

Volume 8
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Augustinian Friends— Seeking God Together

ADICI

Co-Leaders' Message

Monica Meagher
Mary McCormick

Like us you will be heartened by the energy evident in the activities of the local groups of Augustinian Friends as you read their reports.

Friends will be interested to know that we have been invited to tell the story of Augustinian Friends in Australia at the coming Second International Augustinian Congress for the Laity in Rome "Together for a Better World."

With this in mind a Power Point presentation is near completion and will need to be translated into Spanish and Italian. We are delighted that representatives from each group in Australia will be present at the Rome Congress.

Speaking of Congresses, plans are well on the way for the 2007 National Congress in South Yarra, Melbourne. Dates are Friday April 20 to Sunday April 22. Come to Melbourne to celebrate Augustine in Autumn!

Our thoughts continue to be with Augustinian Friends in Innisfail who were so affected by Cyclone Larry.

May the Spirit of Pentecost continue to inspire you in all that you do.

Cyclone Larry

Evelyn Halpin

I wonder if North Queenslanders will ever forget 20 March 2006, when the Innisfail

area was hit by a category 5 cyclone, Larry. Cyclone Larry was similar in force to Cyclone Tracy, which hit Darwin in 1974, killing 71 people and destroying 70% of Darwin. Fortunately, and unbelievably, unlike Darwin, no-one was injured in this first cyclone of the 21st Century.

The Innisfail area seems to have a close affinity with nature; a love-hate relationship; so beautiful one day and so utterly broken the next. The area has been hit by cyclones in 1918, 1927, 1946, 1956, 1986, 1990 and 2006. The 1918 cyclone was particularly devastating, and Larry has been compared to it. It is interesting to note that many of our cyclones have occurred in "six" years...

As the destructive fury of nature was unleashed on the coastal strip early on that fateful Monday morning, no-one could have imagined the wholesale destruction that would greet the dawning day. Everywhere, trees were twisted and torn, snapped and uprooted, absolutely devoid of any foliage. and tangled together like a dropped bowl of spaghetti.

Houses were blown away; others were smashed and broken into pieces like toys. Power lines everywhere were a tangled mess. People wandered about, dazed and bewildered, shocked and crying, overflowing with emotion at the remains of our tropical paradise.

The response of the nation has been amazing, with help coming from all walks of life. The appointment of Peter Cosgrove was such a boost for the local people, because the task ahead of rebuilding the area seemed insurmountable. Volunteers came from everywhere, and were absolutely fantastic, working long hours to

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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.

help restore services and assisting wherever needed.

We thank God for people of such generous spirit. May they be blessed for their efforts!

Our beautiful church in Innisfail was badly damaged and will be out of service for several months. Masses are being held in the adjacent parish centre, which remained untouched. We are thankful for such small blessings.

God sends powerful messages in amidst such ruin. To see the tender new shoots of many plants profusely appearing in the damaged, scarred and battered environment is a most eloquent image. Like these, we will rebuild: stronger, wiser and ever thankful!!

Friends Meet

Coorparoo

Contact: *Sylvia Phillips*

The Brisbane parish's Augustinian Friends community met on Wednesday 22nd. February 2006. Father Paul Maloney was guest speaker and his theme was "The Grand Union of the Order in 1256". Father Paul illustrated his address with interesting photos of the ruins of the Augustinian hermitages still standing in San Gimignano.

It was also interesting to learn that during the 13th century, the four great mendicant orders were founded, one of which was the Augustinians.

Father Paul touched on The World Congress of Friends of the Augustinians to take place in Rome in July 2006. It is

In Augustine's Words

Let our beautiful God, the Word with God, come to us that we may gaze upon Him with the eyes of our minds. He was beautiful in the womb of the Virgin where, in taking on our humanity, He nonetheless did not lose His divinity.

*Commentary on Psalm 44, 3
Sermon 184,2*



Friends at Father Larkin's grave
L to R: Ralph Madigan, Vera Clair, Jeanette Hartley, Kay Morrow and Graham Morrow

expected that there will be three delegates from Brisbane.

Friends were asked to note the following important date: Augustinian Friends Third Lay Congress 2007, 20-22 April at St. Joseph's Parish, South Yarra, Melbourne. We hope to have a large delegation from Brisbane.

Greystanes

Contact: *Sarah-Jane Greenaway*

On June 4, Greystanes Friends met to discuss St Augustine and the Eucharist. Fr Laurie led the discussion, which began with a description of the Eucharistic celebration in St Augustine's lifetime. We commenced by looking at a picture of the excavation of the site of church which Augustine led as bishop, reproduced below.

