



Augustinian Friends— Seeking God Together

ADICI

Co-Leaders' Message

Maureen Atkins & Ruth McGowan

Dear Friends,

We have recently celebrated the feast days so dear to our hearts, of St Augustine and his mother St Monica. We trust that all of you celebrated with us the gift of these wonderful people in the human story, who even today many centuries later, have great relevance in our lives. Monica was steadfast and unceasing in her prayers for her husband Patricius and son, Augustine. We would do well to follow her example.

Augustine's road was a rocky one for a long time. However, he tried many paths and eventually came to the one that led to his conversion and baptism.

We are so fortunate that he was a scholar and a prolific writer. His great legacy to all of humankind is these vast writings which reflect and can be applied to so many situations in today's world, whilst also providing us with a window to his life and times.

Last year whilst holidaying in Maryborough, Queensland, I came across an Augustine quote – boldly displayed in the window of a travel agency, "The World is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page." I smiled to myself and thought –'Augustine pops up everywhere!' and moved on. How he must have captured the hearts and minds of his flock with his wonderful, down to earth sermons, and still inspires us to this day.

This inspiration comes from the enduring tradition of his teaching and writing over so many centuries. During the celebration of Mass on St. Augustine's Feast Day, we pondered on the details of his personal story and the intensity of his love and longing for God after his conversion. This story is told and re-told every century; the memory of his example and his life of faith and love provide us with a map for our own journeys. Each one of us forges an individual path through life

in all its complexity, but we can learn from the saints, like Augustine, about our Catholic traditions.

Reflecting on these ideas at the liturgy, I was reminded of Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof when he said 'because of our traditions, everyone knows who he is and what God expects him to do.' From Augustine's writing, we know what God expects us to do; we also know the importance of our place in God's family. Traditions are passed on, yet they are also adapted in changing times and circumstances; we don't have Tevye's anxiety about how we will manage if traditions change. He worried that 'without our traditions, our lives would be as shaky ... as a fiddler on the roof.' As Augustinian Friends grows and develops, traditions are beginning to emerge; we have faith in the future; we believe in the power of the Spirit and we will walk forward in hope.

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Congress 2010

Brisbane

June 24 – 27

Villanova College, Coorparoo

South Yarra •

Contact: Judith Duncan

Throughout this year we have sought to continue the spiritual momentum generated by the 3rd National Congress for Augustinian Laity held in South Yarra in April 2007. As an organisation for lay people interested in the spirituality of Augustine, Augustinian Friends seeks to follow his direction to be attentive to our hearts where God dwells and also to our community. Our group has flourished under the leadership of Robert Huggins, who has now stepped aside after two years in the role. His place has been taken by Judith Duncan.

Last St. Augustine's Day gave us an opportunity to celebrate with the parish community. The scene was set for the feast day Mass in St. Joseph's Church with Botticelli's representation of St. Augustine, effectively lit by Robert. So the activity of Augustinian Friends shone forth for all present with our Congress banner, and continued with typically Augustinian hospitality as we celebrated afterwards.

Our interest in Augustinian spirituality gained a new dimension when Father John Barry OSA returned from his travels and joined our meeting to share some of his experiences and his insights into the life and times of Augustine. A place which was important for Augustine was brought closer to us as Father John talked to us about his visit to Cassiciacum, near Milan in northern Italy. This is where Augustine spent time in reflection with his friends prior to his Baptism in Milan in 387.

Our first meeting of the calendar year is traditionally on Shrove Tuesday. We were overjoyed this year as by this time Father John had received a gift sent from Cassiciacum by members of the community there, a friendship cake such as Augustine would have eaten.



Now we felt it was our turn. As Augustinian Friends we were pleased to have a way of showing our support for our priests by providing the Jubilee cake for the February celebration of the 50th anniversary of their ordination.

Again this year April brought a wider focus as our South Yarra group hosted an

Augustinian of international standing, Fr George Lawless OSA. Fr George is a renowned scholar from the Order's international university, 'The Augustinianum' in Rome. More than 56 people attended the day's sessions on the theme of Pastoral Care, including the Kyabram group of Augustinian Friends as well as many others from outside the parish. At the invitation of the Parish Council Father George also spoke at the 10.30 Mass the following day, thus emphasising our links with the wider Augustinian community.

We became aware that these links reached out even further in the lead-up to One World Week With Augustine in May. Our understanding of Augustinian spirituality took on an international focus when we joined with 30 groups around the world for One World Week. This was a time for exploration of the theme of Friendship, with materials for daily reading and individual reflection which Mary McCormick had thoughtfully prepared for us. The week finished with shared reflection and lunch, a meeting which bore witness to the true meaning of the laity at work.

In October our local group of Friends will journey to Kyabram to enjoy a day of Augustinian friendship, hospitality and formation with the National Co-Leaders along with the Kyabram group of Friends.

In November we plan to put a Spotlight on Augustine and showcase our new Parish library. This will enable us to consider both the human and library resources and again extend a wider welcome to all parishioners to be part of this initiative.

