

Volume 3
Issue 3
September, 2001



Augustinian Friends— Seeking God Together

Amici

Co-Leader's Message

Anne Hallaway and
Peter Moriarty

Greetings to all Augustinian Friends.

Local Communities of Friends

During his homily at the Mass closing the Augustinian Lay Congress at Echuca in April this year, keynote speaker Father Ted Tack OSA encouraged us to go back to our parishes and help build community. With this in mind a group of Augustinian Friends gathered in Manly Vale during July to discuss ways of offering hospitality and friendship to the broader parish and of deepening our sense of Augustinian spirituality. It was decided to begin by providing a cup of tea after Mass once a month. With many willing volunteers, the commitment will not be heavy. In Manly Vale, we have found in the past that this regular, informal gathering allows visitors to feel welcome and provides fellow parishioners with the chance to get to know one another better. The monthly children's liturgy Sunday was chosen so that young families could be included.

Edmund Maher's course *Life with Augustine: A course in Augustine's spirit and guidance for daily living* is an excellent vehicle in assisting us to understand and

realise the relevance of Augustine's message for us today. The course begins at Manly Vale again this month with 15 participants meeting regularly for discussion following private study and reflection.

Both these local initiatives are a response to Father Tack's challenge to develop our Augustinian spirituality and to extend friendship and service to others. Are there similar opportunities you could implement in your own parish?

New National Leader

In the June issue of *Amici* we invited nominations for the position of national leader of Augustinian Friends, since the term of office for the current committee comes to a close in December this year. Peter and I are pleased to announce that Paul Griffiths of Manly Vale Parish has accepted nomination for this position. So in this bulletin, together with Father Pat Fahey OSA, Augustinian Provincial, we introduce Paul as the incoming national leader of Augustinian Friends. We thank Paul for offering his time and commitment and welcome his many talents to this new position.

Paul comes to leadership of the Association with a sincere appreciation of Augustinian spirituality, nurtured through his upbringing in a deeply committed family and his education at St Augustine's College, Brookvale. Living in Balgowlah with his wife Susan and son James, he has a great love for family and enjoys outdoor activities, spiritual reading and writing poetry. Paul has an undergraduate degree in history and fine arts and is presently completing an MBA in E-business. He has worked in community services and social justice areas and has held management positions in financial services and IT industries.

In This Issue

Co-Leader's Message Anne Hallaway, Peter Moriarty.....	1
New York on My Mind: A Friend on the Spot Paul Maloney OSA	2
We are all Children of God Peter Winneke OSA	2
On Sabbatical Paul Maloney OSA	3
We Build Love from Ashes Paul Griffiths	4
Life Support	4

Augustinians OnLine

Stay in touch with the latest news from the Augustinian community through the Province's website: <<http://www.augustinians.org.au>>
Details of upcoming events in Augustinian spirituality and in parishes and schools around the country can be found on this easy to use site. Links to local lay Augustinian associations and the international community can also be found on this site.

As a guest speaker at the Lay Congress Paul shared his personal experience and strong faith in his talk Confessions of an Ordinary Australian. He has been an actively involved in Augustinian Youth programmes, parish planning, liturgy, Augustinian Friends Prayer Resource and in the founding of our Association.

Through the Augustinians, Paul was introduced to contemplative spirituality and to the Benedictine Monastic community at Jamberoo in New South Wales, of which he has been an oblate member since 1995. Paul's particular interest is in bringing the contemplative dimension of Christianity, so important to the great teachers of prayer like Augustine and Benedict, to our busy society. He hopes that Augustinian Friends can help in bringing this abiding peace of Christ to communities throughout Australia and overseas.

We offer Paul our sincere congratulations for his leadership beginning 2002.



Paul Griffiths: Augustinian Friends' new national leader

New York on My Mind: A Friend on the Spot

Paul Maloney OSA

On Tuesday 11 September, I was on my way to New York to attend a course in Contemporary Spirituality at Fordham University in The Bronx, a "break" from my usual studies at Villanova University,

Philadelphia PA, that make up the American part of my sabbatical. I caught the local train from the 30th Street station in Philadelphia, changed at Trenton, New Jersey, and entered New York via the tunnel leading into the Penn Station, under Maddison Square Garden. I have followed this ritual every Tuesday since arriving in Philadelphia on this leg of my sabbatical.

What happened on that day surpassed fiction as all the horrors of decades of disaster films came true before our disbelieving eyes.

The initial anxiety over how I was going to get to New York gave way to fatalism as all access across the Hudson was closed and the unbelievable sight of both towers imploding in a cloud of dust and rubble drove us into emotional overload. I remember thinking: "Why is so much paper littering the streets?", totally forgetting that offices contain paper as well as people, and that paper blows restlessly in the wind in a way that people don't.

