

VOLUME X . ISSUE III

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# THE AUGUSTINIAN

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FRIAR REFLECTIONS  
FOR A NEW YEAR p. 4

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A large, stylized black calligraphic letter 'A' is positioned on the left side of the cover, partially overlapping the abstract background.



# Introducing the FATHERBILLATKINSONGUILD.ORG

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### FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our third special winter issue of *The Augustinian* magazine, with Friar Reflections for a New Year! For the past two years, friars have written beautiful reflections based on saints for each month. The first year we accompanied each reflection with stained glass windows and last year we photographed relics of the saints for each month. The saints, the friar reflections and the images were devotional in nature.

This year, we have moved from a devotional issue to a topical issue with each month having a different theme. Several reflections are essays, while others are descriptive guides for us to go deeper into the topic. Some of the themes are based on the *Rule* of Saint Augustine.

Another addition to the issue this year are the interpretive original images by Jack Stagliano, O.S.A. Each drawing encompasses a topic with lines and vibrant color using the theme of hands to tie the twelve images together. In my experience working on the issue, the images and the reflections grow stronger and become more meaningful as I spend more time reflecting upon them. Hands that reach to God; hands that reach to love; the merciful hands of Christ; hands that nurture and hold hope for vocations; hands that give for the common good; hands that create; hands that set foundations; hands that work for peace; hands of missionaries who give and take the grace of God; hands that hold the sick and dying; hands that nurture children.

And so, we send you our winter issue with the hope that each reflection and each image will bring inspiration and meaning to the seasons ahead.

-TEDDIE GALLAGHER

#### ON THE COVER:

*Poverty and Mutual Concern*  
Acrylic by Jack Stagliano, O.S.A.

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#### IN EVERY ISSUE

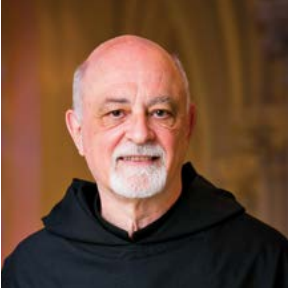
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LETTER FROM THE

PRIOR PROVINCIAL

Dear Friends,

As we enter the calendar year, 2016, we do so conscious of the special theme of *Mercy*, in which the following many months will be lived out. In convoking this special Year of Grace, Pope Francis spoke of it as a favorable time for individuals, for the Church, and for society at large. In Christian belief, all time is favorable, in that all time is sacred, because it is permeated with the presence of God. We live constantly graced and enlivened by *Emmanuel* who is ever in our midst.

In the reflections we are pleased to share with you in the following pages, the presence of God – this continuous and merciful presence of God – is revealed in various ways: in people, events, challenges, opportunities, ideas and ideals, gifts and values. Several of my brothers and I have reflected on various themes that are invitations to consider, perhaps in ways to which we are not ordinarily accustomed, where God dwells and how God operates. To discover the divine in the midst of the daily routine of life, is to become enriched and ennobled; to trace the finger of mercy in the length and breadth of each day, is to be lifted up to ever recurring possibilities filled with hope and expectation.

In this issue of *The Augustinian*, we present, as well, updates on several of our friars, among them one of our brothers who returned to the Lord a short time ago, Father Neil McGettigan, and another, whose name is becoming more and more familiar to many of you, Father Bill Atkinson, now recognized by the Church as a *Servant of God*. Their lives, each in its own particular way, demonstrate God-presence, not so much because they were friars or priests, but first and foremost because they were individuals seeking to respond to the invitation to channel the divine in the very human circumstances in which they found themselves. Their vocation as Augustinians and priests was the manner of their response. All of us, religious and lay, are called in a similar way: to discover and reveal the divine spark that animates our lives. The invitation to us in these next months, is to do so with special attentiveness to the call to mercy – mercy received and mercy to be shared.

May the Year 2016 be filled with many reminders of the generosity of God, ever-present in our lives, in so many ordinary and exceptional ways.

In Augustine,

Michael F. Di Gregorio, O.S.A.  
PRIOR PROVINCIAL  
PROVINCE OF SAINT THOMAS OF VILLANOVA

THE AUGUSTINIAN

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# JANUARY

## FREEDOM OF RELIGION

Arthur P. Purcaro, O.S.A.

*Assistant Vice President for Mission and Ministry, Villanova University*

When we hear the song “America,” its lyrics “My country ‘tis of thee, Sweet land of liberty,” draw our minds and hearts to the ideals on which this nation was founded. Shamefully, we don’t always live up to those ideals, nor do many people have a clear understanding of their significance.

The very colony which became the state of Pennsylvania was forged from the strong belief in the freedom of religion. Yet long after this state and the nation’s independence was born, the founding church of the Augustinians in Philadelphia, known as the City of Brotherly Love, was burnt down in an anti-Catholic riot. Would that this were an aberration! Even a cursory glance at our history, as well as current headlines, reminds us that inviolable rights of the human person, with the protection of religious liberty, are not so.

