



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.

September 28th and 29th
2013

26. Ordinary Sunday –
Year C

St. Thomas Church

Josefská 8, Malá Strana, Prague 1, 118 01

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28th September St. Wenceslaus

(Also Vaclav, Vaceslav.)

Duke, **martyr**, and **patron** of **Bohemia**, born probably 903; died at Alt-Bunzlau, 28 September, 935.

His **parents** were Duke Wratislav, a **Christian**, and Dragomir, a **heathen**. He received a good **Christian education** from his grandmother (**St. Ludmilla**) and at **Budweis**. After the death of Wratislav, Dragomir, acting as regent, opposed **Christianity**, and Wenceslaus, being urged by the people, took the reins of government. He placed his duchy under the protection of **Germany**, introduced German **priests**, and favoured the **Latin rite** instead of the old **Slavic**, which had gone into disuse in many places for want of **priests**. Wenceslaus had taken the **vow of virginity** and was known for his **virtues**. The Emperor **Otto I** conferred on him the regal dignity and title. For **religious** and national motives, and at the instigation of Dragomir, Wenceslaus was **murdered** by his brother Boleslaw. The body, hacked to pieces, was **buried** at the place of **murder**, but three years later Boleslaw, having repented of his deed, ordered its translation to the Church of St. Vitus in **Prague**. The gathering of his **relics** is noted in the **calendars** on 27 June, their translation on 4 March; his **feast** is celebrated on 28 September.

A *parable* or short story with an implied moral lesson, was Jesus' favorite method of teaching. Quite unique in the ancient world- though distantly related to a *fable* (popularized by Aesop, the fabulist)- a parable freely uses the circumstances of persons in "real life" as a teaching leading to a profound moral lesson. In today's parable of the rich man and his poor counterpart, Lazarus, Jesus launches into a very discomfoting story for his Pharisaic audience. The Pharisees, basically religious people trying to do the will of God in infinitesimal detail were, no doubt, unnerved by Jesus' apparent condemnation of the rich man. After all, ran the Pharisaic argument, the rich man was precisely *rich and healthy* (thus blessed) because God so willed it; and the poor man (Lazarus) was *diseased and destitute* (thus punished) because of some sin he, or his parents, had committed. Jesus' novel reversal of destiny- rich man in hell and Lazarus in heaven- therefore, challenged some cherished pharisaic theological givens.

We, post-moderns, can be put off by the simplistic tone of this parable. After all, what do we have to do with "Pharisees" or some esoteric fabled world of compartmental suffering as this imagined hell is here depicted. Again, the lesson learned is not to be confused with the vehicle of instruction. Rather, we are challenged to look within our hearts and consciences there to examine our own attitudes towards success, prosperity, the poor, the diseased, the unfortunate or marginalized. The task is difficult since it is very easy to cover oneself in a blanket of rationalizations that can be as comforting as were those simplistic pharisaic doctrines of reward (=riches) and punishment (=disease and poverty). Where do we stand in all this? Or do we even take a stand delaying as we so often do, at the banquet table of daily life?

Please contact, Fr. William Faix if you want to add announcements to the bulletin at "wfaix@yahoo.com" or contact Fr. Juan at "juan@augustiniani.cz" Please send at latest by the Friday of the week as it has to be added to the bulletin

Mission 2013

A Love Story

I often tell my friends, especially my friends who do not have children, that I didn't realize the full meaning of the word love, until I became a father. You see, the English language doesn't allow us more words than love to express a number of emotional attachments. We love our favorite movies, our favorite foods, our favorite authors, our parents, our spouses and of course our children. I dare to say that all of these feelings are as different as night and day, but we struggle with the lack of precision in the language. We get by with this one word, because we all understand the feelings we have for food are in no way related to how we feel about our family.

I guess that we all sort of feel there is not enough love in the world today. We talk daily of wars, acts of terrorism, crime and things that don't resemble love in the least. There are many who say there is little love left in the world.

When I asked myself this question, I thought of the world and I stopped looking at the world through the big lens and started thinking about people; individuals; people like you and me.

Most of us in the room, were witness to the tragedy of 9-11. When people called, scared, not knowing what would happen, I doubt that any of these people called their old or current enemies and railed at them. Their hearts were not full of hate or vengeance. Their hearts and minds were reaching out to talk to the ones they loved, to share a moment in their uncertainty. To tell them one last time, how much they loved them.

The most incredible message I believe that Christianity gives us is the overwhelming love that God has for us. All throughout the bible we are given different examples of his love and how this love manifest itself. We are after all, his children, and his love for us and patience with us is endless. As parents, we certainly understand the need for patience.

God Loves us:

In Proverbs 8:17; God talks about his love for the faithful. "I love those who love me; And those who diligently seek me will find me.

How deep is God's love?:

Paul wrote to the Ephesians trying to explain the differences in the old way and the new covenant through Christ. 3:18 is part of a prayer for spiritual strength "And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is."

Jesus himself described the Father's love in Matthew. "God's love is pure. Because He is love, He loves to give. He gives good things to those who ask Him" Matthew 7:11

1 John 4:8 "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."

God displays the ultimate love for us:

The most widely quoted bible verse in all history is John 3:16. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

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Ongoing Activities

❖ We **welcome** all our new parishioners to St. Thomas Church. Please introduce yourselves, if you wish, at refreshments after the 11:00 am Mass on Sundays or just call us or visit at your convenience.

❖

❖ If you would like to receive a copy of the bulletin by email, please contact: osaprag@augustiniani.cz

❖ **WONDERING HOW YOU CAN GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY?** St. Thomas provides free English classes as part of their community outreach activities. Classes will be beginning 16 of September. And we are in need of native English speakers who can give of their time to teach classes. If you are interested or want more information, please contact Fr. Juan at juan@augustiniani.cz

ELECTION FOR

NEW PARISH COUNCIL

○ The pastor elected a commission to coordinate the elections: Michael Rainey, Mary Beth and Bear Midkiff

○ All parishioners elder than 15 years are invited to give to this commission the names of some candidates to be members of the parish council.

○ **Candidate can be each parishioner elder than 18 years.**

○ The deadline to give names of candidates is October 6th.

○ After that date the commission will prepare a list of candidates that will be presentate to the parish on October 16th.

○ The election of the Parish Council will be October 20th after 11 am mass

○ The new elected parish council is going to be presented to the community on October 27th,

○ The members of the parish council are elected for a time of 5 years

1 John 4:9-12

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

He commands us to love:

Ephesians 5:28-29 "So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church."

John 13:34-35

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."