By some complete fluke, I was able to get through to my friends in New York to let them know that I was staying put. The rest of the day became a vigil as we slowly realised the extent of the possible death toll of innocent people; the victims of such fanatical malice.

I was in Washington at the time of President Kennedy's assassination, and now, as then, people began moving instinctively towards churches, chapels and gymnasiums, where services of all kinds were offered throughout the day. Literally thousands of people gathered to pray for the dead and the missing. University students, on this campus and many others, in their bewilderment displayed a level of faith and vulnerability that I can only describe as a very real part of American spirituality which finds expression more readily in a church setting than it perhaps does in Australia.

The other difference between watching these events on CNN in Australia, with all the shock and solidarity that this involves, and walking among the people along the eastern seaboard of America, is that everyone you meet is affected in a

personal way with the loss or disappearance of a family member or a friend. The train I travel on will, next week, not be so crowded, and in many of the homes I pass will there be children whose mother or father, or both, did not come home from work on that Tuesday night.

Villanova University prides itself on its law and business schools, and at least 80 of its alumni would have been at their offices at the World Trade Centre when the planes struck. It is that cloud of personal sadness that removes this from the abstract pity that moves us when an earthquake strikes Turkey, or a famine Ethiopia. It is that which makes human this most inhuman of tragedies.

We are all Children of God

Peter Wieneke OSA

The current events and actions relating to "illegals" and "asylum seekers" often involve a questionable use of language. I am reminded of a paragraph in the book *The Augustinian Promotion of Justice and Peace* issued by the Augustinian Curia in 1999. It reads:

Throughout his years as a bishop, Augustine was deeply conscious of the power of language, of the need to find the right words to speak peace. In a letter written near the end of his life, Augustine congratulated the military officer Darius for successfully negotiating a truce with the Vandal tribes, demonstrating the power of a word of truth to make peace. 'It is a higher glory to slay war itself with a word', he wrote, 'than to slay soldiers with a sword; and to procure or maintain peace with peace, not with war.'

The current debate about "illegals" calls on us to be informed, use words correctly and to always speak of refugees and asylum seekers as people having the dignity of the "children of God". For further information see the web site <www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au>.

On Sabbatical

Paul Maloney OSA

Dear Friends,

When I presented myself for registration in the courses I am taking here at Villanova University, Pennsylvania, the Staff in the office asked me how I managed to be given six months for a sabbatical. I told them: "All you have to do is live long enough"; which was my flippant way of saying that endurance has its own reward. They seemed to think that six months was an abundant stretch of time, whereas I am aware that I have already reached the half-way mark. In the last book of *The Confessions*, St Augustine concludes his reflections on the creation of the world with a soliloquy to God:

[B]y the fact that you rested on the seventh day, having fulfilled all your works, which are very good, [you] proclaim to us that we also, after our works, which are very good because you have given them to us, may rest in you on the Sabbath of eternal life. Then also you shall rest in us, even as now you work in us, and so will that rest of yours be in us, even as these your works are through us. [Book 13, 51-52]

This does not mean that I regard my sabbatical as a prelude to eternity (at least not immediately), but rather as a treat that I have been given which will allow me to return refreshed and renewed to the tasks at hand. In my travels, I have quite often been alone on planes, trains and buses, and this gives a remarkable opportunity to reflect on those things that are happening around me, as well as to compare the different pace of being in another country with how things are at home. I have come to the conclusion that living anywhere foreign is like trying to walk the length of a swimming pool; it takes four to five times longer to accomplish the smallest task which would be done with the greatest ease on one's home turf. For instance, the light switches in America point down when off and up when on, and you need an engineering degree to work out how to take a shower, so varied and complex are their plumbing systems.

The practice of taking a sabbatical is mostly found in academic circles but that is not the only tradition available to those who step once more onto the campus of their Alma Mater. During this last week, there was a special convocation to welcome the new intake of students for this coming year. An academic convocation is somewhere between a religious ceremony and a lecture, with music, prayer, the handing out of awards and a special address from a distinguished scholar. Every member of the faculty was required to attend in their doctoral robes, and with the Augustinian friars in their habits (myself included), processed into a packed auditorium of students, parents and allied staff. There was a Colour Guard to lead us in and a band to play a stirring entrance march. The President of the University and administrators and special guests took their places on the stage.

