activity in the world. His ultimate revelation, his highest level of activity in the world was found in the presence, life, death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus was the WISDOM of God. This was the WISDOM Paul proclaimed to the community, to the elderly, even to the leaders of the age. Opposed to this dynamic revelation, the wisdom of the Greek age was found in whatever special knowledge they claimed to have. But that self-centered "wisdom" blinded them to the presence of God found in Christ Jesus. If the contemporaries of Jesus would have seen God's WISDOM (the true identity of the Christ), they would not have crucified him. But, how can they, or anyone, behold God's WISDOM? That insight is the activity of the Spirit which knows all things, even the depths of the divine.

Collection Appeal

Please Contribute Generously to the Parish Collection as we are not meeting our required budget to run all of the activities. We thank you greatly for your kindness Our Weekly Budget is 10,000kč/week.

Summary of the Fourth Parish Assembly on 27th January 2011 in the Crypt Café

The three communities were represented as follows: Czech – 23 parishioners, Spanish – 10, English – 3 (total: 36).

After an initial welcome from the new parish administrator Fr. Vít Mariusz, each community presented its experience of the liturgy. It is particularly good to see the growth of the Spanish-speaking community in both numbers and the range of activities that the community organizes over the last year or more.

Key outcomes of the assembly are as follows:

Liturgy. We will continue to hold joint Holy Masses at Christmas, Palm Sunday, Easter and Corpus Christi, and will retain the 11am start on Palm Sunday that was pioneered last year. A committee consisting of representatives from each of the three communities will meet to prepare the texts for these Masses in all 3 languages and to agree who will be responsible for what (readings, prayers of the faithful, offertory...). There will continue to be a short sermon in each language but the aim is to ensure that the length of the services remains reasonable.

Community Life. There are four celebrations that take place through the year that should be seen as opportunities for the three communities to come together. The Spanish-speaking community is responsible for the Christmas “Pastorela”, the Czech community for the parish barbeque and the English-speaking community for Thanksgiving. In addition there is the Parish Dance (**this year on 25th February**).

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

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.

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.

We continue to call for all to act responsibly in maintaining the **tidiness and cleanliness of common areas**, especially the summer refectory!

The **new web pages** of the Parish of St Thomas are ready to go on line. Each community must first however volunteer 1-2 people to administer their language section. Tim Young and Jim Willetts volunteered for the English-speaking community.

The **parish café in the crypt** is open every Wednesday from 6 to around 10.30pm and is run by young people from the Czech community. The proceeds are used to fund the participation of these young people at international Catholic and Augustinian meetings.

Each community has a different experience of **retreats**. The Czech community had poor attendance at the Advent retreat, whilst the English-speaking community had good attendance and there are plans for a pilgrimage to Taizé this summer. The Spanish-speaking community had very good experience with a weekend retreat for families out of Prague.

Finance. A special vote of thanks was made to the English-speaking community, whose contributions to the parish budget enable a balanced budget to be achieved (without them it would be impossible to pay the basic costs of heating, lighting, etc.).

Various. The number of homeless people served at the monastery on Saturdays is rising and all help is welcomed. Thanks are due to helpers from the English-speaking community who have been contributing food.

Finally, it was agreed that the assembly should meet again in a year's time, even though it is by no means a requirement.

Saint Augustine's School

“A Comprehensive School with a heart open to wisdom”

Hornokrčská 3, 140 00 Praha 4 – Krč

www.skolasvatehoaugustina.cz

Registrations open!

Congratulation to Adriana and Tim Young for their new daughter Anna, that was born on Wednesday Feb. 9th.

Parish dance on the 25th of February in the Archbishops Palace. Please, buy the tickets with Michael Rainey