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Augustinian Friends— Seeking God Together

# AMICI

## Co-Leaders' Message

Monica Meagher  
Mary McCormick

As we greet you in this edition we also share the excitement gathering as we prepare for the Third National Congress of the Laity in Melbourne, April 20–22. Plans are in place for a truly wonderful Augustinian event. Augustine in Autumn has become the catch cry! We are looking forward to the opportunities for *formation, friendships* to be shared and *hospitality* experienced. To those unable to attend, we seek your prayerful support that all will go well and that the Spirit will be ever present. You may look forward to the next edition of *Amici* to read of all that takes place along with the outcomes. You may also wish to take part in the raffle which will be drawn at the close of the Congress. All proceeds will go to an Augustinian Social Justice project in Peru. You can read about the prize below.

May this Lenten season be for you a time of prayer and reflection so that when Easter comes not only your voice can sing Alleluia but your whole being can too.

### Handing over leadership

Two nominations were received for the roles of co-leader of Friends for 2007–2010. Both nominees were ready to accept and so we present a profile and photo of each below. The Provincial Council at its last meeting accepted these nominations and so we are delighted to announce that at the Congress Eucharist Maureen Atkins and Ruth McGowan of Kyabram Friends will be commissioned as new co-leaders. Their profiles are published below.

## Congress progress

To anyone thinking of attending the Congress in Melbourne we urge that bookings be finalized as soon as possible. It is important to know numbers so we can look after you properly.

To those who are attending the Congress, there will an “At Home” in the Parish Centre on Thursday evening, 6.00pm–8.00pm. A chance to register, to find your way around, to be welcomed, even to find a Friend to dine with.

We would like to thank Kaye Coates of the North Harbour Friends (NSW) for co-ordinating the raffle. Her son Simon deserves a special thank you for creating the triptych that is the prize. Please see his article below for more information about the work. We wish him well in his career as an artist.

Friends from Kyabram, Echuca and South Yarra have spent many hours in preparation for the Congress. On 25 February, Fr Paul joined South Yarra parishioners as volunteers were briefed. Another gathering in Northern Victoria over the weekend of 3 and 4 March saw the Congress liturgies finalized.

## International news

The committee of lay people formed at the International Congress in Rome in July 2006 is to meet in Malta late March. Already valuable discussion has taken between members via e-mail. It is hoped that there will continue to be development of the lay movement within the Augustinian family. The Australian delegates are corresponding and entering into the discussion as to a name for this group and offering some ideas as to the role the Committee might play in the future. Please keep this work in your prayers.

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### Augustinians On-Line

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.

## New Co-Leaders for Friends

### Maureen Atkins



I was born in Numurkah in Northern Victoria and completed my teacher training in Geelong. My first teaching position was in Rochester, but later worked in Waaia. I moved to Kyabram in 1967, the year I was married. As a member of St Augustine's Parish Kyabram, I have been involved with the Parish Pastoral Council, *Parish 21*, the Liturgy Group, adult education, Passionist Family Groups and the Bereavement Team. As a member of Augustinian Friends, I attended the International Congress in Rome in 2006.

I work at St Augustine's P-10 school in Kyabram in the position of Deputy Principal Religious Education. Since my initial teacher training, I have completed formal study in social welfare, religious education and leadership.

My personal interests include social and community issues, reading, music, theatre, education and spirituality. I am a member of the Kyabram Community and Learning Centre Committee, Henley Apartments and Kyabram Health Services.

I have a daughter and a grand-daughter who live in Melbourne.

### Ruth McGowan

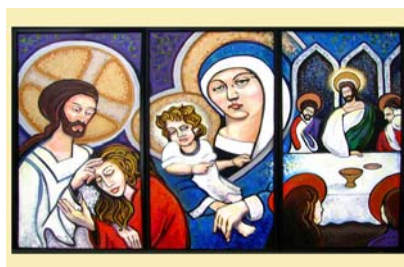


I live in Tongala. I was married for 37 years to Dick, who passed away in December 1999. I am a mother of 9 and a grandmother to 11. Until I retired in 1995, I was a teacher. Since then I work one day a week at Tongala Aged Care. I've been a member of St Patrick's Church community (part of St Augustine's Parish, Kyabram) since 1974. During that time, I have been contact person and writer for *Sandpiper*, the Diocesan monthly paper, a

member of the team which publishes the parish magazine *Tolle Lege*, a special minister (Reader) and a member of the parish liturgy music group. I am a member of Augustinian Friends, , *Parish 21*, as well as a leader of lay liturgies. I attended to Echuca, Sydney and Rome Augustinian Congresses. My interests include reading, sewing, gardening, computing, farming our family tree plantation, and being a volunteer woodworker at Aged Care Men's Shed.

