



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



September 10th and 11th
2016

24.ordinary Sunday –
Year C

St. Thomas Church

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Luke's gospel is replete with many beautiful parables or short morality stories. Today's reading about the Prodigal Son fits squarely within that genre as one of the most poignant in the New or first Testament. The pericope or selection opens with a "double audience" of the sympathetic but religiously suspect "tax collectors and sinners" and Jesus' ever present critics the "Pharisees and those skilled in religious law." For the Pharisees, Jesus was too cavalier in his approach to religious tradition and practice. After all, they (the orthodox) would argue that those tax collectors or those who collaborated with the pagan Romans and the sinners who did not observe all the requirements of the Law were by their "irreligious" attitudes already condemned. Life in the world to come was for these religious folk a reward for specific obedience to the Law. Now Jesus' short moral story of the "wayward son, the forgiving father and the merciless brother" itself an illustrated response to such judgmental attitudes brought home a clear lesson. The merciful father certainly is a loving image of God Himself who gives, yearns for his younger son and forgives. The younger son could certainly stand as a symbol of those who have strayed: unmindful of the hurt they carelessly caused, they come back to themselves, seek forgiveness through repentance in the open arms of their father. The figure of the merciless brother, conversely, was a direct indictment of the Pharisees and scribes glorying in their unforgiving attitudes and peevish behavior which effectively annulled the record of religious fidelity and constancy. The lesson is clear. As important and necessary as religious observance is, we can all fall into the trap of self-satisfaction paradoxically through religious practice. Self-congratulation with one's record of practice and ethical behavior is a form of hypocrisy if we cannot open our hearts in forgiveness. Today's gospel is beautifully relates how the merciful father went out to both the repentant son and his unforgiving brother; in other words, God even meets us in our very painful sinful moments. Do we recognize Him?

St. Ludmilla

September 16th

Wife of Boriwoi, the first **Christian** Duke of **Bohemia**, b. at Mielnik, c. 860; d. at Tetin, near Beraun, 15 September, 921. She and her husband were **baptized**, probably by St. Methodius, in 871. **Pagan** fanatics drove them from their country, but they were soon recalled, and after reigning seven more years they resigned the throne in favour of their son Spitignev and retired to Tetin. Spitignev died two years later and was succeeded by Wratlslaw, another son of Boriwoi and Ludmilla. Wratlslaw was married to Drahomira, a pretended **Christian**, but a secret favourer of **paganism**. They had twin sons, **St. Wenceslaus** and Boleslaus the Cruel, the former of whom lived with Ludmilla at Tetin. Wratlslaw died in 916, leaving the eight-year-old Wenceslaus as his successor. **Jealous** of the great influence which Ludmilla wielded over Wenceslaus, Drahomira instigated two noblemen to **murder** her. She is said to have been strangled by them with her veil. She was at first **buried** in the **church** of St. Michael at Tetin, but her remains were removed to the **church** of St. George at Prague before the year 1100, probably by St. Wenceslaus, her grandson. She is **venerated** as one of the **patrons** of **Bohemia**, and her **feast** is celebrated on 16 September.

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

ST. NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINE, OSA September 10

Nicholas of Tolentine (1245-1305) was a simple priest and Augustinian friar who touched the lives of many.

His spirit of prayer, penance, austerity of life and devotion to the Holy Souls were notable. His preaching brought many to Christ.

Nicholas Gurutti was born in 1245 in Sant'Angelo, Pontano, Macerata, Italy. His family was rather poor.

He joined the Augustinian Order while a young man, after hearing the inspired preaching of Reginaldo da Monterubbiano, Prior (local superior) of the Augustinian monastery in Sant'Angelo.

As a priest and religious, he was full of charity towards his brother Augustinians as well as towards the people to whom he ministered. He visited the sick and cared for the needy. He was a noted preacher of the Gospel. He gave special attention to those who had fallen away from the Church. People considered him a miracle worker.

He often fasted and performed other works of penance. He spent long hours in prayer.

The story is told that, one day, having fasted for a long time, Nicholas was physically weak. While at prayer, Jesus told him to eat some bread marked with a cross and soaked in water in order to regain his strength. Thus arose the Augustinian custom of blessing and distributing Saint Nicholas Bread in his memory.

Another story relates that Nicholas, while asleep in bed, heard the voice of a deceased friar he had known. This friar told Nicholas that he was in Purgatory, and urged him to celebrate the Eucharist for him and other souls there, so that they would be set free by the power of Christ. Nicholas did so for seven days. The friar again spoke to Nicholas, thanking him and assuring him that a large number of souls were now with God. Because of this Nicholas was proclaimed patron of the souls in Purgatory.

He is also considered the patron saint against epidemic disease and against fires.

During most of his adult life, Nicholas lived in Tolentine, Italy. There he died September 10, 1305. Canonized in 1446 by Pope Eugene IV, Nicholas is the first Augustinian friar to be canonized after the Grand Union of the Order of St. Augustine in 1256.

The remains of St. Nicholas are preserved at the Shrine of Saint Nicholas in the city of Tolentine.

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.

❖ **Lectors and Eucharistic ministers:** If you would like to be a **lector** or Eucharistic minister at mass on Sundays please contact Ann at dalyaann@hotmail.com
A new schedule will be prepared soon.

❖ It's time to register your kids (4years and up) for Religious Education classes! Please see Mary Beth after Mass or contact her at redirector@augustiniani.cz for details! Classes start Sept 11th at 9:45.

❖ Today Sunday begin the **Religious education Program**. Thanks to all the teachers and voluntaries that are going to help during this school year. God bless!

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❖ **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 19 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

Year of Mercy: "Merciful like the Father"

Let us rediscover these corporal works of mercy:

1. to feed the hungry,
2. give drink to the thirsty,
3. clothe the naked,
4. welcome the stranger,
5. heal the sick,
6. visit the imprisoned,
7. bury the dead.

And let us not forget the spiritual works of mercy:

1. to counsel the doubtful,
2. instruct the ignorant,
3. admonish sinners,
4. comfort the afflicted,
5. forgive offences,
6. bear patiently those who do us ill
7. pray for the living and the dead."