



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



May 26<sup>th</sup> a 27<sup>th</sup> 2018

Holy Trinity Sunday -B

# St. Thomas Church

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## The Reflection of the Gospel

The Christian belief in the one and triune God has been the subject of both meditation and polemic from the very beginning of the Christian movement. Biblical texts do not mention the word "trinity" or "triad" of persons in the Godhead; in fact, there are some passages such as *Proverbs* 8:22-31 or the oft-repeated *John* 14:28, "The Father is greater than I" which seemingly 'subordinate' Jesus to the Father. Such a concept of Jesus' relation to the Father deeply affected the very understanding of his personhood and mission. The earliest biblical evidence viewed Jesus in a "functional way": his very words and actions were indicative of his divine origins. Thus, the Community viewed their Lord as the Messiah, "the Promised One" or Emmanuel, "God with us." Such simple faith statements came under increasing scrutiny by the late third and early fourth centuries and a Church council, the first of such meetings, was convoked at Nicea in 325 to examine the evidence. From all accounts the council was not an immediate success. The Arians, or those who taught that Jesus - "like" but not to be identified with the divine, a "superman" less than God but more than man- were condemned. But it was some three hundred years before this specter of *Arianism* finally passed into heterodox oblivion. The greatest minds in the history of the Church, such as Augustine and Athanasius spent their energies in making this mystery intelligible. The teaching that Jesus was Son of God, begotten from all eternity, became Man, suffered, died and rose for our sake and now sits at the right of the Father is at the heart of the Christian message. From the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit has been sent forth into our hearts to instruct, console and guide us in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Augustine explained those passages in Scripture that speak of Jesus' "inferiority" as indicative of his status through the humility of his *Incarnation* wherein he became a human person. To share in our weakness he became *Man*, to redeem us he had to be *God*. In this theandric action He remained God and Man without losing, weakening, mixing or dividing his human and divine natures. Augustine draws on the analogy of the human person and considers how we as live. There are three modes: *existence, knowledge and will*. "They are distinct but inseparable, constituting *one life, one mind, one essence*." But, we cannot think that such an analogy as this anymore than the simple shamrock of St. Patrick, or the *light, the heat and the sun* example of St. Gregory of Nyssa "really deepen our faith"! They may help but do not convince us into faith. As we celebrate this feast of the Trinity, let us reflect on Jesus' saving love, his sanctifying gift of the Holy Spirit that comes from the Creator God who knows no beginning and no end.

## Study of the First Reading

While the fulfillment of divinely mandated religious and civic duties was common to all ancient peoples, obeying a God who revealed himself in history implied a special covenant relationship. A God who saved a people and formed a nation in history must be obeyed in a historical context. For example, the people were to treat others with the same compassion in their day-to-day history as God treated them when he freed them from slavery in Egypt.

Soon Israelites believed when a believer fulfilled a religious duty as a historical event, he or she could glimpse into the mind of God. Fulfilling religious duties became a personal event. Fulfillment became the person's way to say "yes" to God, just as the people said a corporate "yes" to God on Mt. Sinai when they received the Law. In this way, the individual could personally hear and see God, just as the people did on Mt. Sinai.

Ultimately, Israelites viewed Moses' exhortation not just to the people as a whole. They saw his speech directed to the individuals in the group. God not only spoke to the nation, he spoke to the every man, woman, and child in Israel. Religious duty was more than a social responsibility. It was personal. To Israel and the Israelite, God said, "I am your God, and you are my beloved." This logic found its end when St. Paul called every Christian "a child of God."

**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, OSA if you want to add announcements to the bulletin at [osaprag@augustiniani.cz](mailto:osaprag@augustiniani.cz) . Please send at latest by the Friday of the week as it has to be added to the bulletin

## Study of the Second Reading

When Paul wrote his letter to the Romans, the cult of the Nazorene caused great scandal in Judaism. Not only were these "Christians" declaring Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, they also allowed Gentiles into their company, their homes, and their meal times. Following this "risen" prophet was a heresy. Living in their community made them "unclean." The faith and the fellowship was polluted, in the eyes of those in the synagogue.

Paul fought with the leaders of the synagogue time and time again. For Paul, both the claims of traditional Judaism and the new Christian movement hinged on the question of righteousness. Are we righteous by what we have done? Or, are we made righteous by what God will do? Paul saw focus on the past (in the Law) as the defining tenet for Judaism. But he saw the ever active initiative of God as the force behind the Church. The synagogue clung to the Law and its traditions. The Church depended upon the movement of the Spirit as it faced the end times. It was a battle between the past and the future.

So, righteousness was the work of the Spirit. We Christians were to know we were right before God as his children when we prayed to God as Father and when we steadfastly awaited the return of the Savior. For Paul, prayer and promise, not rigorous duty, marked the presence of righteousness.

## Next Saturday!!!

### THE 15th PARISH FESTIVAL

St. Thomas Monastery

Saturday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018

15:00 -21:30

Games and activities for all ages: Music, dance...

Program for children: games, ...

Presentation of activities

Mass

BBQ

Fireworks

And much more....

**Come to celebrate with us!!!**

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## Announcements and Ongoing Activities

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

\*If you would like to receive a copy of the bulletin by email, please contact [osaprag@augustiniani.cz](mailto:osaprag@augustiniani.cz)

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\*Please note: on Sunday, June 03, the Czech, the English and the Spanish speaking communities will celebrate in common the feast of **Corpus Christi** honoring the Eucharistic presence of Christ. One Mass for all our communities will be celebrated at 09:30 am. Please note: **there will be no Mass at 11:00 am.** Immediately after Mass the Eucharistic procession will proceed first to the Altar of the Czech Patrons at the rear of our church for Benediction. Then the Procession proceeds to St. Joseph's Church. Following Benediction we will then cross Mostecka Street and turn left to the Church of Saint Mary. The Procession with the final Blessing will be given at the Main Altar in the Church of the Infant Jesus of Prague (Jezulátko). All are invited to join us in public homage to the Lord in the Eucharist.

\*We wish all our families a wonderful, restful summer and look forward to welcoming you back at our Sunday School in September

\*If you wish to sign up your child for the 2018-2019 religious education program for children and youth or if you are interested in helping with the program as a teacher or an assistant, please contact Mary Beth Webster at [marybethwebster@hotmail.com](mailto:marybethwebster@hotmail.com).

**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.