## Congress Triptych

Simon Coates



The work being raffled at this April's Congress is a *triptych*, which is a salute to early Christian art. From the Ancient Greek "triptychos", meaning *three* and *fold*, the triptych first appeared in the Middle Ages as altar pieces in Eastern Byzantine churches, and spread across Europe to the Celtic churches of the British Isles. Historically featuring hinged panels of carved wood, and later illustrated images, the triptych has continued to develop in the painting tradition throughout the ages and is still practiced in this post modern period, albeit now without hinges and often in differing sizes, shapes and arrangements. Many of the world's greatest painters have worked in this format, in particular on liturgical themes and commissions, including the famous works of Peter Paul Rubens in the Cathedral of Our Lady, Antwerp.

Analogous to the Holy Trinity, which is the foundation of the Catholic faith and the basis of all Christianity, the Triptych as a whole is intended to be greater than the sum of its parts. The central panel is the

focus of the work. Whilst not addressing the Holy Trinity per se, my work illustrates some of the seminal themes of Christ's life, as the benevolent redeemer, as child in the arms of the Madonna, and as presiding over the first Eucharist of the Last Supper.

The graphic style of my painting is intended to evoke the feelings of traditional iconography, in particular the beautiful convention in our faith of the stained glass window. The triptych functions as a montage in one whole image, and as three separate pieces as well.

## Friends' Constitution

Peter Kotsiakos

The 2003 National Congress in Echuca seems a long time ago. But I can remember that on the Sunday morning of the Congress we were presented with a draft Constitution which, as far as I can recall, was accepted without amendment. Well, here we are in 2007 and once again the draft Constitution is being presented for acceptance and ratification.

The current draft is substantially the same as the 2003 draft with some substantive changes which are detailed below. The philosophy has been to make as few changes as possible, acknowledging the great work done by the original drafters of the Constitution. The aim has been to produce a not over-legal but hopefully a reasonably simple and unambiguous document. Most of the changes relate to clarification and presentation, such as ensuring a common font and font size, and consistent numbering and format. There has also been a tidying up of terms and definitions. The order of chapters and of some clauses within chapters has been changed to create a more logical flow. But no doubt there are still some inconsistencies which have been missed.

These are the substantive changes to the 2003 draft Constitution:

- 2.3 Inclusion of social justice as a recommended activity.
- 3.2 Constitution to be approved by the

Provincial Council rather than the Prior Provincial.

- 4.4 Inclusion of regional leaders on the National Committee.
- 4.9 Leader may co-opt delegates to attend international meetings as an alternative to personal attendance.
- 4.14 Removal of limitation on the number of additional Committee members the National Committee may co-opt.
- 4.16 Provision for the Provincial rather than the Provincial Council to review nominations for National Leader to facilitate possible last minute consultation.
- 4.17 Provision for the election of National Co-leaders as an alternative mode of leadership.

The draft Constitution was approved by Provincial Council in February, and will be presented to members for ratification at the Melbourne Congress in April.

Copies have already been sent to all regional leaders to enable members to comment. Copies will be available for inspection during the Congress.

If any member would like a copy emailed or posted, please contact me at [anne-peter@excite.com](mailto:anne-peter@excite.com) or on 0408108342.

## Friends Meet Coorparoo

Contact: Sylvia Phillips



Coorparoo Friends had their first meeting for the year on 28 February. We had the

usual good attendance. The highlight of our meeting was Fr Dave's presentation. It was his first meeting with us and he spoke about "Rediscovering the Land of Augustine". With his guidance, we rediscovered the Africa of Augustine's times, walking in the "footsteps" of the philosopher of Tagaste. We learned of the

cities which contain archaeological remains from the 4th and 5th centuries, the age in which Augustine lived, and of the present culture of North Africa today which still preserves traces of ancient Christianity. Without leaving Coorparoo we travelled through Carthage, Hippo Regius (Hippo Annaba), Ruscade (Skikda), Icosium (Algiers), Tingi (Tangiers). It was fascinating.

Our latest and successful raffle was of a painting by a well-known Korean artist whose son Francis has lived at the Coorparoo Priory for several years. The painting was actually done in Brisbane while Francis' parents visited him here although sadly the father has since passed away.

One of our members Karleen bought the painting at a St James' parish auction but kindly donated it for the *Friends* raffle. It was won by Sister Margaret White SGS. Lenore Girard has generously given a bottle of whiskey for our next raffle. Both Kathleen and Lenore will be attending the National Augustinian Congress in Melbourne so we will catch up with them then and no doubt new friends will be made!

## Kyabram

Contact: Maureen Atkins and  
Ruth McGowan

In February, Kyabram Friends met for the first time in 2007. Everyone was eager to hear of preparations for the Congress. Maureen and Ruth were able to report on progress as we had been involved with the planning of the liturgies for this anticipated event.

