



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



**YEAR OF FAITH:**  
**OCT. 11, 2012-NOV. 24, 2013**  
"The 'door of faith' (Acts 14:27) is always open for us, ushering us into the life of communion with God and offering entry into his Church."---Pope Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter Porta Fidei for the Indiction of the Year of Faith.

January 05<sup>th</sup> and 06<sup>th</sup> 2013

The Epiphany Sunday

# St. Thomas Church

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## THE SOLEMNITY OF EPIPHANY, THE MANIFESTATION OF JESUS

*Early Egyptian Christians celebrated the Visit of the Magi (Matthew 2) as well as the baptism of the Lord (Mark 1:6-11) on January 6. From the fifth century this day has been celebrated throughout the eastern Churches as Christmas Eve since the Birth of Christ according to the Julian calendar is commemorated on 07 January. Throughout central Europe, door lintels are chalk-marked with the cipher of the year and the initials of the "Three Kings" (traditionally Casper, Melchior, Baltassar) who offered gifts to the Infant Jesus, i.e., 20+C+M+B+13. Perhaps, we can mark our own doors in faith.*

### The Epiphany Proclamation

Dear brothers and sisters, the glory of the Lord has shone upon us, and shall ever be manifest among us, until the day of his return.

Through the rhythms of times and seasons let us celebrate the mysteries of salvation.

Let us recall the year's culmination, the Easter Triduum of the Lord: his last supper, his crucifixion, his burial, and his rising celebrated between the evening of the Twenty-Eighth day of March and the evening of the Thirtieth day of March, Easter Sunday being on the Thirty-First day of March.

Each Easter -- as on each Sunday -- the Holy Church makes present the great and saving deed by which Christ has for ever conquered sin and death.

From Easter are reckoned all the days we keep holy.

Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, will occur on the Thirteenth day of February.

The Ascension of the Lord will be commemorated on the Ninth day of May.

Pentecost, joyful conclusion of the season of Easter, will be celebrated on the Nineteenth day of May.

And, this year the First Sunday of Advent will be on the First day of December.

Likewise the pilgrim Church proclaims the passover of Christ in the feasts of the holy Mother of God, in the feasts of the Apostles and Saints, and in the commemoration of the faithful departed.

To Jesus Christ, who was, who is, and who is to come, Lord of time and history, be endless praise, for ever and ever.

Amen.

## Study of the Reading

### **SECOND READING:**

At the time this letter was written, Ephesus was a major seaport on the west coast of Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). At the mouth of Cayster River, the city had a long history. Ionic Greeks settled the area in the tenth century B.C. Ephesus was controlled by different major powers as a gateway to the Aegean Sea. In 133 B.C., the Romans conquered the seaport and controlled the area for the next millennium. Many biblical scholars have questioned the authorship of this letter to the city. The writing style and grammar of the letter did not match those of Paul's other writings. Ephesus was not mentioned in the salutation of the letter, unlike the Paul's other letters. And, one of Paul's major themes (the controversy over baptizing Gentiles into the community) seemed to be missing; the author spoke of a co-equal relationship between Jews and Gentiles (2:11-22). Many have speculated that the letter was written to a group of church communities in Asia Minor (Ephesus would have been the stand out), by one of Paul's disciples in 80-90 A.D. Since the ancient people had no sense of copyright laws and a critical view of history, writing in the name and spirit of a known teacher was not uncommon at the time. Chapter 3 focused upon Paul's role as the herald for God's revelation. God revealed a divine mystery to Paul and gave him a mission to share that mystery with others. The mystery was God's plan of salvation. In hindsight, Paul could see the unfolding revelation peak in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Paul shared his mission to evangelize with others (apostles and Christian prophets). The power that drove these men was God's very Spirit. As a result, Gentiles shared in the promise made to the Jews by God (co-heirs), they sat as equals at the table of the Lord with their Jewish brethren, and they shared the same hope in the coming of the Messiah. The Good News (a vehicle of God's "grace") was the means for faith. We evangelize others through our words and example. But have you ever considered evangelization as a vehicle for God's grace? After all, like St. Paul, our words and actions present the face of Christ to others. They reveal God's activity in the world. And they invite others to join us to the Christian life.