Whether it be the controversy surrounding a 13-story Islamic community center planned for a site two blocks away from the National September 11 Memorial Museum — or the plight of a Kentucky clerk, jailed for refusing to issue marriage licenses to gay couples, despite a Supreme Court ruling that made same-sex unions legal nationwide — the natural tension which stems from the ill-defined relationship between church and state requires a strong conviction in the tremendous value of dialogue and respect for the dignity of each and every human being.

The Second Vatican Council’s declaration on Religious Freedom, *Dignitatis Humanae*, promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1965, asserted that “...religious freedom has its foundation in the dignity of the person, whose exigencies have come to be fully known to human reason through centuries of experience. Religious freedom in society is entirely consonant with the freedom of the act of Christian faith.”

During his visit to the United States in 1987, Saint John Paul II reminded all Americans that: “The ultimate test of your greatness is the way you treat every human being, but especially the weakest and most defenseless ones” (Farewell Address, September 19, 1987).

Pope Francis, during his recent visit to Philadelphia, dedicated his talk at Independence Hall to that same issue, stating: “In this place which is symbolic of the American way, I would like to reflect with you on the right to religious freedom. It is a fundamental right, which shapes the way we interact socially and personally with our neighbors whose religious views differ from our own. The ideal of interreligious dialogue, where all men and women, from different religious traditions, can speak to one another without arguing, this is what religious freedom allows.”

The entire process of freedom, understood as liberation from sin and selfishness, is directed toward genuine



FATHER ARTHUR PURCARO, O.S.A.

communion, understood as unity in diversity, rather than uniformity. Religious freedom, as enshrined in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, calls us to respect one another and not place ourselves as the standard to judge others by. Religious freedom definitely does not mean: others are free to be like me, free to think as I do, free to believe what I believe, free to worship as I worship.

Faith can bring us closer to one another, and our freedom to practice our faith and follow our conscience is central to our ability to live in harmony. On January 16, Religious Freedom Day, let us pledge our constant support to all who struggle against religious oppression and rededicate ourselves to fostering peace with those whose beliefs differ from our own. In doing so, we reaffirm our common humanity and respect for all people with whom we share a brief moment on this Earth.



# FEBRUARY

## THE CHALLENGE OF LOVE

Michael P. Sullivan, O.S.A.

*Augustinian Preaching Apostolate*

Jesus Christ never, never, ever said, “Like one another as I have liked you.” There are some people who are not very likeable. There are even some people who do not like me. Shocking! Some days I do not like myself. What Jesus did say is, “Love one another as I have loved you.” How is this Christ-like love possible when we feel the exact opposite? There is no one on the face of this earth that we cannot love or, for that matter, forgive, except the person or persons we choose not to love or forgive. Love is not a feeling that is ephemeral and fleeting, but rather a decision, an act of the will. We choose to love or forgive. Yes, we can hate, if you will, what an individual or others have done and still forgive and love. Sometimes the most difficult forgiveness to experience is to forgive oneself. If we can forgive self then it is possible to accept the forgiveness of God and others. Augustine’s love is a “conscious preference,” a decision.

We were all created in the image of God, Father, Son and Spirit. God is persons in relationship. And to the degree that we are open to relationship to God, others and self, to that degree we will be open to God and reflect his image. Saint Augustine begins



FATHER MICHAEL SULLIVAN, O.S.A. (FRONT), AND OTHER FRIARS AT MASS AT SAINT THOMAS OF VILLANOVA CHURCH

his *Rule* with the plea, “Before all else, dearly beloved, love God and then your neighbor.” That is the challenge of love, namely, to love when it is difficult or seemingly impossible. Love is life giving and builds up the Body of Christ. When it is most difficult to love another is the instance when the Christ in me reaches out to love the other. When the Christ in me loves the Christ in you, we experience Christ loving himself. It is that indwelling of Christ in each member that makes true community life possible.

Christ-like love makes unity in the midst of diversity possible. Presently here at Saint Thomas Monastery there are 47 men living under one roof. There are 47 different opinions on almost any one topic. It is not just a human love or tolerance that creates a religious community but

a focus on Jesus Christ. A saying of yesteryear not too often heard today is, “Offer it up.” Yes, true love is oftentimes a sacrificial love. Christ loves us and gave himself up for us, so there are times when our motives and way of existing must be sacrificial in imitation of Christ.

“True tolerance and acceptance of another is only positive and constructive when it is based on love for the other. Intolerance destroys love.” God is love and the ones who live in love, God lives in them and they in God. Augustine’s quote, “love God and do what you will,” is one of my favorites. If we truly live in God’s love would we consciously do anything to offend or jeopardize that love?

“To have love and be a bad person is impossible. Love is the unique gift, the fountain that is yours alone. The Spirit of God exhorts you to drink from it, and in so doing to drink from himself.”

AUGUSTINE, SERMON ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN 4:4-12, NO. 6

# MARCH

## THE JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY

James J. McCartney, O.S.A.

*Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy and Adjunct Professor, School of Law, Villanova University*

**“Blessed are the merciful,  
for they shall be shown mercy.”**

This beatitude taken from the Gospel of Matthew has special relevance in the Church right now. Pope Francis has called for a “Jubilee Year of Mercy” beginning on the feast of the Immaculate Conception in December 2015 and lasting until the feast of Christ the King in November 2016.

But what does the word “mercy” really mean? The Latin word for mercy – *miser cordia* – provides a very accurate understanding of this call of Jesus. *Miser cordia* comes from two Latin words – *miseri*, meaning the unfortunate, marginalized or poor (think *Les Miserables*) and *cor* meaning heart. So “mercy” literally means having a heart for the unfortunate, marginalized, or poor.

The Psalms tell us that God is rich in mercy because God forgives the sins of all of us who have become marginalized and poor by our sinful disobedience. We in turn are called to be merciful to others and we pray to extend mercy each time we recite the Lord’s Prayer: “Forgive us our sins as we forgive others.” But having a heart for the unfortunate is not limited to the forgiveness of sins – well do we describe our responsibilities as Christians as performing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy!

Let us reflect on what Saint Thomas of Villanova says about mercy:

“Many things should induce us to show mercy:

First, our own misery:

Not unacquainted with evil, I learned to comfort those in misery.

Second, is the tremendous benefit, for we also need mercy ourselves:

Whoever shows mercy to the poor invests in the Lord, and the Lord will pay him back his profit (Prv 19:17), and for a little mercy he will obtain much mercy. On the other hand: Judgment without mercy will be his who has shown no mercy (Jas 2:13). Therefore if you need mercy, show it to your brothers and sisters.

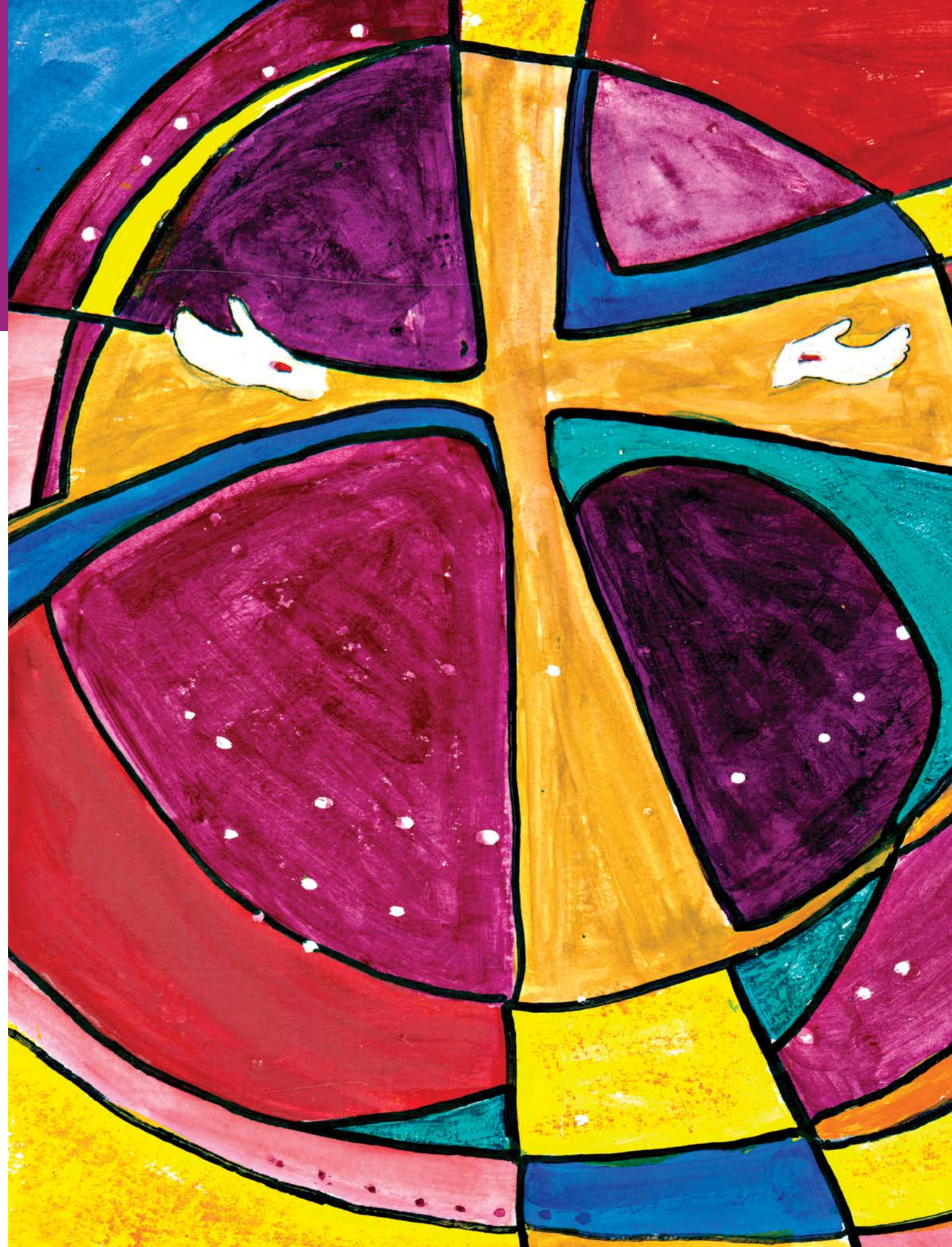
Third, the great multitude of miseries incites our mercy:

