



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



December 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> 2011

Christmas Year B

# St. Thomas Church

Josefska 8, Mala Strana, Prague 1, 118 01

Tel: 257 530 556, 602 643 365

Fax: 257530556

## **NEW YEAR'S DAY**

**ANNO DOMINI + 2012**

All of us, whether we advert to it or not, are on a *pilgrimage*. All of us have our own pilgrimage. Firstly, our journey from birth, through various transitional vital stages is completed in death. Secondly, since we were created by God we are drawn back to him through the sacramental rites of the church and the powerful intercession of saintly patrons and friends. Thirdly, as temporary inhabitants of this planet we are travelling at 67,000 mph on the earth's 365 days' journey around the sun. At the same time we are with all the rest of the planets in our system journeying 633,000 mph around our galaxy. This pilgrimage takes our solar system 230 million years to circle the center of the Milky Way. By the way, we are all travelling 1.4 million mph toward the constellation Hydra..

As we continue on our journey let us strive for a new beginning in and through Christ. Hilaire Belloc, a Catholic British poet wrote:

*From quiet hours and first beginning,  
out to the undiscovered ends,  
there is nothing worth the wear of winning,  
but laughter and the love of friends.*

All of us are busy. But, let us not forget that "laughter" and "love" make all fresh beginnings worthwhile.

For centuries, there was a liturgical expression pronounced before any journey or procession. Let us reflect on its meaning: *Procedamus in pace or Let us go forth in peace!* And the beautiful response: *Deo gratias or Thanks be to God!*

## **FEASTS AND OTHER ANNIVERSARIES: JANUARY**

**03. Fulgentius (+527)** African Augustinian bishop and noted theologian who suffered much for his orthodoxy.

**Genevieve(+512)** Noted lay-woman, councillor of kings, venerated as Patroness of Paris.

**04. Christina of the Cross (+1312)** Augustinian nun and mystic.

**Elizabeth Seton (+1821)** Organized the Sisters of Charity in the USA and foundress of the Catholic school system in that country.

**05. John Neuman CSSR (+1860)** Czech missionary and fourth bishop of Philadelphia.

**06. EPIPHANY or MANIFESTATION OF THE LORD will be observed on Sunday, January 09.**

**Abbot Rehor Mendel, OSA (+1884)** superior of the Brno Augustinians whose work in genetics changed the course of modern biology.

**Frere Andre Bessette, CSC (+1937),** A humble Canadian brother who organized the devotion to St. Joseph in the famous Saint-Joseph Oratory, Montreal, Canada.

**07. Knute or Canute (+1131)** Saint and king of Denmark who is venerated as Patron of Denmark.

**Raymond of Penafort, OP (+1275)** Spanish Dominican, writer and moralist.

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS  
POPE BENEDICT XVI  
FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE  
WORLD DAY OF PEACE**

**1 JANUARY 2012**

**EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE IN JUSTICE  
AND PEACE**

1. The beginning of a new year, God's gift to humanity, prompts me to extend to all, with great confidence and affection, my heartfelt good wishes that this time now before us may be marked concretely by justice and peace.

With what attitude should we look to the New Year? We find a very beautiful image in Psalm 130. The Psalmist says that people of faith wait for the Lord "more than those who watch for the morning" (v. 6); they wait for him with firm hope because they know that he will bring light, mercy, salvation. This waiting was born of the experience of the Chosen People, who realized that God taught them to look at the world in its truth and not to be overwhelmed by tribulation. I invite you to look to 2012 with this attitude of confident trust. It is true that the year now ending has been marked by a rising sense of frustration at the crisis looming over society, the world of labour and the economy, a crisis whose roots are primarily cultural and anthropological. It seems as if a shadow has fallen over our time, preventing us from clearly seeing the light of day.

In this shadow, however, human hearts continue to wait for the dawn of which the Psalmist speaks. Because this expectation is particularly powerful and evident in young people, my thoughts turn to them and to the contribution which they can and must make to society. I would like therefore to devote this message for the XLV World Day of Peace to the theme of education: "*Educating Young People in Justice and Peace*", in the conviction that the young, with their enthusiasm and idealism, can offer new hope to the world.

My Message is also addressed to parents, families and all those involved in the area of education and formation, as well as to leaders in the various spheres of religious, social, political, economic and cultural life and in the media. Attentiveness to young people and their concerns, the ability to listen to them and appreciate them, is not merely something expedient; it represents a primary duty for society as a whole, for the sake of building a future of justice and peace.

It is a matter of communicating to young people an appreciation for the positive value of life and of awakening in them a desire to spend their lives in the service of the Good. This is a task which engages each of us personally.

The concerns expressed in recent times by many young people around the world demonstrate that they desire to look to the future with solid hope.

At the present time, they are experiencing apprehension about many things: they want to receive an education which prepares them more fully to deal with the real world, they see how difficult it is to form a family and to find stable employment; they wonder if they can really contribute to political, cultural and economic life in order to build a society with a more human and fraternal face.

It is important that this unease and its underlying idealism receive due attention at every level of society. The Church looks to young people with hope and confidence; she encourages them to seek truth, to defend the common good, to be open to the world around them and willing to see "new things" (Is 42:9; 48:6).

(The whole document you can read at:  
[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/messages/peace/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_mes\\_20111208\\_xlv-world-day-peace\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/peace/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20111208_xlv-world-day-peace_en.html)



**Blessing**

**The Presidents of the Czech, English and Spanish Parish councils, the members of the various parish committees, Fr. Juan, Fr. Antonio, Fr. Vít, Fr. Jan and Fr. William, the pastor sincerely wish you, your families, guests, visitors and our benefactors, the blessings of peace, health, joy and success as we enter into a new year of service in Malá Strana-Prague.**