### Upcoming Events

- 08 *Women's Day* in Greece. *Galileo Galilei* (+1642), *Robert Baden Powell* (+1941).
- 09 *Adrian of Canterbury* (+709) founded the first school on English soil. Today is also the birthday of *Karel Capek* (\*1890) who coined the word *robot* and *Simone de Beauvoir* (\*1908) who pioneered *feminism*.
- 10 *Kentigern of Glasgow* (+603) evangelized that city and its environs. Today died *Carolus Linnaeus* (+1778), the Swedish botanist and *Gabriel Mistral* (+1957), the Chilean diplomat-poet

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### Announcements and Ongoing Activities

\*We are looking for a **professional English teacher** to teach English to children from 3 till 7 years old. Please contact Fr. Juan if you are interested

\*Please, pray for the **Mission** in our Parish!

\***Bible Study** sessions are held each Tuesday evening at 6:30pm/18:00 in the Church office. All are welcome to join and reflect on the Word of God.

\*St Thomas' English Speaking Community now has a presence on **facebook**. Please 'like' our page and if you want to get more involved with the community, join our group!

\*The RE program will be having its annual 3 Kings Party this Sunday in the Refectory instead of the normal classes

### Epiphany

6<sup>th</sup> of January commemorates the manifestation of the glory of Christ to the Gentiles in the person of the Magi, as well as His Baptism and first miracle at Cana. Originating in the Eastern Church in the 3rd century, it soon spread to the West, where it is now commemorated especially for the apparition to the Magi. In England and many European countries it is popularly known as *Twelfth Night* (after Christmas) and is the occasion for the revival of numerous quaint customs. The feast is a holy day of obligation in England, Scotland, and Ireland. The office of the day is one of special beauty.

### Mission 2013

This reading is in support of the St Thomas mission to support the Year of Faith.

What is faith? If we are to understand how to renew our faith, we must start by understanding the meaning of faith and the uses of the word in the Bible.

If you go to the dictionary you will find definitions such as:

Confidence or trust in a person or thing

Belief that is not based on proof

Belief in God

A system of religious belief (Christian Faith, Jewish Faith)

In the bible, the word faith is used in four distinct and separate manners:

It is used to describe for a personal belief, the mental acceptance of God and his existence: Some examples of this are:

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Hebrews 11:1 King James)

We walk by faith not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7)

Faith is used to describe work or behavior that demonstrates the complete acceptance of God.

We show our faith by our works James 2:14

Just as repentance can be seen, so too "Faith can be seen" Mathew 3

Faith is used to show trusting or trustworthiness:

The story of Abraham, asked to take the life of his only son Moses who was asked to lead the Israelites from the grips of all mighty Pharaoh

The forth way it is used in the bible is to describe the faith of the masses or a believe by many, as in the Christian faith

There is a funny story about faith:

A man was being chased by a tiger. He ran as hard as he could until he was at the edge of a cliff with the tiger in hot pursuit. The man looked over the edge of the cliff and saw a branch growing out of the side of the cliff a few feet down. He jumped down and grabbed the branch just as the tiger reached the cliff. The tiger growled viciously as the man sighed a great sigh of relief.

Just then a mouse came out from a crevice and began to chew on the branch. The man looked down to what was a drop of a thousand feet and sure death and looked to the heavens and yelled out, "Dear God, if you are there, please help. I will do anything you ask but please help."

Suddenly a voice came booming down from heaven, "You will do anything I ask?" it questioned.

The man shocked to hear a reply to his plea yelled back, "I will gladly do anything you ask, but please save me."

The voice from heaven then replied, "There is one way to save you but it will take courage and faith."

The branch began to weaken from the mouse and the tiger was still growling a few feet above the man, "Please, Lord, tell me what I must do and I will do it. Your will is my will."

The voice from heaven then said, "All right then, let go of the branch."

The man looked down to a fall of a thousand feet and certain death. He looked up at the hungry tiger a few feet away and he looked at the mouse still chewing on the branch. Then he looked up at the heavens and yelled, "Is there anyone else up there?"

Is your faith strong enough to walk without knowing the destination? To let go and fall without knowing where to land? Will you take the steps in your heart you know are right, when you risk scorn of those who do not believe?

<http://www.augustiniani.cz/en>