This world is filled with needs and poverty, like a huge lodging of the poor. Do not think, brothers and sisters, that they alone are poor whom you call poor, who lack food or clothing; is he not poorer who lacks faith, wisdom, judgment, light, reason, understanding? Misfortune of the body is less serious than misfortune of the heart, because life is more than the body (Mt 6:25). Alas! I pity wounds in the body, and will I not perceive the wounds of the soul? If you open your eyes, wherever you turn you will find many poor whom you can help” (*Opera Omnia*, Vol. III, pp. 110-120).



FATHER JAMES MCCARTNEY, O.S.A.

Let us pray that during this “Jubilee Year of Mercy” we may obtain God’s mercy. And let us further pray that we may extend God’s mercy to others, especially the unfortunate, marginalized and poor.





# APRIL

## WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Francis J. Doyle, O.S.A.

*Prior, Blessed Stephen Bellesini Friary, Pre-Novice House, Ardmore, Pa.*

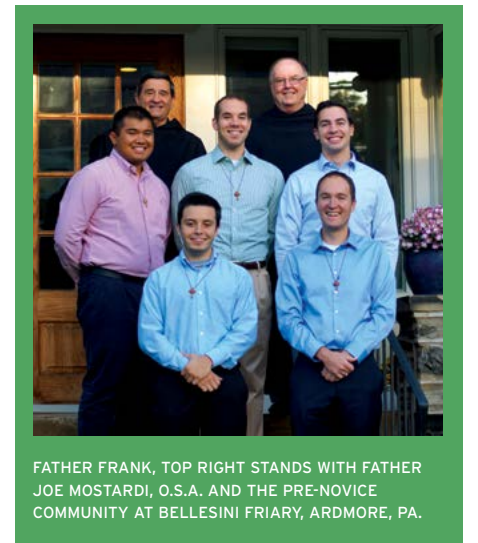
On August 28, 2013, on the occasion of the feast of Saint Augustine, the members of the General Chapter of the Order of Saint Augustine were gathered in Rome. There at the opening Mass, they were addressed by our Holy Father, Pope Francis. In his homily, he asked them to reflect upon Augustine's "restlessness," which ultimately led Augustine to an encounter with God. He suggested to those gathered that day to consider their own restlessness of spirit saying that the restless heart of Augustine has something to teach us, namely the "restlessness of the spiritual quest, the restlessness of the encounter with God, the restlessness of love." He challenged all the members of the Order to ask themselves if they had lost some of that restlessness. Our Holy Father went on to ask, "Look deep within yourself and ask yourself, do you have a heart that desires something great, or a heart that is put to sleep by material things?"

Men and women are asking themselves that very question today, looking deeply within themselves, aware of the restlessness and the lack of meaning and fulfillment that many are experiencing. For many years now, I have been engaged, directly or indirectly, with the ministry of accompanying men in their discernment of a call to religious life. I know that the Holy Spirit is at work in

them as they encounter their personal restless spirit and begin to consider the call to do something "great" for the Kingdom of God.

This past year which Pope Francis proclaimed as, "The Year of Consecrated Life," the Holy Father called all men and women religious to "Wake Up the World," to be witnesses of a different way of doing things, of acting, and of living, and by their example to invite others to respond to this call. Thankfully, we see that the grace of the Holy Spirit is touching and opening the hearts of men and women to consider the Augustinian way of life. In a prayer for vocations which the friars pray each day, we pray that men and women would see the beauty of Augustinian common life. We pray that they would imitate the faith-filled life of Mary, Our Mother of Good Counsel, who was guided by the Wisdom of God's Spirit as she responded to God's challenging call in her life. It is the graced freedom to say "yes" to God, that only God can give, which allows men and women to respond to the call to religious life.

That is a prayer that we ask you, our family and friends, to join with us in praying each day. As Pope Francis has stated: "Behind and before every vocation to the priesthood and consecrated life there is always the



FATHER FRANK, TOP RIGHT STANDS WITH FATHER JOE MOSTARDI, O.S.A., AND THE PRE-NOVICE COMMUNITY AT BELLESINI FRIARY, ARDMORE, PA.

strong and intense prayer of someone: a grandmother, a grandfather, a mother, a father, a community... Vocations are born in prayer and from prayer; only through prayer can they persevere and bear fruit."

