



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



April 14<sup>th</sup> and April 15<sup>th</sup>  
2018

The Third Sunday of  
Easter- B

# St. Thomas Church

Josefská 8, Malá Strana, Prague 1, 118 01

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## The Reflection of the Gospel

There are several approaches to the resurrection of Jesus Christ: the first, of course, is to be dismissive. After all, the sceptics bray, the dead *are* dead and that means *no vital activity!* Others propose a more conciliatory approach. Jesus did return *from the dead* but not as Luke and the other evangelists would have us believe. Christ according to this *Docetic* theory did appear to to his disciples but in the semblance of a *ghost* or *phantasm*; could we add *extraterrestrial*? With some unique additives, the Jehovah Witnesses would subscribe to this “body denying” theology. The third, or basic Catholic explanation, would be that

*He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. On the third day he rose again from the dead.*

Do you notice the emphasis that the Church places on Jesus’ death? There are no euphemisms or circumlocutions: Christ has died, Christ has risen! Luke, of course, was faced with the same questions both within and outside the struggling Christian community. How could a dead man return from the cold grasp of death? When the apostle Paul broached the question in sophisticated Athens (*Acts 17:31 ff.*) he was laughed off the podium for his temerity. Even though the ancients, more so than our culture today, believed in revived gods and goddesses often symbolised in the recurrent cycle of nature. Christians were unique in so far as they believed in their own resurrection promised through Christ’s victory over death.

Today’s gospel borders on the incredible: his troubled disciples did not believe the resurrection reports; they did not even recognise him physically or even intellectually as he explained scripture to them. The Risen One, however, does accept their invitation to share a meal: he, who gave them to eat, now receives food from his discouraged disciples and reveals himself in the breaking of the bread. For us the Eucharist is both nourishment and recognition; this is our Emmaus as we journey often in discouragement and fear.

**The Lord is risen! He is truly  
risen! Alleluia!**

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## Study of the Second Reading

These verses were covered in some detail with the study of 1 John 5:1-9 on the Baptism of the Lord (Cycle B). In that study, I mentioned the practical nature of Christianity. It was a religion that integrated prayer with acts of charity. It was not an esoteric religion such as many contemporaries of the author and his audience wanted. They were Gnostics, those who believed Jesus came as a spirit (in some non-material body) that gave a secret knowledge that led to salvation. With this knowledge (and its practice), one could “save” himself from the evil of the material world. The author of the letter opposed this view with his emphasis on “water, blood, and the Spirit,” a clear indication of his belief that God worked in the physical world. (Please see that study for more details.) In this season of Easter, the reading reaffirms our belief that the Risen Lord is still present and at work in our material universe. HE shares his struggle of water (his Baptism) and blood (his death), and everything in between. He also shares the Spirit, the gift of his resurrection. The Risen Lord is with us in a very real sense.

**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 contact Fr. Juan at [juan@augustiniani.l.cz](mailto:juan@augustiniani.l.cz) Please send at latest by the Friday of the week as it has to be added to the bulletin

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## XX. AUGUSTINIAN WEEK

23.4-27.4

Saint Thomas Monastery , Josefská 8. Prague 1

### Saint Augustine a vocation

#### April 23, 2018

6:00pm Readings from saint Augustine book "Soliloquia".

#### April 24

07:00pm Holy Mass commemorating the Conversion of Saint Augustine (AD 387)

#### April 25

06:00pm Conference presented by Fr. William S. Faix, OSA, "Augustinians in Czech Republic"

#### April 26

06:00pm Conference presented by P. David Voprava. "St. Augustine and the preparation for baptisms"

#### April 27

6:00pm Concert

### APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION **GAUDETE ET EXSULTATE** OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS ON THE CALL TO HOLINESS IN TODAY'S WORLD

1. "REJOICE AND BE GLAD" (*Mt 5:12*), Jesus tells those persecuted or humiliated for his sake. The Lord asks everything of us, and in return he offers us true life, the happiness for which we were created. He wants us to be saints and not to settle for a bland and mediocre existence. The call to holiness is present in various ways from the very first pages of the Bible. We see it expressed in the Lord's words to Abraham: "Walk before me, and be blameless" (*Gen 17:1*).

2. What follows is not meant to be a treatise on holiness, containing definitions and distinctions helpful for understanding this important subject, or a discussion of the various means of sanctification. My modest goal is to repropose the call to holiness in a practical way for our own time, with all its risks, challenges and opportunities. For the Lord has chosen each one of us "to be holy and blameless before him in love" (*Eph 1:4*).

Read the whole exhortation at :

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20180319\\_gaudete-et-exsultate.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20180319_gaudete-et-exsultate.html)

## 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](mailto:osaprag@augustiniani.cz)

\***Bible Study** sessions are held each Tuesday evening at 6:30pm/18:00 in Tagaste room. All are welcome to join and reflect on the Word of God.

\***Religious education for adults** sessions are held each Wednesday evening at 6:00pm/18:00 in Tagaste room.

**Parish dance.** Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup>. Tickets will Michael Rayney.

The **21st Annual Marian Pilgrimage** to the Shrine of the Gracious Madonna, at sv. Dobrotiva-Zaječov, will be held on May 12. We meet in front of St. Joseph's Church on Josefská Street, at 08:30 am, Saturday morning, May 12. 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.

### Coming soon:

*17.5.2015: First Communion Sunday*

*25.5.2018: The Night of the Churches from 18: 00 till 00:00*

*2. June 2018: The 15th PARISH FESTIVAL.*