

AUGUSTINIAN FRIENDS - PRAYER RESOURCE GUIDE

SHARING THE SPIRITUALITY OF AUGUSTINE

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Co-Leaders' Message

Augustine provides the perfect Prayer to begin the season of

PENTECOST :-

*Breathe in me O Holy Spirit
That my thoughts may all be holy;
Act in me O Holy Spirit
That my works, too, may be holy;
Draw my heart O Holy Spirit
That I love but what is holy;
Strengthen me O Holy Spirit
To defend all that is holy;
Guard me then O Holy Spirit
That I always may be holy.*

In a Sermon for Pentecost Augustine spoke to his people,
*“The happy day has dawned for us on which Holy Church
 makes her first radiant appearance to the eyes of faith
 and sets the hearts of believers on fire.”* Sermon 271,1

**At Pentecost we are reminded
 of the particular gifts of the Spirit.**

Wisdom

Counsel

Courage



Wonder

Understanding

Knowledge

Reverence

The Purpose of the Prayer

Resource Guide

Each of us is on a journey to God like our patron Augustine.

The Friends prayer resource is offered to you as a support in your day to day prayer and will be sent to you 4 times a year.

It is centered on the Gospel readings for coming Sundays and quotes from Augustine.

It also contains a prayer orientated letter from our Chaplain.

In your daily living are you able to acknowledge these gifts within yourself?

How often do you notice and affirm them in other people?

**As individual gifts these all bring blessing
 but for Augustine the ultimate gift is love.**

“Love, therefore, which is of God, and is God, is specially the Holy Spirit, by which the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by which love the whole Trinity dwells in us.”

On the Trinity xv, 18.32,19,37.

Donald Burt OSA, an Augustinian scholar and writer, offers further insights on **Pentecost**:

Today is the day we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Church.

It is the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit to you and me.

As St. Augustine told his people again and again:

“The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ and we are members of that Body”.

What is the sign that we have received the Holy Spirit?

.....that we are healthy members of the Body of Christ?

that we are truly daughters and sons of God?

St. Augustine gives the answer.

The sign of the Holy Spirit is in us that:

.....we are joined together by love

.....that we love the Church

.....that is, each other, because we are all that community - Christ.

On Pentecost, the Spirit did not come down only on the Apostles, the bishops, the clergy, he came down on **all the people** who expressed faith in Christ and were baptized in his name.

Whatever our state in life, the Body of Christ suffers if we do not try to live in love of each other and Christ our Lord.

It is encouraging to realize that the sign of the Holy Spirit in us is not some exotic gift such as prophecy. It is not in speaking in tongues. It is not in becoming martyrs. It is simply found in our love for each other and for the Lord.

It is an encouraging thought because we cannot make ourselves prophets or scholars or martyrs in the service of Christ. But we can make ourselves lovers. We can show true concern for every member of the human race for the sake of Christ. And we can begin that today by being kind to those in our own house, in our own neighbourhood. We need not go to a desert for solitary prayer to God for the rest of our lives. Prayer begins in living well.....in living a good life, and Christ has told us that a good life is a life of love.

Whoever we are, and whatever gifts we have or do not have, it is possible for us to be a temple of the Holy Spirit in this life..... because it is possible for us to love.

With love, we need not worry about a lack of dramatic powers. By ourselves they have no importance.

Augustine was firmly convinced that if we have love we have all the other gifts of the Spirit and if, we do not have love, any other gift we claim to have is worthless.

-Our prayer for you who are truly daughters and sons of God is that you allow the Spirit:

To enable you to see the face of God in those you meet each day,

To bring you deep peace in troubled times,

To sustain God's love within you,

To set your hearts on fire.

Spirit of God bless you,

June 1st, 2006

Dear Friends,

two Augustinian events are about to happen that illustrate the ongoing vision the Church had in mind when it called into existence the mendicant Order of St. Augustine seven hundred and fifty years ago. At the time of the Grand Union the structure of the Order required that although each community kept a certain autonomy, houses in the same country or region were to be united to form a distinct province under the leadership of a prior provincial with duty of care for each friar in his jurisdiction. This leader was elected at a gathering or 'Chapter' which was to occur every four years, and on June 25th this year just such a convocation is to take place in Sydney. The new Provincial, Fr. Tony Banks, OSA and a gathering of almost 40 participants will spend five days preparing a blue print for what the future of the Australian Province might be.

High on the list of priorities to be discussed at this Chapter is a quality of the Augustinian Order which has existed from its very beginning: the way in which members of the laity have been consistently invited to share the spirituality of Augustine with their ordained or vowed brothers and sisters. A modern expression of this participation will be the second event of note, an International Congress of Lay Augustinians to take place in Rome on July 12th at St. Monica's College. There will be a Social Justice theme to this gathering and reflection (from Augustine's broad point of view), on today's world in all its ethnic and economic disparity. The hope held out for this Congress is that —

We come together, seeking God in unity of mind and heart, under the guidance and inspiration of St. Augustine, to contribute to the creation of a better world, by building the Kingdom of God in friendship and fraternity among peoples of all cultures.

