



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

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING:

„ My children cannot be
sold as slaves“

(Leviticus 25)



Advent 2011

December 3rd and 04th 2011

The 1st Sunday of Advent. B

St. Thomas Church

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Reflection on the Gospel

For centuries it was thought that Mark's short gospel of 16 chapters was a summary of Matthew's longer and presumably older gospel. Contemporary scholars, however, generally agree that Mark is in fact older than the other three and that he freely adapted much of his information about Jesus and his ministry from yet another older (non-extant) document termed the Q (the German *quellen* or source).

Through close application of the rules of literary criticism, there is major consensus that Mark wrote during the turbulent days of the Jewish War (AD 66 –72) in order to assist his Christian community now under attack by Jewish guerrillas as traitors and the Romans as subversives in their hazardous journey of discipleship. The opening sentence of Mark proclaims that this is the gospel, an Anglo-Saxon word translating the Greek euangelion meaning “good news of” or “about Jesus Christ”. Commonly conferred in the first century, the name Jesus itself, a Greek rendition of the Hebrew Jehosuah or Joshua (“God will save”), is used here as “sign” of what is to follow (nomen or his name = omen or a sign). Jesus (like his Old Testament namesake, Joshua, who once rescued Israel) is linked not only with God's past redemptive actions but with the unfolding of salvation offered both to Israel and to all that accept him as the Son of God. Mark progressively identifies Jesus as the Christ, yet another Greek term translating the Hebrew Mashiah meaning the “anointed one”. Here the evangelist, reflecting the tense political atmosphere of his day, cautiously uses this title Mashiah since a number of violent terrorists had used it in their quest for religious legitimization in war against Roman rule. For Mark this hesitancy in using this volatile designation has been termed the messianic secret; that is, Jesus' messianic identity was at first revealed only to and for his immediate entourage (“the 12”). But this title “Christ” was to be used by Jesus. At his trial when he acknowledged himself as the Messiah before Caiphas, he was “by his very words” to be sentenced for blasphemy. Mark in this passage, therefore, indicates that all who profess Jesus as the Christ could and would receive the same treatment. This gives us some idea of what the public profession of Jesus meant for the early Christians. Would we be willing to live up to what we so freely profess on our lips?

St. Barbara, Dec 4th : Patroness of our

Barbara lived in the 4th century and brought up as a heathen. A tyrannical father, Dioscorus, had kept her jealously secluded in a lonely tower which he had built for that purpose. Here, in her forced solitude, she gave herself to [prayer](#) and study, and contrived to receive instruction and [Baptism in secret](#) by a [Christian priest](#).

Barbara resisted her father's wish that she marry. Then on one occasion, during her father's absence, Barbara had three windows inserted into a bathhouse her father was constructing. Her purpose was thereby to honor the Trinity.

Dioscorus was enraged by her action and by her conversion. So he himself denounced her before the civil tribunal. She was horribly tortured, and at last was beheaded. Her own father, merciless to the last, acted as her executioner. God, however, speedily punished her persecutors. While her [soul](#) was being borne by [angels](#) to Paradise, a flash of lightning struck Dioscorus, and he was hurried before the judgment seat of God.

The [life of St. Barbara](#) is a vivid reminder that there can be much [anger](#) in our world and in our lives. Being in touch with God's presence in a very special way can do much toward relieving ourselves of our tendency to allow [anger](#) to control us. We should pray often against a sudden and unprovided death; and, above all, that we may be strengthened by the Holy [Viaticum](#) (Last Sacraments) against the dangers of our last hour.

Advent social Project: Helping to help!

We received from our brothers in Congo the next information: “During my visit in the north I met two young men who are willing to study. The first is a nurse in Dungu, he would like to study ophtalmology, since sr Jeanne, osa died we have only one old man who is helping in the ophtalmology in Dungu. I think if you can get someone who would like to help that young man to study ophtamology here in Kinshasa it will be great. I will let you know the total amount of the two years study in few days. The second boy is from Doruma, he has just finish secondary school, he would like to study law because many people do not know their right. He is looking for someone who can help him with 1500\$ for three years study(500\$ each year) starting if possible this school year”. It a possibility for our community to help someone that is going to help manv. More information with Fr. Juan

Advent Recollection:

Saturday, December 10, 2011
9:30AM to 12:00, St. Thomas Refectory

The Human Face of Christ:

Talk by Sister Bernadette of the Good Shepherd Sisters:

Followed by exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Confession

Mass at St. Barbara's Chapel

ALL ARE WELCOME!

THIS SUNDAY AFTER 11:00AM MASS!

Parishioner's Day – Open House

What's going on in St. Thomas community? You'd be surprised how much! Therefore, the Parish Council is sponsoring a Parishioner's Day.

The goal is twofold – to inform new and old parishioners alike of all the activities, opportunities to grow faith and opportunities to serve in the community AND to have an opportunity to grow community by meeting each other and networking.

The many different aspects of our community will be on display with representatives to discuss the area. The areas include but are not limited to:

- Religious Education & Children's Liturgy
- Augustinian School
- Music
- Liturgy (altar service, lectors, ushers, Eucharistic ministers)
- Hospitality after Mass
- Family Ministry (Focus on Abortion & Human Trafficking)
- Adult Religious Education, Inquiry Classes, Marriage Preparation
- Augustinian Spirituality Class
- Christian Meditation
- Community Celebrations (Parish Festival, Thanksgiving dinner, etc.)
- Parish finances and fund raising
- Language classes (English, Czech, German & Spanish)

Please join us! Food and refreshments will be served.

The Christmas Schedule:

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24th :

18:30/6:30pm Christmas Mass
23:30/11:30pm Christmas Carols (Czech and English) followed by Midnight Mass in three languages. After Mass there will be the traditional procession to Bethlehem and the adoration of the Savior.

CHRISTMAS DAY, Dec. 25th MASS at 11am

26th December Saint Stephen's or Boxing Day.

09:30am Mass with Blessing of Grain.

Announcements and Ongoing Activities

* **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. 18 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.

* Tuesday, 06 December, the Feast of **Saint Nicholas**, in the church of Saint Nicholas, at 06:00 PM Mass will be celebrated for the intentions of our children and young people by the Cardinal Miloslav Vlk.

***St. Nicholas Visit follows Mass on 4th 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

* Today second collection for the semiarist. Thanks for your generosity!

*Sunday December 11th we will have a **join Mass** with the Czech and Spanish community. After Mass the Spanish community invites us for the advent tradition of "**Posadas**". Then will be a join lunch and in the afternoon several activities for children and adult. You are invited. Come to celebrate with us!

Collection Appeal

We would like to inform you that we have budgeted expenses of 10 000CZK per week and our collections have fallen drastically to 8000CZK. We request you 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).