We were entranced by the description, as we were taken back in time to the noise and bustle that was a service in the late 4th century CE. The homily, which could go on for an hour, was an interactive affair, with participants calling out "Peace be with you!" to the reader and chiming in with questions, applauding or hissing when appropriate (or not, as the case may have been! Imagine getting away with that today...). The Word was as important to Augustine as the Eucharist, and he considered that the main task of the priest was to bring the word of God to the congregation and to encourage the congregation to make the Word a central feature of their every day lives.

As in Mass today, prayers of the faithful were read, psalms were sung, the Eucharistic prayer recited, and concluded

with the great Amen. The service ended with prayers and blessings.

For Augustine, the focus of the Eucharist was the coming together of the community as the body of Christ. For him, this unity with one another was the effect of the consecration of the Eucharist, and this was central to his idea of faith. Again, Augustine's great love for Christ and the community of Christ shone through. This way of life we today can share and put into action, every day, not just on the weekend when we attend Mass. As Father Frank Doyle pointed out at the 2004 Congress, we should treat the word "Eucharist" as a verb and not just as a noun.

Our next meeting will be on 17 September, and will focus on St Augustine's *Confessions*. So, please bring along your copy of *The Confessions*, bookmarked at your favourite passage.

Mareeba, Nth Queensland

Contact: *Jeanette Hartley*

On Wednesday 5 April Augustinian Friends travelled to Kuranda from Mareeba to gather with the members there. Father Rob presided at Mass in St Christopher's Church followed by a shared meal and fellowship at the home of Joan Clark.

On Monday 5 June those Friends who will be making the two day trip to Cooktown in mid-June are gathering at the home of Kay and Graham Morrow to finalise arrangements. This year we will be welding the railing around the Augustinian grave sites, painting it and generally clearing weeds and leaves. We are fortunate to be able to stay at the presbytery in Cooktown



Excavations of Basilica Pacis, Hippo, where St Augustine was bishop (now Annaba, Algeria)

Third National Congress of the Laity

Augustine Ancient & New:

A Vision for the Future

Melbourne, April 20-22, 2007

which has a beautiful view over the Endeavour River.

St Thomas's Church, Mareeba

Augustinian priest Fr Patrick Larkin was born in Ireland in 1857 and ordained in Rome in 1888. He served first in Cairns in 1892 until his appointment to Herberton for the year 1894, followed by two years in Port Douglas before returning to Cairns. The final two years of his life were served in Herberton. This assignment entailed saying Mass in isolated communities and homesteads and covering vast areas. Fr Larkin found the climate, loneliness, lack of good conversation and long periods in the saddle all too much. On 9 February 1902, he was returning, in poor health, from Normanton to Cairns on a coastal steamer for some rest and recuperation but died in his cabin. He was buried at sea in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

On 9 February, 2006, the 104th anniversary of Fr Larkin's death, a memorial headstone was placed in the Reconciliation Lawn situated between the St Thomas of Villanova Church and the Augustinian priory under the beautiful jacaranda tree. Parish priest, Fr Rob Greenup OSA, blessed the head stone.

Recently a number of the Mareeba group of Augustinian Friends gathered beside the headstone in honour of Father Patrick Larkin OSA.

Newcastle

Contact: Kathleen Smith

We continue to meet every week for meditation and at the beginning of the month we had a lovely day of sharing with

Fathers Laurie and Paul at the Spirituality Centre at Greystanes.

We learnt more about the Augustinian Order and were most interested to see pictures of the stone hermitages in Tuscany where the Augustinian Hermits first lived in communities. The hermits moved into the wider community when Pope Alexander IV in 1256 formed them into a mendicant order.

We look forward to future gatherings and times together and our thoughts and prayers are with the Friends who are attending the Rome Congress in July.

Forewell Friends

Kyabram

Having just come to terms with the empty chair vacated by Fr Dave Austin Augustinian Friends in Kyabram has been further saddened by the death of one of its inaugural members, *Patrick Matthew Hansen*, on March 15 2006. Pat's presence in our group will be greatly missed. For many years, other than the Augustinians, he was the only male member of our local Friends group.

Pat and his wife Gail were enthusiastic members, having a very long association with the Augustinian Order. They visited the parishes of Manly Vale and Coorparoo, corresponded regularly with the Augustinian Community in Korea, and participated in many sessions at the Augustinian Friends' Congress in Echuca. Pat took a very active part in the life of the Parish, being involved with many committees.