The Australian Province will be represented at this gathering by 19 participants who will not only be deepening their own experience of Augustinian spirituality by taking part in talks and discussions, but will also share their story of living the Christian calling in an Australian environment. A highlight of the Congress will be celebration of the Eucharist in the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo, the very site where the Great Union took place in 1256.

In the centuries that have intervened the example and writings of St. Augustine have ensured that this mutual sharing of what we have in common has been a hallmark of the Augustinian family. The Order founded in his name clearly provides a safe structure from which to live out our Christian calling, whether as laity or religious:

We don't build a house for the Lord until we are blended together through love. If the beams and stones of the house were not fitted together by a definite order, if they were not bound to one another in peace, and united in love by mutual cohesiveness, no one would ever dare enter this house. But when you see a building in which the beams and stones are solidly joined together, you enter with confidence, and have no fear that it may fall. (Sermon 336, 1-2)

Augustine was deeply interested in what binds us together. He spoke of a relatedness to one another that is given by God, that *contains* God. The human yearning for communion, for oneness with others is really a reflection of the communal nature of God, the Trinity, in whose image we are made. Our very nature and longing for relationship reflect God who is relationship. At the heart of all reality both personal and social is the Trinity, that community of love which Augustine saw reflected in the first gathering of the Christian church described in the Acts of the Apostles and upon which he based the Rule that he wrote for the men and women - clergy and laity - who gathered around him.

Let us therefore love one another as far as we are able and by our love draw one another to possess God within us . . . Christ loved us in order that we might love one another; by loving us he has given us the help we need to unite ourselves with one another in mutual love and, being united by such a sweet bond, to be the members of so great a head. (Tract on John 65,2)

May the Spirit of Pentecost mould the two gatherings to take place, one in Rome and one in Australia, into vital expressions of the sweet bond of Christian love we have received from the tradition of Augustine.

With much love,

Tolle Lege (Take and Read)

It is suggested that you reflect on the readings taken from the Sunday liturgy when you can find a quiet time in the previous week. 'Take and Read' the paragraph chosen and keep in mind the question, "What is God wanting me to know about this passage now?" Then let God's grace illumine your understanding.

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| June 11 | Holy Trinity | Romans 8:14-17 |
| June 18 | Corpus Christe | Mark 14:12-16, 22-26 |
| | <i>'We though many, are one loaf, one body.' So you are beginning to receive what you have also begun to <u>be</u>, provided you do not receive unworthily . . . You receive worthily, however, if you avoid the yeast of bad doctrine, in order to be 'unleavened loaves of sincerity and truth', or if you hold to that yeast of charity.</i> | <i>(Sermon 228B, 2-5)</i> |
| June 25 | Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time | Mark 4: 35-41 |
| | <i>Don't let the waves overwhelm you when your heart is upset by a temptation. And yet because we are human, if the wind has driven us on and shaken our souls with passion, don't let's despair; let's wake up Christ, and so sail on in a calm sea, and reach our home country.</i> | <i>(Sermon 63, 1-3)</i> |
| July 2 | Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time | Mark 5: 25-34 |
| July 9 | Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time | Mark 6: 1-6 |
| July 16 | Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time | Ephesians 1: 3-10 |
| July 23 | Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time | Mark 6:30-34 |
| | <i>We were caught by pressures and crushed in order that our love—which used to go out to things worldly, temporal and time-bound—might now begin to seek a peace which this life or this earth cannot give. Then the Lord becomes for us what the scriptures say he is: "A refuge for the poor".</i> | <i>(Exposition of the Psalms 83,3)</i> |
| July 30 | Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time | John 6: 1-13 |
| August 6 | Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time | Ephesians 4: 17, 20-24 |
| August 13 | Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time | John 6: 41-51 |
| | <i>Intending, then, to give the Holy Spirit, the Lord, in urging us to believe in him, spoke of himself as the bread that comes down from heaven. For <u>to believe in him</u> is what is meant by eating the living bread. Those who believe eat; they are invisibly filled because they are invisibly reborn.</i> | <i>(Homilies of the Gospel of John 26, 1-2)</i> |
| August 15 | The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin | 1 Corinthians 15: 20-26 |
| August 20 | Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time | John 6: 51-58 |
| | <i>He is the food which nourishes without perishing; he is the food which doesn't disappear when it is taken; he is the food which fills the hungry and remains whole. When you depart from here to your own tables, you won't eat anything like that. So because you have come together to this banquet, take care that you eat well. And when you go away, mind you digest it well. You eat well and digest badly if you hear the word of God and don't do it.</i> | <i>(Sermon 28:2-3)</i> |
| August 27 | Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time | John 6: 60-69 |
| September 3 | Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time | Mark 7: 14-15, 21-23 |
| | <i>As with the outward mouth we take nourishment for the body, so with the interior mouth we take nourishment for the heart. That is why it can be said: Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be filled.</i> | <i>(Expositions of the Psalms 125, 5-6)</i> |

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