Mareeba •

Contact: Jeanette Hartley

Late May saw the annual migration to Cooktown of eight members of Mareeba's Augustinian Friends group for the cleaning of the gravesites. While the best of intentions were held, the work had to be minimal, for it rained!

However, our best efforts were undertaken, with the result that when the Sisters of Mercy went to Cooktown a few weeks later for their special celebrations to commemorate the 120th anniversary of the arrival of the first Sisters to come to Cooktown in 1888, at the behest of the Augustinian Bishop, John Hutchinson OSA the gravesite was looking at its best.

For the Sisters' celebrations, members of Mareeba Augustinian Friends were invited to attend any of the events in Cooktown, an invitation we were happy to accept. As a result, three Augustinian Friends, Vera Clair, Kay Morrow and Jeanette Hartley drove to

Cooktown accompanied by Father John McGlone OSA who was relieving Father Robert Greenup OSA at the time. We attended the Mass at the gravesite, a moving and joyful occasion, and then repaired to the restaurant 1770 on the Cooktown seafront for a delicious meal. It was a joyous and heartwarming occasion with most of the Sisters present, a true commemoration and tribute to the original Sisters from Dungarvan, Ireland. For the celebrations, two Sisters from the present-day Dungarvan community were able to attend, making the events even more special.

Augustinian Friends congratulate and thank the Sisters of Mercy for their hospitality, their friendship and their constant presence in our lives.



Jeanette Hartley, Kay Morrow and Vera Clair at Mercy Sisters celebration June 24th 2008

Newcastle •

Contact: Kathleen Smith

August 23, 2008. It was a cold bleak day. There was a biting wind. It was possibly the coldest winter day Newcastle had experienced. Inside the beautiful room with lovely stained-glass windows warmth emanated, not only from the air-conditioner but from the community of friends who came together after 20 years to celebrate the anniversary of Fr Laurie Mooney OSA and Fr Paul Maloney OSA who had established their home in an inner city suburb of Newcastle 20 years before. Home is where the heart is - their home, like their hearts was open to receive anyone - those who went to learn and share meditation, those who went to learn more about life and themselves, seekers, many who were in need and searching for a welcoming, accepting place. Lives were changed. On this special day, twenty years later, Laurie and Paul returned once again to be with their friends. Today there were times of deep silence when everyone was meditating or listening to the beautiful words of St. Augustine on prayer and there were moments when ecstatic waves of sound rose and fell as friends chatted and laughed over cups of tea and coffee. The wonderful shared memories were a poignant reminder of Augustinian love, friendship and hospitality. Today was amazing - although much water had flowed under the bridge time seemed to stand still. As one poet expresses it, 'When you meet love Time stands still for a gaze of eternity.'

North Harbour



On Friday evening 22nd August, despite the chill in the air in Sydney that night, the warmth of our Augustinian friendship embraced our gathering of 30 guests.

Fr Paul Maloney OSA celebrated the Eucharist for the feast of Saint Monica and Saint Augustine at the commencement of the evening.

The evening was enhanced by Father Paul's historical and religious discussion on Saint Augustine and his mother Saint Monica. It was a most informative talk and left everyone attending full of hope that we too will be guided and pray as she did for her son.



Kyabram



In families, we value and acknowledge our heritage and the traditions handed down from one generation to the next. When we celebrate St. Augustine's Feast day, our parish and school community is remembering its story and the influence of the Augustinians as leaders of faith. Although they have left the community, the story of Augustine will continue to be shared in St. Augustine's Parish and St. Augustine's College.

The day began with a prayer from St. Augustine and a message from the College captains focusing on the importance of friendship and sharing good times together. Afterwards the children made their own Rosary bracelets and they listened to a Christian band, Ascending Rain, who had played at World Youth Day.

Families and parishioners were invited to pray with the school community at Mass and join them for lunch. Members of Augustinian Friends in Kyabram also participated in the Liturgy. The celebrant was our parish priest, Fr Michael Morley.

The focus on special events during this day provided an opportunity for the children to learn about Augustine, to participate in a time of recreation and to develop an awareness of our stories and traditions.

Brisbane

St. James Parish Coorparoo's celebration of St. Monica and St. Augustine was held on Sunday 24th August. It was a joyous community occasion at a brunch attended by around one hundred parishioners after the 9am Mass. A special thanks must go to Fr. Dave Austin, Fr. Abel van der Veer and Fr. Peter Hayes for their presence and support, and to Sr. Margaret Shannon and her team who prepared a delicious spread. Thanks also to our school families and staff and all parishioners and visitors who enhanced our celebration of the day by their attendance.

Friends meeting night was held on St. Augustine's Feast Day, Thursday 28th. Once again it was a successful meeting with the usual full participation by those who attended.

Dianne Martin said Grace. Patricia Mallon played the violin and we sang "You have made us for yourself O Lord" followed by Vince O'Rourke reciting St. Augustine's prayer "Be the change you wish to see in the world". Fr. Dave Austin gave us an overview of the Augustinian Youth Encounter which took place in Sydney immediately after World Youth Day. Pilgrims came from all over the world to attend the Encounter.

