



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



750 let Augustiniánů v Čechách

1262–2012

S nadějí a radostí

**THE AUGUSTINIANS IN THE CZECH  
LANDS: 750 YEARS IN SERVICE OF THE  
GOSPEL.**

***With Hope and Joy!***

April 1<sup>st</sup> 2012

Palm Sunday- B

# St. Thomas Church

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## The Reflection of the Gospel

The Church's three year gospel cycle designated as *A*, *B* and *C* readings is so arranged that each of the synoptics, Matthew, Mark and Luke, teaches the community for a specific year. The current year 2009 in the *B* cycle has Mark as the designated teacher. His evangel, the shortest and the oldest of the gospel accounts, consists of only 16 brief chapters. The Passion account (that section dealing with the arrest, suffering and death of Jesus, which comprises about one fifth of the entire gospel) is characterized according to Donald Senior by three keywords: *journey*, the *disbelief of the disciples* and the *cross* as revelation and crisis.

In sharp contrast to Matthew and John, Mark pays more attention to the actions than the words of Jesus. And, probably writing soon after the destruction of the Temple and city of Jerusalem during the great Jewish War (AD 66-72), he shows little nostalgia "for what had been." Mark frames the Lord's teachings within the context of his *journeying* from Galilee, across the Jordan, through Jericho and ultimately "up to Jerusalem." Predicting not only his immediate passing but also the destruction of the very Temple itself, Jesus' death and glorification will soon supersede any sacrifices and ceremonials. The journey, therefore, becomes an important paradigm or setting for this stunning revelation. The second characteristic of *disbelief of the disciples* is emphasized in Mark's gospel. Their persistent misunderstanding and patent contradiction of Jesus' teachings are dramatically underlined. In the Garden on the night of His betrayal, they turn on their heels and flee, leaving their master in the hands of his enemies. In the court of the high priest during the trial and under the cross at the moment of death, Jesus is alone and abandoned. Every prediction of His suffering and death follows a pattern: patent contradiction and, in one instance, quarrels over places of honor in the messianic kingdom! Jesus then attempts to correct (without success) such self-serving impressions through the symbol of the *cross*. This shameful sign is revealed both in Christ's life-giving service to others and stands in open contradiction to all self-seeking or pretensions of power. As we prepare to enter into Holy Week, let us try to remember the figure of Jesus. Accompanied by vacillating disciples, a fickle crowd and the ever-ubiquitous enemies, the Jesus of Mark's gospel is truly the Man who can identify with the woes of all. In a world that knows not God, it is only in humble service for others that we can both find God and ourselves. Let us begin this holy season in love of God revealing Himself in His poor.

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## Study of the First Reading

These verses were part of the so-called "Songs of the Suffering Servant." Scholars have identified Isaiah 50:4-9 as a sliver of the Songs from this chapter. The sliver described the call of the Servant to preach, despite opposition. In the context of the times, Second Isaiah used these verses to address his critics among the exiles in Babylon. A general pessimism had descended upon Jewish populace in the city. When Second Isaiah saw promise in the coming reign of Cyrus, the Persian conqueror. Cyrus respected local religions and customs. Second Isaiah pinned his ambitions upon the Persian. Whether the prophet wrote before or after the conquest of Babylon in 539 B.C. has been an open question. No matter. Second Isaiah wrote to raise the hopes of the exiles and presented the possibility of return. Isaiah 50:4-7 spoke to the resistance the prophet may have felt. God called him to proclaim an unpopular message and the prophet would remain true to his call [50:4-5]. His critics would try to shame him. Indeed, the prophet would allow his opposition to shame him. But God would vindicate him [50:6-7]. Second Isaiah used one of the Servant Songs to refer to his own ministry. And he projected his message onto this unidentified leader (or group) who would bear the burden of leadership and judgment. Leadership made one open to criticism and to judgment. The Servant would face both as part of God's plan. As long as the Servant remained true to his call, he would stand with honor before God, not before men. No wonder early Christians adopted the image of the Suffering Servant and applied it to Jesus!

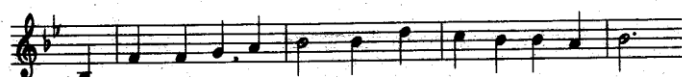
**Coffee, Cookies & Conversation** follow Sunday Mass in the Monastery Refectory off the Cloister Garden. **All are invited, especially our visitors.**

Please contact, Fr. William Faix if you want to add announcements to the bulletin at "[wfaix@yahoo.com](mailto:wfaix@yahoo.com)" or [osaprag@augustiniani.cz](mailto:osaprag@augustiniani.cz). Please send at latest by the Friday of the week as it has to be added to the bulletin

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1-5. All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or To you, Re-deem-er King!