This month we celebrate the "World Day of Prayer for Vocations." In this Holy Year of Mercy we pray that the seed of God's call might be received in rich soil and provide an abundant harvest of those called to God's service as religious men and women.

# MAY

## POVERTY AND MUTUAL CONCERN

Richard D. Nahman, O.S.A.  
*Preacher for "Food for the Poor," Bronx, N.Y.*

We Augustinians own God's call to be the witness of Divine love through living a common life... becoming one in mind in heart hungering for God. In the U.S.A. we do this formed in a culture that values the individual over community and fierce independence over dependence. Fidelity to our vow of poverty enables us to convert ourselves and thrive in this counter-cultural lifestyle.

As a community our primary goal is a greater love of God as made known through Jesus Christ, and derivatively, bringing this love to all with whom we share our lives. We do this inspired by Saint Augustine's vision.

Saint Augustine observed that the most basic virtue for Christian growth is humility. In order to love we must first and foremost stand before the person we love in honesty. In the case of loving God, we must stand before the Divine in the humble stance of complete dependency.

It is living fidelity to our vow of poverty in community that lays the natural foundation of experiencing requited dependency upon which we, individually and communally, build the superstructure of ever deepening our abandonment, in dependency upon God.

In a simplicity of life, we establish a structure in which we experience need and dependency and cultivate the virtues

of self-denial, understanding, moderation, courage, charity and forbearance.

We live encouraged by the words of Saint Augustine: "Your life does not belong to yourself but to all the brethren, just as their life belongs to you; or better, your life and the life of your confreres are no longer separate lives but only one life in Christ" (Letter 243, 2).

As we live together, growing in respect for one another's individuality and needs, we commit ourselves to a poverty of spirit in which we place the needs of one another above our individual self-interests. It is in living in the reciprocity of meeting each other's human needs, each to the degree that he is able; denying self interest and sharing and moderating our food, clothing, shelter, furnishings, work, illnesses and spiritual disciplines with others; respecting the commonality of our motivation to growing in holiness; that men from a spectrum of human experiences, cultures and customs, grow in experiencing acceptance in our dependency, enabling us to more and more confidently abandon ourselves to the Divine.

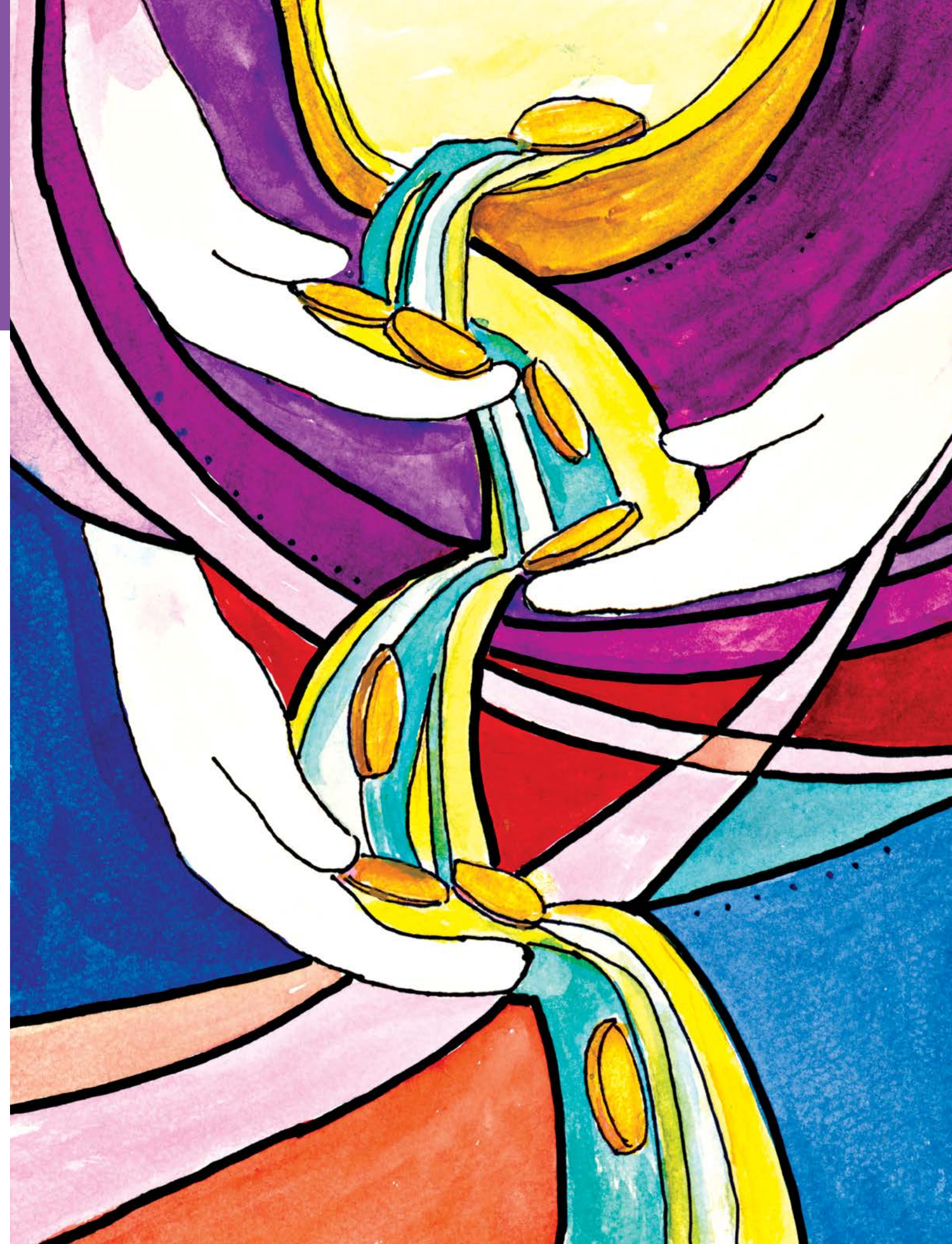
The poverty of Jesus and His relationship to the things of this world, as presented in the Gospels, inspires us. Just as He did not deem what He possessed with the Father something to be clung to, but emptied Himself, so too He did not cling to what He