We then reflected on Tolle Lege (June 2008 issue of the Prayer Resource Guide) and our evening ended with Judith Richards reading St. Augustine's "Late Have I Loved You". It was a happy evening enjoyed by all.

South Yarra

On Sunday August 31st at the Sunday Eucharist South Yarra parishioners were pleased to celebrate the feast of St Augustine and to have an opportunity to remember and to give thanks for the life and ministry of Fr. Denis Kevin (Kieran) O'Shea OSA.

The music for the Liturgy suited both purposes well. Not only were there various songs about Augustine but a rendition of a Gaelic song hauntingly reminded all of Fr. O'Shea. The English translation of this song told us that **Christ is the seed, Christ is the harvest, And into God's barn May we be brought**

Fr. Brian Buckley OSA in his Homily was able to take the idea of Christ as the seed and explore the many references Augustine made in his writings to Christ as the Word.

Parishioners then adjourned to the Parish Centre for much conversation and friendship over Lunch.



Fr Brian Buckley OSA (middle) and Augustinian Friends present Leader, Judith Duncan and past Leader, Robert Huggins.



celebrating Eucharist

celebrating family



celebrating community



Feast Day celebrations continued....

Feast day greetings came to Augustinian Friends from a number of our International Friends.

USA

Jim McMaster from America, who attended the 2007 Congress, writes to offer thoughts of thanksgiving for my dear Australian friends and to say that he and his wife Anne joined the friars of the Province of St Thomas of Villanova on the campus of Villanova University for Mass and Dinner commemorating the feasts of Monica and Augustine and for the affiliation of 12 special individuals who have been joined to the spiritual gifts of the Order. He claims that it was a wonderful and fitting celebration of both feast days.

MALTA

John Grech of Malta sent prayerful wishes for the feast along with Fr. Hilary who promised to remember us all at his Mass on the Feast day.

SPAIN

Carmen Villanueva of Spain assured us of prayer and thoughts on the day.

URUGUAY

Milton Petraglia sent a message from Uruguay.

IRELAND

In Ireland the Feast day was celebrated at Orlagh Retreat House with a BBQ. They were glad of the large tree at the front of the house just in case it rained. Bernadette Toal wished everyone well.

Augustinian Pilgrimage

Enthusiastic pilgrims are engaging in animated discussion about the possibilities of visiting significant places in the life of St Augustine. This trip could take place in early September or October 2009, but we are still waiting for information from Harvest Pilgrimages. Fr Paul Maloney has contacted Fr Brian Lowery from San Gimignano and asked him to be involved in the pilgrimage. He is enthusiastic about accompanying us in Milan and Rome and we could stay with the Augustinians at San Gimignano, a beautiful village close to Siena and Florence. The proposal also includes travelling in Africa to Augustine's birthplace. This will be an opportunity to learn more about St Augustine while travelling with a group of Augustinian Friends.

World Youth Day & Augustinian Youth Encounter

As a message to all of our youth and young adults those active and non-active in church activities. Where to from here after WYD and AYE? First things first. We need to start within ourselves. Now that Australia sees us as a vibrant young Catholic church

- ◇ no longer should we be closed, but open to all that our faith has to offer
- ◇ no longer should we be embarrassed but proud and passionate for our love in God and for our community.
- ◇ no longer should we be spectators but fully active participative baptised Catholics who are called to be witnesses to Christ in everything that we do.

It all begins right now. WYD and AYE were the starting points. The mission of these two events is not over. It is only the beginning.

Extract from a
thankyou letter
written by Michael
Dela Cruz, Project
Officer, Order of Saint
Augustine, Australian
Province, to all those
involved in WYD/AYE.

We remember

Augustinian Friends remember with love and thanksgiving two special Augustinian priests.

Fr Donal Paul Dempsey OSA died in Ireland on June 21st 2008. He was always interested in the development of Friends and loved to share in a gathering.

Fr Denis Kevin (Kieran) O'Shea OSA was another interested Friend, ready to support leaders with ideas and resource materials. Died 8th August 2008.

A Gaelic song known to both men was: *'Ag Criost un siol, ag Criost un fomhar'* *To Christ the seed, to Christ the harvest.* It has a haunting melody and the English translation is offered by way of reflection on the lives and faith of them both.

To Christ (belongs) the seed
To Christ (belongs) the harvest,
In the barns of God may we be.

To Christ (belongs) the sea,
To Christ (belongs) the fish,
In the nets of God may we meet

From growth to age,
and from age to death,
May your two hands,
O Christ, draw us to you

From death to end,
Not the end but regrowth,
In the Paradise of Grace
may we be.

In Augustine's Words

**"O Holy Spirit, descend
plentifully into my heart.
Enlighten the dark corners
of this neglected dwelling
and scatter there thy
cheerful beams."**

Augustinians On-Line

www.augustinians.org.au

Stay in touch with the latest news from the Augustinian community through the Province's website. 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.

www.augnet.org

Augnet is a website containing a total of 1,800 pages about Augustine's life and work, and about history and activities of the Order of Saint Augustine. It contains pages on Augustinian Friends in Australia and England.

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