



# THE MISSIONS

## OF THE AUGUSTINIAN FRIARS

**Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova**

**January 2016**

Dear Friends of the Augustinian Missions,

Blessings for the New Year! May 2016 be a time of abundant grace and true peace for you and your loved ones.

The new year brings exciting news from our Augustinian missions in Peru. Construction will begin soon on a new Augustinian elementary and high school in Trujillo. After over two years of obtaining permissions and building permits, a wall will be built around the property and the erection of classrooms will begin. The school is being financed, in part, with a grant by the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova from the Father Richard Appicci, O.S.A., Endowment Fund for the Missions. Read about this new venture for our missions inside this newsletter.

Also, three missionary priests laboring in Peru in 1991 who were murdered by revolutionaries trying to destroy that country were beatified at a Mass held in Chimbote. Two of our Peruvian friars participated in the ceremonies.

In Japan, the school children of Saint Mary's School in Nagasaki give witness to their faith by performing short plays illustrating Catholic religious beliefs for their non-Christian classmates. All of the school children learn to appreciate God's gifts, especially in nature. They are cultivating their own garden and rice paddy on the grounds of the school.

The good work of bringing Christ's message to the people of Peru and Japan by the Augustinians would not be possible without the generous support and prayers of our many benefactors. 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. Please be assured of their prayers for you.

In Christ and Augustine,

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





## New Augustinian School in Trujillo to Be Constructed

After two years of obtaining permissions and building permits, construction on a new school established by the Augustinians in Trujillo is scheduled to begin this month. When completed, the school will provide primary and secondary education at all grade levels.

San Agustín School opened in March 2013 on the grounds of the parish at which the Augustinians have ministered since their arrival in Trujillo in 1988. The original enrollment was 18 students in grades 1 to 3, with a new grade level to be added every year. Current enrollment is 51 students in grades 1 to 5. Two years ago, land was purchased as a permanent site for the school, and the slow process of acquiring government permission to build commenced. Now with all certifications in place, the first step planned is to construct a wall around the property and then begin building the school. The hope is that classrooms for grades 1 to 7 will be available for the opening of the academic year in March 2017. Additional classrooms will be added as the school grows to its full anticipated size.

The Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova has donated \$500,000 to help fund the construction of the new school. The money comes from the Father Richard Appicci, O.S.A., Endowment Fund, which was established in honor of a friar who dedicated much of his life and priestly ministry to the missions in Peru. With the help of many generous benefactors, the Fund provides monthly support for the Augustinian missions and for special projects such as San Agustín School.

Augustinians from the United States provinces have been serving in northern Peru since 1963. The mission began in the Diocese of Chulucanas, where friars continue to serve the poor in several parishes. In 1988, the Augustinian formation program moved to Trujillo, where friars also minister in a nearby parish and teach in the diocesan seminary.



San Agustín is the first school founded by the Chulucanas Vicariate. Providing solid educational opportunities is considered an important ministry that will enable many to advance from a life of poverty.

Father John Lydon, O.S.A., surrounded by friars of the Chulucanas Vicariate and children from San Agustín School, breaks ground at the blessing of the site of the new school.



## Students Present Nativity Play During School Mass

Presenting a Nativity Play at a Catholic School at Christmas time would seem very ordinary--if you have a school full of Christian students. At Saint Mary's School in Nagasaki, Christian children are only 20% of the student body. These minority Catholic students form a Religion Committee and often prepare short plays to illustrate and explain various religious themes during school liturgies. This is a good learning experience for the Catholic students, which helps them to understand various important aspects of their faith. These presentations are also a good opportunity for the Catholic children to witness to their faith in a non-Christian society.



In Japan, Catholic schools are called Mission Schools by the public in general. Truly, Catholic schools in Japan are an essential element in the Church's task of bringing the Gospel message to a society that has not yet received the Good News.

School children enact the visit of the magi bearing gifts for the Christ Child at a school Mass in Nagasaki.

## Nagasaki Students Tend Garden, Rice Paddy at School

Saint Mary's School is operated by the Augustinians at Our Mother of Consolation Parish in the Shiroyama section of Nagasaki. The school tries to instill a deep respect for life in the heart of its students, including being aware of and being thankful for the many gifts which God bestows on us in nature. To this end, the curriculum includes planting a vegetable garden and harvesting and consuming the fruits of nature.

The students plant potatoes, onions, carrots, radishes, beans, broccoli, lettuce, cabbage, and tomatoes. They gain responsibility by taking care of the vegetable garden during the growing season and, after harvesting the vegetables, enjoy eating them as part of their school lunch prepared each day in the kitchen below their classrooms.

Since rice is the staple of the Japanese diet, the students learn about planting, growing, and harvesting rice in the special rice paddy constructed on the school grounds. It is very unusual for a grade school to have a rice paddy near its classrooms because there is need of a great deal of water to keep the paddy constantly covered in water. Fortunately, the parish has its own well and the water used to backwash the filters, which formerly was discarded, now is channeled to keep the water full in the rice paddy. The students show a spirit of thanksgiving, joy, and satisfaction when they eat the rice harvested by their own hands.



January 2016

## Missionary Martyrs Beatified

On December 5, 2015, during a Mass presided by the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation of the Saints, the first three martyrs of Peru were beatified in Chimbote, a city about 85 miles south of Trujillo. The three missionaries, two from Poland and one from Italy, were murdered in 1991 by the radical insurgent group Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*) because their dedication to the poor was judged to be against the ideals of the revolution.

Shining Path started in Peru in 1980 and reigned terror throughout the country for almost twenty years. Their twisted philosophy was based on the idea of destroying the country and then, from the ashes, a new phoenix would arise, namely a new Peru. By this philosophy, any attention given to the poor was counter-productive to the revolution, and so they sought to eliminate any social or religious programs that might help the poor. It is not difficult to see why aim was taken at different representatives of the church. The Augustinians in Peru were not immune from threats and intimidation by *Sendero*. During the years of the Shining Path, more than 69,000 Peruvians were killed by the terrorists and by the army in the years when the search for the guerilla insurgents resulted in many human rights abuses.



The three missionary martyrs were a strong symbol of the option of the Church to be with the poor and not to abandon them in those years of suffering. That dedication continues as many Peruvians remain in the grip of poverty.

Augustinians Father John Lydon (pictured at left) and Father Gioberty Calle celebrated the Mass of beatification, which took place in the soccer stadium of the city of Chimbote.

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## Record Snow Hits Nagasaki

Although not nearly as heavy as the blizzard that blanketed the Mid-Atlantic United States, on January 25 Nagasaki experienced its largest snowfall since weather records have been kept there. Although any snow is a rarity, Nagasaki was covered with seven inches, which shut down the city, according to Father Michael Hilden, O.S.A., pastor of Our Mother of Consolation Parish in the Shiroyama section of town.



St. Mary's School, from the window of Father Michael Hilden's room in the Nagasaki friary.

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