

Former Prior General Ordained Bishop in Peru

On November 3, 2014, Pope Francis named former Prior General of the Order of Saint Augustine, Father Robert Prevost, O.S.A., Bishop of the Diocese of Chiclayo, Peru. Born in Chicago, Illinois, and a member of the Midwest Province, Father Prevost served as Prior General of the entire Order for two terms, from 2001-2013. After his return to the United States, he served as director of the formation house of theology in Chicago.

No stranger to Peru, Father Prevost served in various capacities in the Augustinian missions in Chulucanas and Trujillo from 1985 to 1998 (except for one year when he was vocation director and mission procurator in the United States). He served as chancellor of the Prelature of Chulucanas, as prior and director of the Augustinian formation house, and in the Diocese of Trujillo as judicial vicar, pastor, and director of studies for the diocesan seminary. He returned to the United States in 1998 after having been elected Provincial of the Midwest Province, in which office he remained until his election as Prior General in 2001.

On December 12, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas, Apostolic Nuncio to Peru, Archbishop James Green, ordained Father Prevost as the fourth Bishop of the Diocese of Chiclayo. Twenty-three other bishops, including Bishop John McNabb, O.S.A., and Bishop Daniel Turley, O.S.A. (founding and current bishops of Chulucanas, respectively) participated in the rite that took place in the Catedral Santa Maria. At the end of Mass, Prior General Alejandro Moral Antón, O.S.A., offered words of congratulations on behalf of all Augustinians.



The appointment of Bishop Prevost by Pope Francis is an indication of the respect with which the American Augustinians are held by the people of Northern Peru, whom they have served for over 50 years.

AUGUSTINIAN MISSION OFFICE

PO Box 340
Villanova, PA 19085

Phone: 610-527-3330 Ext. 233

E-mail: missions@augustinian.org

Donate online at www.augustinianfund.org



THE MISSIONS

OF THE AUGUSTINIAN FRIARS

Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova **Christmas 2014**

Dear Friends of the Augustinian Missions,

Christmas is the joyous season when Christians throughout the world celebrate God's infinite love for the human race by sending his only son to live among us and to show us the way to true and lasting happiness. The spirit of this season is so powerful that even those who do not know Christ are caught up in the love and peace, generosity and good will that seem much more evident at this time of year.

In this newsletter, you will read how the Augustinians in Japan bring the good news of Christ to non-Christians through the simple, yet profound, story of his birth solemnly re-enacted by the kindergarten children of our parish in Fukuoka. The Augustinian missionary effort in Japan was started in 1952 by Father Thomas Purcell, O.S.A., whose tenth anniversary of death occurred on November 27. Father Purcell labored for 52 years in Japan, making the gospel message known to many through his words and actions on behalf of the poor.

Other "glad tidings" come from Peru, where on December 12 Father Robert Prevost, O.S.A., former Prior General of the Order of Saint Augustine, was ordained Bishop of the Diocese of Chiclayo. Before his service to the Order in Rome for eight years, Bishop Prevost served in many roles as a missionary in Peru. He becomes the third American Augustinian to be named a bishop in Peru.

The good work of bringing the gospel to Japan and Peru by the Augustinians would not be possible without the generous support and prayers of our many benefactors. During this season of giving, please consider a gift to the Augustinian Missions to continue the work of evangelization in these parts of the world.

Thank you for all that you do for our Augustinian missionaries and their people. This Christmas, may you and your families experience the true peace and love which Christ came to bring, and may your New Year be filled with many blessings.

In Christ and Augustine,

Fr. Francis J. Horn, O.S.A.





Remembering Father Purcell

November 27 marked the tenth anniversary of the death of Father Thomas Purcell, O.S.A., one of the founders of the Province of St. Thomas of Villanova missions in Japan. In November 1952, Father Purcell, along with fellow friars Fathers George Krupa and Edward Robinson, arrived by ship in Japan and soon began preparations to establish the Augustinian parish of Our Mother of Consolation in the Shiroyama section of Nagasaki. The site was about a half mile from the epicenter of where the atomic bomb had been dropped in 1945; the area was still devastated and desolate. Today the property is home to one of the largest Catholic parishes in Japan, with a beautiful church, community center, kindergarten, and elementary and middle schools.

In his fifty-two years as a missionary in Japan, Father Purcell also founded St. Monica Parish in Nagoya and served as prior and pastor of St. Augustine Parish in Tokyo. He was a true missionary, who lived the gospel and brought the love and compassion of Christ to the poor, the sick, and those who were struggling. When first asked by the Provincial to serve in Japan, Father Tom responded by writing: "Ever since I was a small lad I have had the desire to go to the missions, ... to spread the Faith....If you wish me to go, I shall be more than willing and happy to comply with your wishes and go to Japan." Father Thomas Purcell was greatly loved by the Japanese people whom he served. He is still fondly remembered in our parishes in Japan. A memorial Mass was offered at the Shiroyama Church on his anniversary.



50 Years of Augustinian Presence in Morropón

Shortly after the Prelature of Chulucanas was established in 1964, with Prelate (later Bishop) John McNabb, O.S.A., as its spiritual leader, the parish of San Isidro in Morropón was entrusted to the care of the Augustinians. Father Pedro Lopez, O.S.A. from Mexico, was named pastor, and Father Edward Chapman, O.S.A., one of the first missionaries to Peru from the Chicago Province, soon joined him.



Father Chapman served in Morropón for over 20 years. One of his main projects was the construction of St. Rita School, originally a high school for girls from poor families in the parish. Father Ed recognized the need for education for these young women, and the school included boarding facilities for fifty girls from the many outlying villages of the parish. Operated by Benedictine nuns and Peruvian Augustinian sisters, the school offered basic secondary education and vocational training to the girls, many of whom evangelized their remote villages when they returned home during vacation periods. The school later added an elementary level and has expanded to include boys.

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A statue of Father Edward Chapman, O.S.A., with two children stands outside the Augustinian friary in Morropón, Peru.



Christmas in Fukuoka

One of the main ministries of evangelization at the Augustinian Parish of St. Augustine in the Sa-saoka section of Fukuoka, Japan, is a kindergarten with more than 200 students. Each year, in December, the children present the story of the Nativity of Christ in a pageant attended by teachers, family, and friends. Each child is very serious about the part which he or she plays. The shepherds and kings enter with great dignity and with noble gestures adore the infant with his parents. Their participation in this sacred story has a profound and lasting effect on the students, who often later recall with great affection the presentation they made in kindergarten when they were five years old.

Because approximately 99% of the families that send their children to our kindergarten are non-Christian, the annual Christmas event offers a special opportunity to present the basic Christian belief of God's love for the world in sending his only Son, born of the Virgin Mary. This is but one way in which the gospel of Jesus Christ is made known to the people served by the Augustinians in Japan.



Morropón (continued from page 2)

The golden anniversary of Augustinian presence in Morropón was celebrated in August 2014. A large youth gathering from the Augustinian parishes and schools in Northern Peru joined in the festivities marking 50 years of service and evangelization.

Youth from the Augustinian parish and school in Pacasmayo join in the celebration of Augustinian presence in Morropón.

