



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



This is the logo for the Holy Year of Mercy, which opens Dec. 8 and runs until Nov. 20, 2016.

September 19th and 20th 2015

25th Ordinary Sunday - B

St. Thomas Church

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The Reflection of the Gospel

There are two points in today's reading from Mark's gospel. The first is his portrayal of the apostles as impervious to Jesus' teachings and the second is that Jesus' teaching is based and can only be understood through the cross and the resurrection. The apostles certainly in the Markan evangel did not understand precisely what Jesus had meant in his passion-resurrection prophecies. Their argument over who was to be the greater in the coming messianic kingdom betrayed the very spirit of discipleship. To counterbalance this gross misunderstanding Jesus placed a child (*talya* in Aramaic) in their midst as a model of a faithful servant (also *talya* in Aramaic). Therefore to be a disciple Jesus teaches that his followers must be humble with a sense of service to others. The second lesson of Mark is that the humble imitation of Jesus *per se* involves following him through his passion even under the threat of death. Such a position can be best understood when we learn that the community for whom Mark wrote his gospel was confronted by enthusiasts who, though recognizing Jesus as the "heavenly one," demanded, in turn, that they also be accorded the same divine prerogatives! Hence, Mark answered these superior presumptions with the lesson of humility, which roots Christian discipleship only in and through the cross and the resurrection. As we contemplate the gospel today, let us rethink our own sense of discipleship. What, if anything, motivates us to follow Christ? And, are we willing to make the humiliation of the cross and the concomitant hope of the resurrection the keystone of our lives and actions?

Study of the First Reading

People gossip. They always will. Sometimes their talk is idle chatter. Sometimes their gossip turns ugly, slanderous, and, ultimately, vengeful. So, the innocent suffer from the venom of those who speak behind backs and seek their brand of "justice" in the dark. The believer suffers at the hands of those who hate God. The righteous suffer at the hands of the jealous and the devious.

In these passages from the "Wisdom of Solomon," the author wrote about the true nature of evil. It sought vengeance upon just almost without reason. In the context of the book, the wise (i.e., the person who followed God's will and tried to live a good life) would prevail, but only through God's help. Living out that trust divided the good from the bad. It was that trust that drove the wicked to frenzied action.

Trust in God has a price. Sometimes trust costs us our reputation. Sometimes it costs us relationships. In the case of a few, it cost them their lives. But, trust means that God will win out in the end. It means he will save us. It means the price is worth paying.

Coffee, Cookies & Conversation follows Sunday's 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" Please send at latest by the Friday of the week as it has to be added to the bulletin.

Announcements and Ongoing Activities

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

*Enrollment for children's **Religious Education** is now open! We look forward to seeing your children in our classes! Minimum age is 4 years. Classes will begin on September 13th. Registration forms are available on the Religious Education page at www.augustiniani.cz; please send completed forms to Mary Beth at redirector@augustiniani.cz.

* **Lectors and Eucharistic ministers:** If you would like to be a **lector** or Eucharistic minister at mass on Sundays please sign up with after mass in the court yard or e mail Ann at dalyaann@hotmail.com

* Every Saturday at 9:00am **feeding of the homeless**, as a social service

* **Bible Study** takes place every Tuesday from 18:30-19:30 in Tagaste room. Everyone is welcome to come and learn more about our sacred scriptures.

*Wednesday at 18:30. Tagaste room takes place **Adult Religious education**.

Bl. Junipero Serra

Miguel Jose Serra was born on the island of Mallorca on November 24, 1713, and took the name of Junipero when in 1730, he entered the Franciscan Order. Ordained in 1737, he taught philosophy and theology at the University of Padua until 1749.

At the age of thirty-seven, he landed in Mexico City on January 1, 1750, and spent the rest of his life working for the conversion of the peoples of the New World.

In 1768, Father Serra took over the missions of the Jesuits (who had been wrongly expelled by the government) in the Mexican province of Lower California and Upper California (modern day California). An indefatigable worker, Serra was in large part responsible for the foundation and spread of the Church on the West Coast of the United States when it was still mission territory.

He founded twenty-one missions and converted thousands of Indians. The converts were taught sound methods of agriculture, cattle raising, and arts and crafts.

Junipero was a dedicated religious and missionary. He was imbued with a penitential spirit and practiced austerity in sleep, eating, and other activities. On August 28, 1784, worn out by his apostolic labors, Father Serra was called to his eternal rest. He was beatified by Pope John Paul II on September 25, 1988. His statue, representing the state of California, is in National Statuary Hall. His feast day is July 1. On Wednesday Sept. 23 2015 Pope Francis will have the Mass of Canonization at Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C.

Study of the Second Reading

Why do we have strife in daily living? Why do we battle our "inner demons?" These verses from James tried to answer the questions. Simply put, James pointed to the lack of God's wisdom for these troubles. In past studies, James created and knocked down straw men to advance his belief. Faith needed works, moral duties of the Law. These works (which James defined in terms of charity) evangelized non-believers and strengthened the community. The person who believed but did not act on these beliefs, James claimed, weakened both Christian witness and the cohesion of the local church. In James practical logic, the dichotomy between faith and works came down to the use of wisdom: knowing where and when to act. Believers who did not act wisely lived in a sea of desire and unfulfilled cravings. From this unsettled state, people act out in jealous, petty ways. While there was no clear parallel between the faith-only (i.e., libertine) Christian and the desirous believer, there were implicit ties. Toward the end of the passage, James shifted from the language of war [4:1] to an object of desire [4:2-3]. What was this object? A brief reading seemed to point to material goods or pleasure. But a deeper reading pointed to wisdom itself. Greek culture made wisdom the highest value. Over the centuries before the birth of Christ, Jewish culture was influenced by this ideal. Indeed, several deuterocanonical books (Sirach and Wisdom of Solomon, for example) appealed to wisdom as the virtue most desired. From wisdom came riches and reputation, as well as high moral living. While James may have not implied these outcomes for wisdom, clearly, he saw wisdom from God as greater than human desires or ambitions. Ironically, while many people desired power, possessions, or cult of personality, these same people were jealous of the wise person. Wisdom was attractive. Many sought it out of selfish motivations only to have it elude them or to have it slip through their fingers because of their self-centered nature. Implicitly they desired to earn what God gave as a gift. A gift that calmed inner turmoil and promoted harmony within the community. The wise person received and exercised the virtue simply because he or she was open to God. Wisdom, then, is God's gift to the person who opens mind and heart to his will. So, put away selfish pursuits and gain God's wisdom.