Our topic for the evening was letter writing, particularly in relation to this art in St Augustine's time. We followed the excellent article by Joan Nelson from South Yarra as our guide. After looking at the difficulties of letter writing in the 4th century, and the form that letters took at that time, we read Letter 122 from St Augustine, written to "his Well-Beloved Brethren, the Clergy, and the Whole People of Hippo". We were thus able to form a valuable word picture of these times. Following this, we planned our

meeting dates for the year, and concluded with supper.

We look forward to greeting Friends old and new at the Congress in April. See you there!

## Mareeba, Nth Queensland

Contact: Jeanette Hartley

The Mareeba Friends group met at the home of Teresa and Gennaro Marinelli on 13 January, our first gathering for 2007. A delicious meal of home-made pizza was enjoyed and planning for the year to come took place. Kay Morrow spoke of her weekend at Greystanes, Sydney, in November and the of the forthcoming Congress in Melbourne this April. At this point in time Jeanette Hartley and Kay Morrow will be attending from FNQ.

Our gatherings for this year will include an overnight trip to Cooktown (22 and 23 May) to maintain our earlier work carried out in the Cooktown Cemetery. On 4 July we will attend evening Mass at St Christopher's Church in Kuranda and then share a meal at the home of Joan Clark. To celebrate the feast of St Augustine on 28 August, we will have Mass, a shared meal and discussion about his life. For the Feast of St Thomas of Villanova, Augustinian Friends will host a sausage sizzle after the 10.00 am Mass. Our final gathering for 2007 is tentatively arranged for 1 December.

Our parish priest Fr Rob Greenup leaves on a six month sabbatical at the end of May. During his absence, the Augustinian priests replacing him will certainly join with our group and share in our discussions on St Augustine.

## Newcastle

Contact: Kathleen Smith

Greetings from the Augustinian Meditation Group and Friends in Newcastle. Just before the Christmas break we were pleased to welcome two new members. Our first meeting for the year was early in February and it was lovely to share and meet together again share in prayer.

In our group we regularly share thoughts that arise from our meditation readings, as

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well as any prayer requests that stem from our day-to-day living. We are especially remembering the coming Congress in our prayer time and pray that we will all be spiritually nourished and guided as we gather together in fellowship.

We are also very much looking forward to our visit to Greystanes this month. We expect to learn more about St Augustine and the forthcoming Congress.

### North Harbour

Contact: Kaye Coates

Eleven North Harbour Friends gathered on 9 February to discuss the Congress and accommodation there, to plan our diary for 2007 and to view the painting to be raffled and discuss the raffle.

We have set down the following for 2007, addition to the Congress in Melbourne. A gathering with Friends from Greystanes and St Clair, to share highlights and experiences of the Congress has been arranged for 22 July. The venue is the parish centre, with morning tea will be served after 9.30 am Mass and lunch to follow our meeting. A gathering will take place on 19 October at the home of Peter and Kaye Coates. To celebrate Christmas, a gathering at a local restaurant on 8 December has been planned.

### St Clair

Contact: s Peter & Margaret  
Moriarty

Eight St Clair Friends met on 12 February at the Parish centre. We enjoyed a very good gathering. Following a reflection upon an Augustinian reading, we concentrated on planning for the upcoming year.

We looked at St Clair's response to the forthcoming Congress in Melbourne. A Power Point presentation was put together and an address was made at all the Sunday masses on 25 and 26 February to publicise the event and invite parishioners to attend. As a result, seven parishioners from St Clair are going to the Congress. Another five people are interested in attending but as yet are still undecided. Many were drawn to attend the event because of the social justice issues to be addressed and the quality of the speaker.

## Life Support

Please keep the following people and intentions in your prayers:

- Australia our parched land!
- Greg and his family on the death of his sister, Maureen.
- Margaret Wilcox who is nursing her cousin, June O'Connor

Many also wanted to take part in an uplifting Augustinian event.

We also organised some other events for this year. We hope to have a series of talks in June or July where we gather for 4 or 5 weeks and follow a programme based on an Augustinian theme. We want to offer it to the whole community. We also plan to celebrate St Augustine's Feast day in August with a Mass and social event.

See you in Melbourne! Come on the Swans!

### South Yarra

Contact: Robert Huggins



South Yarra, has been focusing on the upcoming Congress. The end of year function last December took the form of a spit roast lunch with members from Kyabram joining us to sample the culinary skills of a proposed caterer for the Congress. All agreed that this caterer would well provide for the three days of the Congress.

In February, we set up an exciting launch of bookings for the Congress in both our churches of the South Yarra Parish. At St Joseph's balloons and lighting in the church's foyer created quite an impression!

At the first group meeting for 2007, after prayer, one member shared insights from his personal spiritual journey, which was appreciated by all present. Plans were discussed for the year and ideas were well received in the group. Pancakes were then enjoyed by everyone!

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