1-5. To whom the lips of chil - dren Made sweet ho-san-nas ring.



1. You are the King of Is - ra - el, And Da - vid's roy - al Son,  
 2. The com - pa - ny of an - gels Are prais - ing you on high;  
 3. The peo - ple of the He - brews With palms be - fore you went:  
 4. To you be - fore your pas - sion They sang their hymns of praise:  
 5. Their prais - es you ac - cept - ed, Ac - cept the prayers we bring,



1. Now in the Lord's Name com - ing, Our King and Bless - ed One.  
 2. And mor - tals, joined with all things Cre - a - ted, make re - ply.  
 3. Our praise and prayers and an - thems Be - fore you we pre - sent.  
 4. To you, now high ex - alt - ed, Our mel - o - dy we raise.  
 5. Great source of love and good - ness, Our Sav - ior and our King.

Text: 76 76 D; Theodulph of Orleans, ca. 760-821; tr. by John M. Neale, 1818-1866, alt., *Hymnal Noted*, 1854.  
 Music: Melchior Teschner, 1584-1635.

### Study of the Second Reading

For over the past 60 years, most biblical scholars have seen this passage as a hymn sung in early Christian communities. Paul adopted (even adapted) the song for his letter to the Philippians. The original form is hotly debated: some group the verses into two stanzas (6-8 & 9-11); others group the verses into three stanzas (6-7a, 7b-8, & 9-11). Whether Paul made additions to or subtractions from the hymn is unknown. The author, influences, and background are speculative. But the verses do reflect the early Christian belief that identified the Christ as Isaiah's Suffering Servant. Notice the hymn began with the divine (2:6) and returned to the divine (2:9-11). But the focus was on Jesus. He existed in God and did not "seize" Godhood. Instead, Jesus descended to the level of humanity. 2:7b-8 used two phrases built around the verb "becoming." In 2:7c, "becoming in the likeness of men" referred back to Jesus emptying Himself into the form of a servant (2:7b). In 2:8b, "becoming obedient until death" referred back to the humiliation of Jesus (2:8a). The core of the hymn used "emptying" for the Incarnation and "humbling" for the Passion, the two pillars of our faith in Christ. God responded with the resurrection (2:9a) and glorification (2:9b) of Christ. The response of the follower is worship (2:10) and profession of faith (2:11). So, why did the Christians sing this hymn? They worshiped and professed faith in Christ because of the self-giving nature of their Savior and because of God's activity. The divine Son of God was humble in His birth and death. God was faithful to His Son and His followers. He gave both eternal life.

### HOLY WEEK and EASTER SCHEDULE AT SAINT THOMAS CHURCH

April 2012

#### 1. PALM or PASSION SUNDAY: THE LORD'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

06:00 pm, Saturday, the Blessing of Branches and Mass in St. Barbara's Chapel.

11:00 am, Sunday, we will congregate at The Infant Jesus of Prague Church, for the blessing of branches and then process to St. Thomas Church during which the English Choir will sing ALL GLORY PRAISE AND HONOR. Mass will be sung in both languages.

#### 4. WEDNESDAY in HOLY WEEK: Judas betrays the Lord

06:00 Confessions will be heard followed by Mass in St. Barbara's Chapel.

#### 5. HOLY THURSDAY or THE LAST SUPPER OF THE LORD

09:00 am The Mass of Chrism will be celebrated with our Cardinal in the Cathedral. All are welcome.

06:30 pm The Mass of the Last Supper with the washing of feet and procession in St. Thomas Church.

#### 6. GOOD FRIDAY or THE COMMEMORATION OF THE LORD'S PASSION AND DEATH

6:30 pm. Station of the Cross in the monastery Clauster

07:00 pm The Liturgy of the Passion, Death and Burial of the Lord

#### 7. HOLY SATURDAY or THE VIGIL OF THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

10:00 – 12:00 pm Confessions will be heard in Church (Czech, English, Spanish, Portugese, Polish); Easter food will be blessed upon request.

08:00 pm The *EASTER VIGIL* begins in the courtyard of St. Thomas for *all* our parishioners and guests

Following the *VIGIL* there will be the traditional "Opening of the Tomb and the Resurrection Procession." Please join us for refreshments in the summer refectory of the monastery.

#### 8. THE SOLEMNITY OF THE GLORIOUS RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

11:00 am Mass will be followed by the traditional Procession and the "Encounter"

PLEASE JOIN US IN CELEBRATING THE PRINCIPLE MYSTERY OF OUR FAITH. ALL ARE WELCOME HERE AT SAINT THOMAS CHURCH.