FATHER RICHARD NAHMAN, O.S.A. (RIGHT), IS CONGRATULATED BY PRIOR PROVINCIAL MICHAEL DI GREGORIO, O.S.A., ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 50TH JUBILEE YEAR AS A PRIEST.

possessed in this world – from infancy, possessing royal treasures from Kings, and, who hung upon the cross possessing a garment so valuable that crude Roman soldiers could not bring themselves to destroy it.

We all hunger for God. In community, by our simplicity of life, we keep alive a natural awareness of wanting a little, so as not to lose the restlessness of our hearts' hunger which can be done by possessing too much.







# JUNE

## THE INSPIRATION OF THE ARTS

Richard J. Piatt, O.S.A.

*Director, Rogers Center for the Arts, and Professor of Practice in Theater, Merrimack College*

When I meet someone and say I teach at Merrimack College, they expect me to say that I am in Religious and Theological Studies. When I say I teach theater and often direct a college theater production each season, I am met with a slightly stunned look. While *Jesus Christ, Superstar* occupies a high spot on my bucket list, “religious themed” plays are not generally my thing.

I am interested in works of art that challenge the audience, works that invite artist and audience alike to view the world with a more critical eye. Art is not meant to simply entertain us.

Augustine seems to have a complex relationship with the arts. He enjoyed music and encourages us in his *Rule* to sing during prayer, and he showed concern that love of the music should never surpass love of the God who made it possible. However, Augustine seems to have little praise for the works of the stage.

In the 20th century, we find a playwright pope weighing in on the subject of art and artists. In his 1999 *Letter to Artists*, Pope Saint John Paul II emphasized that artists fulfill a vital role in society.

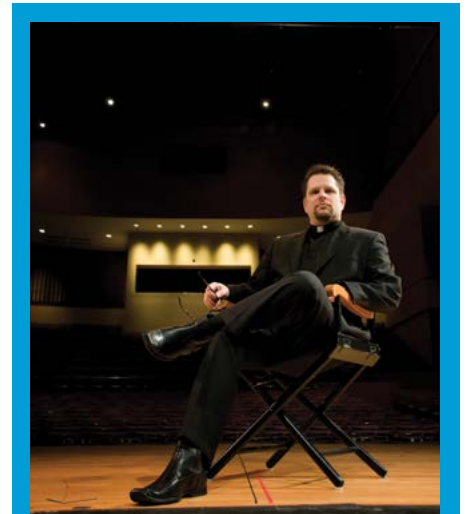
“Society needs artists...who ensure the growth of the person and the development of the community by means of that supreme art form which is ‘the art of education’. Within the vast cultural panorama of each nation, artists have their unique place. They render an

exceptional social service in favor of the common good.”

Here, John Paul II touches on what I feel is an important point: that through their unique talents and creations, the artist enriches cultural conversation and serves humanity by inviting us to think more fully about the world in which we live, move and have our being.

The work of the artist is not simply to beautify the world, to create that which is at best a mere ornament to God’s creation. The role of artist is to disturb. This may take depicting life in the underbelly of society, the distasteful and disrespectful in order to show, as Jesus often did, the beautiful human creation that resides there. Having produced Jonathan Larson’s *RENT*, Mel Brooks’ *The Producers*, and John Patrick Shanley’s *Doubt: A Parable* at Merrimack College, I came under fire for each. I contend that all three are “worthwhile and beautiful,” “enrich all of humanity,” and offer “social service in favor of the common good.” Uniquely, they each offer a great deal of beauty.