The address was given in a very spirited way by a popular member of staff who spoke on the theme of "friendship" as an ideal for students attending an Augustinian University. He used an example of playing golf with a friend with a score so close that either of them could have won. His friend turned to him and said: "I hope that you were not praying that I would miss." He drew the remarkable insight that it is only when we wish for our friend to excel that we ourselves are stretched to do better as well. If our friend did not improve their game we might remain static also. It occurred to me that this would apply equally well in a marriage or in community life, that by wishing the best for our partner or partners we are being called to achieve something better within ourselves as well.

With much love,

Paul

New Prior General, Order of St Augustine

On behalf of Augustinian Friends, congratulations to Father Robert Prevost OSA of the American mid-West Province

Augustinian Friends Annual Mass and Lunch

Sunday
18 November, 2001

11.30 am Mass at
St. Kieran's,
Manly Vale

followed by Lunch
Guest Speaker:
Dr Laurie Woods

Dr Woods will be presenting:

The Portrait and Spirituality of Jesus in
Luke's Gospel

Cost: \$15.00 includes lunch (BYO drink).

RSVP: 11 November, 2001.

Further information and RSVP to:

Peter Moriarty

Margaret Burke

Anne Halloway

See back page for contact details

who was recently elected Prior-General of the Order at the General Chapter in Rome.

Message from the New Prior General

Father Robert F Prevost
Prior General OSA

Dear Friends,

I have received the message you sent me on the occasion of my election as Prior General of the Order.

I am deeply grateful for this fraternal gesture, and especially for the communion of faith and prayer which it manifests. With God's help and with your help I hope to carry out my ministry effectively in the service of God and of the brothers and sisters.

May the Lord bless your religious commitment and your apostolates. United in faith and prayer I send you sincere fraternal greetings.

We Build Love from Ashes

Paul Griffiths

In the cloud of illusion we magnify
darkness,
Countless replays on the evening news,
Lead us from sadness to despair and
depression,
Until we reflect,
Sometimes in a cavern of silence,
Under the deepest darkness.
We face the reality of warmth,
Of the myriad loving acts unreported,
unheard,
We leave behind the cloud of forgetting,
The virtual illusion of endless suffering
without hope,
Carried across the vast networks of our
information age.
Imagine if the millions of days decorated
with warmth and love,
Yours and mine,
Filled our evening news,
A real story that goes something like this:

In countless streets today through the cities
and towns of the world,
Amongst all peoples, races and creeds,
Trust was placed and well received,
Neighbours cared for each other,
Lovers loved,
Parents cuddled children,
Honest labourers toiled in the field.

If we stop in this time of tragedy to reflect
on the true nature of reality,
Then love transcends state, organisation
and group,
The blind hatred that births violence
subsides,
And bridges of peace are built.
If you question this reality,
Watch the darkness changing to light on
your screens and radio waves,
See tears of love and comforting arms
rising from the ashes,
Battle hardened TV anchors caring for
suffering guests,
Tireless rescuers,

Amici

A publication of
Augustinian Friends

PO Box 679
Brookvale NSW 2100

Ph. (02) 9905 3049
Fax (02) 9938 4465

Designed, edited, and typeset by
Sarah-Jane Greenaway
(02) 4751 5813
sjgreenaway@bigpond.com

Contacts

Margaret Burke

(02) 9452 1179

burkemt@hotmail.com

Anne Halloway

(02) 9949 1758

halloway@intercoast.com.au

Sue & Gerald Mackey

(02) 9982 6357:

gmackey@optushome.com.au

Paul Maloney osa

(02) 9631 0340

paulmal@bigpond.com.au

Margaret & Peter Moriarty

(02) 9670 2110:

peter_moriarty@acslink.net.au

Life Support

Please keep the following Friends and
Friends of Friends in your prayers:

Augustinian brothers and sisters
throughout the United States of America

All those who have friends and family
missing in the World Trade Centre.

The leaders of the US and the world as
they deal with the aftermath of the
terrorist attacks on New York; given
them the strength and the wisdom to do
what's right.

The emergency workers at the World
Trade Centre.

Kay Morrow, Mareeba , recovering from
surgery

Fr. Ted Tack OSA , past Prior General,
who is experiencing health problems

Beryl Woolnough, Sarah-Jane Greenaway's
great-aunt

Unseen heroes who gave their lives,
Couples who died holding hands,
People who lay flowers and cry on the
other side of the world.
Leaders of all nations and creeds bound
together in tears.
Yes, at times the dark clouds cover the
shining sun,
But the illusion of darkness is our own
creation,
For even in the deepest darkness,
The soft light of the moon sparkles across
the night ocean,
And caresses the leaves as a gentle
breeze whispers through the sleeping
forest.
Alone we are lost in our dark illusions,
Together we build love from ashes.