



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

St. Thomas Church

Today's Prayer

Say this prayer today

My soul longs for your presence, Lord.
When I turn my thoughts to you,
I find peace and contentment.

In this issue:

Gospel Reflection	1
Study of Readings	1
Upcoming Events	2
Ongoing activities	2

September 3rd-4th, 2011

23rd Ordinary Sunday

Josefská 8, Malá Strana, Prague 1, 118 01

Tel: 257 530 556, 602 643 365

The Reflection of the Gospel

Today's gospel reading is one of four "discourses" given by Jesus and is concerned with discipline or good order in the community. Drawing its inspiration out of the Old Testament (the Bible of the early Church), the underlying principal is, how can an erring member be forgiven his offense and so be readmitted to the community.

There are three steps to this process. It should be noted that the offense, though not named, is grave enough to involve the community and as such has to be forgiven by the community either individually or collectively. The *first instance* is self-explanatory. When a brother or sister sins, a private but firm fraternal correction is regarded as the ideal recommended by Leviticus 19:17: "You shall reason with your neighbor, lest you sin because of him." In those cases, however, when such an ideal is unrealizable than the *second instance* drawn from Deuteronomy 19:15: "Only on the testimony of two or three witnesses, can a charge be upheld," is to be employed. Obviously, the charge must be more grave to warrant such a correction. The *third*, or *final instance*, is most grave. When all else fails and the brother or sister remains incorrigible, then with the full authority given its leaders (Matthew 16:18) and the community itself (Matthew 18:18), the Church is to expel the recalcitrant from its midst. Until proper repentance is demonstrated, such a one shall be treated "like a pagan or a tax collector"; in other words, "like an outsider."

Matthew concludes this somber but "emergency" passage with the reminder that to implement these painful remedies the community must seek agreement in prayer. Only with the authority of Jesus prayerfully present in such decisions will the good of the errant brother or sister be paramount.

Study of the Today's Readings

FIRST READING

In these few verses, Ezekiel realized his calling. He was to be the watchman at the city gate. Like other watchmen, he delivered news and orders from the king. Unlike other watchmen, he was not the gatekeeper who allowed the king's friends access to the city, while keeping his enemies at a distance. Ezekiel was to call the sinner to repentance. He called those leaving God's city (i.e., the community) to return. There is strength in numbers. But for the Church, we are not talking about a body count, but the number of sincere, sorrowful hearts. If we hear God's watchmen, like Ezekiel, and return, our presence will make a difference. For we show others the kind of God we follow and the type of people with whom we associate.

SECOND READING

How are Christians to act in areas not covered by civic laws? Here, Paul used the Torah (especially the Ten Commandments) as a backdrop to promote a popular rabbinic interpretation: Leviticus 19:18 fulfilled the Law. "Love your neighbor as yourself." Paul echoed the

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

Roots of Augustinian Spirituality

Augustinian Spirituality is based on principles found in Holy Scripture and guided by the thought of St. Augustine of Hippo, the great Fifth Century African Doctor of the Church and framer of the ideals of our community life.

Some key elements of Augustinian Spirituality are

The Word of God

It was the words of Holy Scripture ("*Let us conduct ourselves properly as in the day, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in promiscuity and licentiousness, not in rivalry and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the desires of the flesh.*" --Romans 13: 13-14) that occasioned Augustine's conversion. Augustine's study of the Scriptures made him a formidable theologian.

The Word of God is for us a primary place of encountering God, of discovering the mystery of God's love and action in our world.

Discovering God in Community

Augustine writes frequently of how God has worked through people. Indeed, true friendship is for Augustine a way of experiencing the love of God.

Augustinians are called to live in community--or better, in communion. We are called to live in such a way that, through our sharing of faith and life together, we and others will come to know God's presence and love.

Interiority

The theme of interiority is well known in Augustine's writing. It is deep within one's heart that God is found. Silence needs to be given a special place in our life. Meditation, contemplation, personal reflection and other forms of prayer allow space in our lives to encounter the mystery of the Divine Presence.

The Restless Heart, always seeking God and not finding rest until it rests in God, is an image which holds a central place in the spirituality of Augustine.

To be continued

If you are interesting in knowing more about **St. Augustine and Augustinian spirituality** come to the meeting that we are going to have every Tuesday at 06:30 pm from September 20th. More information with Fr. William, OSA

ACCOMMODATION:

- for one woman sharing with other woman one room flat in Prague 6- Břevnov in quiet place. Telephone: tel 728537858
- or in Praha 4-Nusle. Tel: 732120362

Upcoming Feasts This Week

07. Melchior, Marek and Stepan(+1619) the Martyrs of Kosice, Slovakia.

-Brazil Independence Day (1822)

08. Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

10. Nicholas of Tolentine, OSA (+1305), "the Wonder Worker" and devoted helper of the poor. On his feast day bread is blessed and distributed to the sick and needy.

Family Activity

Have your family develop the rules together. The rules should respect the individual members as people. They should also respect the authority given to parents. Try to list fair rules that keep peace and order in the family. The rewards for keeping the rules and consequences for breaking the rules should also show respect, yet be realistic. Rewards should stress the quality of work, not just the quantity.

Announcements and Ongoing Activities

* **Religious Education is starting from the 25th of September at 9:45am.** Information meeting for parents on 18st of September at 10am. If you wish to enrol your children please contact Monika Shaheen –mshaheen@iol.cz

***Help at Sv. Dobrotiva** in Zaječov. Next Saturday September 10th. Meeting in front of St.Thomas Church at 09:30am. We will be back at 05 pm. Thanks for your help to the oldest Augustinian Marian place in the Czech Republic.

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

*We are looking for an **English teacher** for our school. If you are interesting, please see Fr. Juan

*Parish Council meeting. Sunday September 4th at 12:15 pm

*** Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers**

If you would like to serve the St. Thomas community as a lector or Eucharistic minister at the Sunday mass, please contact A. Daly at dalyaann@hotmail.com