These works enrich through their belief that the power of love and truth have in our world, even if love and truth do not “win” in the world of the play. They encourage and empower us to go forth from the theater proper into the theater of the world and see how God’s love is manifested. Do we treat others with the dignity and respect they so crave and deserve? Do we serve justice or the



FATHER RICHARD PIATT, O.S.A., IN THE ROGERS CENTER FOR THE ARTS AT MERRIMACK COLLEGE

status quo? Do we dismiss those who live on the outside of our comfortable spaces as somehow less?

Art can be ugly, profane, vulgar, crude, and extraordinarily difficult to understand, just like life itself. Art ALWAYS tells the truth, at least as seen through the eyes of the artist. Those of us who receive the art are free to disagree, to challenge, to debate. That is the point. Art disturbs. Art invites us to engage. Art invites us to challenge. Art may actually be one of the greatest ways God has given us to really explore our relationships with Him, with other people, and with the entirety of creation.

That is certainly worthwhile and beautiful.

# JULY

## AUGUSTINIAN EDUCATION VALUES

Stephen M. Curry, O.S.A.

*Director of Augustinian Mission, Saint Rita High School, Chicago, Ill.*

There are three core values embodied in Saint Augustine's philosophy of education: *Veritas, Unitas, et Caritas* (Truth, Unity, and Love).

*Veritas* is the Latin word for *truth* and Augustine described his life as a restless search for truth. He was a life-long learner who tried to find this truth in his studies, the Manichean cult, his political career, and in living a sinful life. It was not until he turned within himself and discovered Jesus Christ, the Inner Teacher, that he found truth. He captures this relationship with God by stating in his *Confessions*: "Lord, let me know myself, let me know you."

Augustine's search for truth is a restless journey of the heart. He believes that our true identity as people dwells within us where we encounter God. God is closer to us than we are to ourselves. He states the importance of this yearning heart in his *Confessions*: "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

The inner search for truth requires an open spirit. An open spirit is taking flight from our inner heart toward the transcendent God by moving from interiority to truth, from liberty to love, and from friendship to community.

The second Augustinian value for education is teaching people how to live together, which is *unitas*, the Latin word

for *unity*. This unity implies a respect for diversity, the way people think, and the way they act.

In the desire to build unity, we need community to go beyond ourselves. Community is where the common interest is put first over individual needs. Unity with one another allows us to experience the fullness of Christ. It is collaboration and not competition. Augustine's *Rule* explains his view on unity through community: "The main purpose for you having come together is to live harmoniously in your house, intent upon God in oneness of mind and heart."

In the midst of unity lies the importance of respect for each person by being student-centered. An Augustinian education is a dialog between the students and teacher that addresses students' perceived needs and by respecting each student's individuality in order for their uniqueness to emerge. It is comprehensive by being in touch with the students' will, intelligence, and personal development, so that learning leads to personal achievement and happiness.

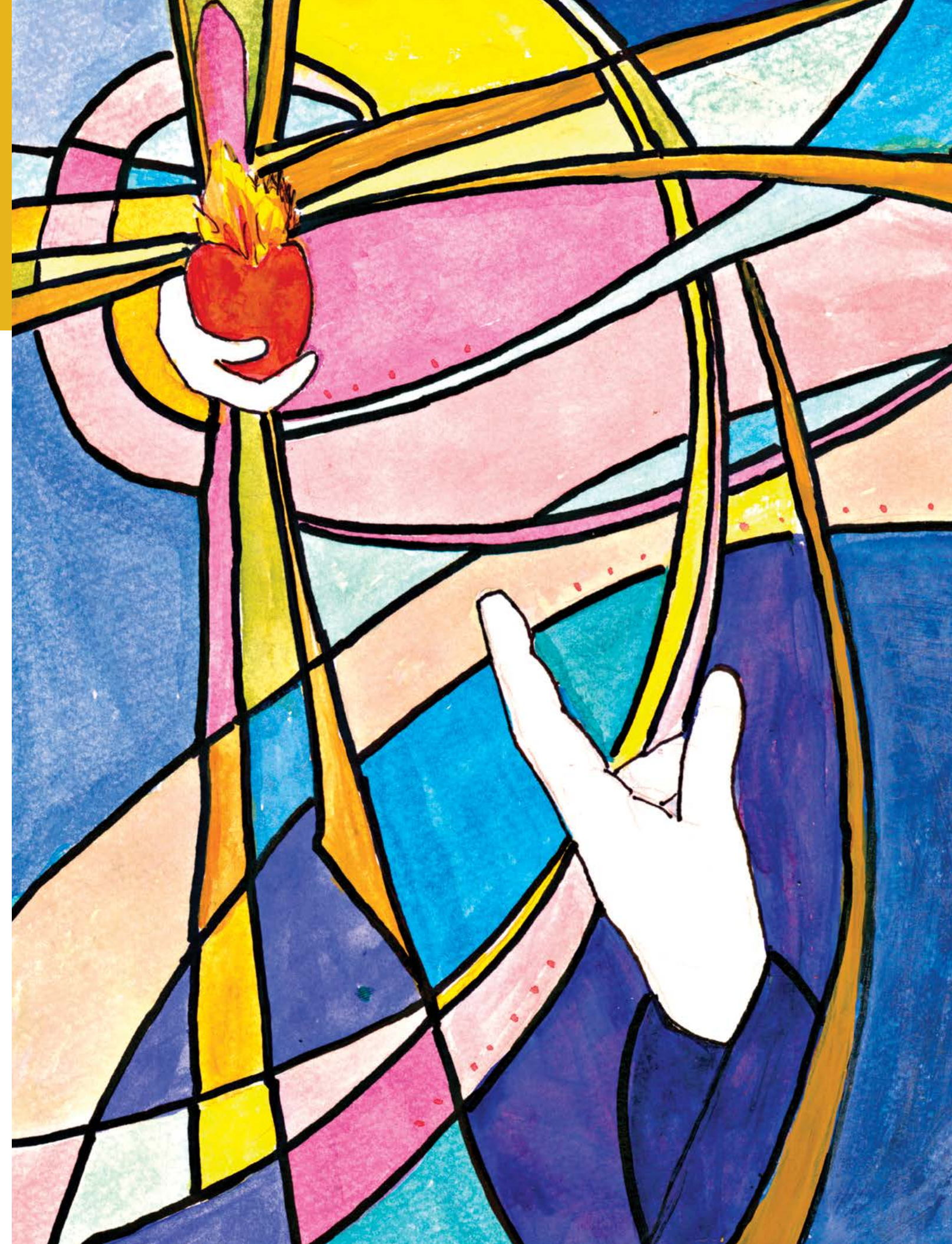
The third value to an Augustinian education is *caritas*, the Latin word for *love*. Love accepts everyone for exactly who they are. It is a culture of graciousness, a generous donation of time, and a climate of friendship.