He was a committed man of faith, with a deep sense of Augustinian spirituality. Jim McDonald wrote in the Augustinian Prayer Resource Guide (December 2005):

This to me is the Augustinian way of prayer: bow down my intellect to God, let Him shine on the past, present and future of my life in His own way, and prepare with Him in those ordinary events of my life for the reward that is to come.

Patrick epitomised the Augustinian way. He has now been summoned by God and is enjoying his reward.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Gail and her sons: Christopher, Nicholas, Tony, Robert, Mark, Sam, Matthew and their families. Although we will miss Pat's presence in our group, we look forward to Gail's continuing membership.

Rest in Peace, good friend.

Manly Vale

Father William Bernie Connolly, born 17 August 1924, was a member of the Augustinian community at Manly Vale, and died on 1 June 2006. A eulogy by a cousin relative concluded with these words:

Father Bernie was a man with a huge heart. We know he kept all of us in his prayers as he did all of you his friends. It is our turn now to send our prayers for this loved man who was always foremost a servant on the Lord. May the Lord be with him and may his soul rest in peace.

Newcastle

Newcastle Friends have been saddened by the death of Thomas Lloyd Smith on 25 May, after some years of illness. Our prayers go with Kathleen Smith and her family.

Media Moments

**Augustine and
Monica—Interpreting
Scripture by
Margaret Wilcox**

Margaret Wilcox from her home base in Western Australia has published a most wonderful booklet. It was created to help parents who are concerned for the spiritual

Amici

A publication of
Augustinian Friends

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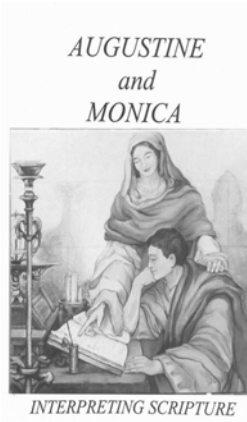
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welfare of their children, and supplements parish gatherings that discuss various concerns that they might have. The book is called *Augustine and Monica – Interpreting Scripture*. The

Provincial Office has ordered 50 copies of the beautifully produced booklet and it is available for \$6.60 per copy plus postage. Please contact Kay Stennar if you would like to make use of this local resource.



Booklet by Margaret Wilcox

Fr Paul Radio Personality

Tune into ABC Radio 702 and John Cleary's programme each Sunday night at 11:45 pm, commencing on Pentecost Sunday and continuing for seven weeks through June and July. You will hear our very own Fr Paul Maloney, who recorded a series of talks or "meditations" entitled *An Augustinian Approach to Contemplation*.

The meditations are being broadcast as part of an on-going series on Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Sufi approaches to prayer. Most of the previous contributions described meditation by means of a mantra or repeated word or phrase, with ample opportunity for the listener to participate by adopting the technique explained. Fr Paul, using the writings and life experiences of St Augustine, takes an approach of "guided meditation" to give the listener an experience of what the *movements* in Augustine's prayer might be like for them.

An interesting aspect of the series is that each episode was as background music a different version of the *Te Deum* played between the dialogue. This hymn is connected with the baptism of Augustine on 25 April, 387CE, when tradition tells us he and St Ambrose spontaneously

composed the hymn of praise during the actual ceremony. Many composers have set these famous words to music and the programme's producers have considered the *Te Deum* an authentic underpinning for the story of Augustine's journey towards God.

If the series receives sufficient interest, the ABC will produce a CD of the talks to be available for sale later in the year.

Second International Congress of the Laity

In just over a month's time a group of nineteen Australians will join participants from all over the globe at the Augustinian mother-house in Rome for a gathering of laity to reflect on the unique view St Augustine offers on many of the complex issues of our modern world. They will spend five days hearing talks given by experts, but also sharing the experiences of those who have a similar background of living and working with Augustinians in schools, parishes and missions.

There will be a guided tour of the ruined port of Ostia where Monica died as she and Augustine waited for a ship to take them back to Africa. We will also celebrate a special Eucharist with the Prior-General at the Church of Santa Maria Del Popolo the church where the Order was founded by Papal Decree in 1256.

Following the Congress the Australian contingent (with some fellow travellers), will travel to Tuscany to spend five or six days at our monastery in San Gimignano learning of the early history of the Order and its hermit origins. This will be augmented with trips to Florence and Siena if we can tear ourselves away from the beautiful cloister of the Convento San Agostino built into the walls of this historic hill-side town.

Our next edition of *Amici* will have some first hand descriptions of what adventures occurred through all our careful planning.

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