



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

Today's Prayer

I pause for a moment and think of the love and the grace that God showers on me: I am created in the image and likeness of God; I am God's dwelling-place.

May 3rd and May 4th 2011

The Third Sunday of
Easter – Year A

St. Thomas Church

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THIRD EASTER SUNDAY – A

There are several approaches to the Resurrection of Jesus narrative. The first would be to dismiss the entire story as “Christian myth” running in close competition with some vernal festival of antiquity. As sceptics do bray: *The dead cannot walk and talk*. A more conciliatory approach would assert that Jesus *did* return but certainly *not* as Luke and the other three gospel writers assert. Thus, this *docetic* explanation (embraced mainly by such sectarians as the Jehovah Witnesses, etc.) assert on the basis of a “body denying teaching” that Christ had “evaded” death, was not really crucified and “came back” in some “ghostly” (extraterrestrial ?) form. A variation on this theme was revisited in a historically thin work entitled *The Passover Plot*, later reworked into a film similarly named but equally as anemic.

The Catholic teaching on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is that *He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. On the third day He rose again from the dead*. All the Church’s creedal statements from the very beginning are firmly based on Jesus’ death. There were no attempts to “cover” or “conceal” the awful fact of the Lord’s tragic passion, death and burial; no euphemisms nor circumlocutions allowed or intended. The gospel writers may point fingers at those responsible for Jesus’ death but never do they deny his being raised from the dead “on the third day.” The Easter proclamation *Christ is truly risen* did not, of course, solve basic doubts either in or outside the Christian community. When Paul preached the resurrection of the dead in sophisticated first century Athens (Acts 17: 31 ff.) he was roundly mocked off the podium. These sceptics would certainly have been familiar with such tales of various “revivified” deities; but Paul’s unique message wherein each man and woman’s *own* resurrection had been *promised* through Christ’s personal victory over death baffled them. Today’s gospel reading certainly borders on the incredible. The two disciples are fleeing Jerusalem, they do not believe the “resurrection reports,” they do not recognize Jesus “in the flesh,” nor do they appear to understand the teachings of Sacred Scripture. These doubts could hardly be conducive to a profound act of faith! It is only when Jesus accepts their invitation to dinner that the “eyes of faith” are opened. Jesus’ own presence often unrecognized in our daily lives *is* the motive of our faith but he must be *invited to share with us*. Are we prepared to sit down with him at the Eucharist

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (Offertory Hymn)

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, source of all compassion,
Love unbounded, love all pure;
visit us with thy salvation,
Let your love in us endure.

Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
nevermore your temples leave.
Lord we would be always blessing,
serve you as your hosts above,
pray, and praise you without ceasing,
glory in your perfect love.

Finish then your new creation;
pure and spotless, gracious Lord;
let us see your great salvation
perfectly in you restored:
changed from glory into glory,
till in heav’n we take our place,
till we sing before the almighty,
lost in wonder, love, and praise.

**On Thursday, May 8th we are celebrating the birthday of Fr. William, the pastor of the English Speaking Community in Prague. God bless him and we pray for him and thanks God for his service to our community! Mass at 12:15
Happy birthday Fr. William!!!**

The Easter Alleluia

Saint Augustine of Hippo

Our thoughts in this present life should turn on the praise of God, because it is in praising God that we shall rejoice for ever in the life to come; and no one can be ready for the next life unless he trains himself for it now. So we praise God during our earthly life, and at the same time we make our petitions to him. Our praise is expressed with joy, our petitions with yearning. We have been promised something we do not yet possess, and because the promise was made by one who keeps his word, we trust him and are glad; but insofar as possession is delayed, we can only long and yearn for it. It is good for us to persevere in longing until we receive what was promised, and yearning is over; then praise alone will remain.

Because there are these two periods of time - the one that now is, beset with the trials and troubles of this life, and the other yet to come, a life of everlasting serenity and joy - we are given two liturgical seasons, one before Easter and the other after. The season before Easter signifies the troubles in which we live here and now, while the time after Easter which we are celebrating at present signifies the happiness that will be ours in the future. What we commemorate before Easter is what we experience in this life; what we celebrate after Easter points to something we do not yet possess. This is why we keep the first season with fasting and prayer; but now the fast is over and we devote the present season to praise. Such is the meaning of the *Alleluia* we sing.

Both these periods are represented and demonstrated for us in Christ our head. The Lord's passion depicts for us our present life of trial - shows how we must suffer and be afflicted and finally die. The Lord's resurrection and glorification show us the life that will be given to us in the future.

Now therefore, brethren, we urge you to praise God. That is what we are all telling each other when we say *Alleluia*. You say to your neighbor, "Praise the Lord!" and he says the same to you. We are all urging one another to praise the Lord, and all thereby doing what each of us urges the other to do. But see that your praise comes from your whole being; in other words, see that you praise God not with your lips and voices alone, but with your minds, your lives and all your actions.

We are praising God now, assembled as we are here in church; but when we go on our various ways again, it seems as if we cease to praise God. But provided we do not cease to live a good life, we shall always be praising God. You cease to praise God only when you swerve from justice and from what is pleasing to God. If you never turn aside from the good life, your tongue may be silent but your actions will cry aloud, and God will perceive your intentions; for as our ears hear each other's voices, so do God's ears hear our thoughts.

Ongoing Activities

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

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

Bible Study sessions are held each Wednesday evening at 6:30pm/18:30 in the Tagaste room. All are welcome to join and reflect on the Word of God.

Lectors and Eucharistic ministers : If you would like to support the community as a lector or Eucharistic minister at mass on Sunday's please contact Ann at dalyaann@hotmail.com

I would also like to hear from those who took part in the training session for Eucharistic ministry last February.

Meeting of the **Parish Council**. Next Sunday, May 11th at 12:15 in Kasiciaco room.

The 17th Annual Marian Pilgrimage to the Shrine of the **Gracious Madonna**, at sv. Dobrotiva-Zajecov, will be held on May 31st . We meet in front of St. Joseph's church on Josefská Street, at 08:30 am, Saturday morning, June 4th . If you do not have a ride please contact Fr. Juan Bautista for details. In keeping with our tradition, please bring a lunch, which you can share with another person on pilgrimage. Whatever is left over (if you so will) is given to the poor. There is a brochure, which explains the origins and traditions behind this beautiful 700-year pilgrimage, which has been renewed after forty years of communism. **SIGN UP:** In the sacristy of St. Thomas Church.

Coming soon:

18.5.2014. First Communion Sunday

25.5.2014 Confirmation Sunday

**23.5.2014 The Night of the Churches from
18:p00 till 00:00**

**The 11th PARISH FESTIVAL
7. June 2014. Monastery of St. Thomas**