FATHER STEPHEN CURRY, O.S.A. TEACHING SCRIPTURE TO SOPHOMORES MICHAEL RIOS AND AHMED AMADOU

*Veritas, unitas, and caritas* culminate in the Eucharist. We are the Body of Christ and we are called to become Christ-like in our restless journey toward God through truth, unity, and love. Augustine says in Sermon 227: "Be what you see and receive what you are."

Today the Order of Saint Augustine continues the tradition of education as it relates to its 5th century founder Saint Augustine. In North America there are nine college prep high schools and two universities that teach truth, unity and love to their students to minister to them on their restless journey to God.





# AUGUST

## THE 220<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROVINCE OF SAINT THOMAS OF VILLANOVA

Michael F. Di Gregorio, O.S.A.  
*Prior Provincial, Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova*

When Friar Matthew Carr disembarked on Philadelphia soil in April, 1796, after a lengthy sea voyage out of Dublin, Ireland, he brought with him two things that gave promise, even then, for the establishment of the Augustinian Order in the newly-founded nation: the resolve of a stalwart missionary, and the authorization of his Prior General in Rome. Whether he carried much more is really questionable.

Within a matter of months of his arrival, Father Matthew began raising funds for the construction of a church and friary among an immigrant population that welcomed his presence and did their best to support his efforts. By July he had purchased land for this end, and on August 27th of that very year, the Augustinian General Curia in Rome approved the establishment of the new venture under the title of the Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel. A few short weeks later, the cornerstone of Saint Augustine Church was laid, and within months the first candidate for the Order, Michael Hurley, set sail to begin his studies in Italy.

Looking back now, 220 years later, it all seems to have begun so rapidly. And so it did! The enthusiasm of a 41-year-old friar, eager to do some good among fellow immigrants, in a new land filled with high expectations and no few challenges, zealous to preach the Gospel

and share the faith, and to plant the seeds of Augustinian religious life, saw possibilities to be achieved and dreams to be realized. “Nothing succeeds like success” we sometimes say, yet often success comes, not because the path is easy, but because enthusiasm doesn’t wane. It would take a good measure of enthusiasm to keep the Augustinian venture alive in those early years, in the face of sickness and death and the departure of friars who had come to help the mission for a time.

In religious terms we might call enthusiasm by another name: faith, hope, zeal, passion. The last would be a most appropriate term for a son of Augustine such as Friar Matthew. And his example in this regard is timely, as the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova, renamed thus in 1874, finds itself rethinking what success means in the present moment. Matthew Carr spent 24 years with a mission to establish the Order in the United States. His responsibilities were extensive, for he wore many hats as pastor, diocesan vicar general, religious superior, president of the Augustinian board of trustees and financial manager of the mission. During those years he was troubled by various hurdles, such as financial concerns and a lack of candidates willing to sign on to the American venture. At his death there was only one friar – Michael Hurley – to carry on the dream and the



FATHER MICHAEL DI GREGORIO, O.S.A., CELEBRATES MASS AT OLDE SAINT AUGUSTINE CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

work. Fortunately, Michael inherited much more than dream and work from his mentor and confrere. He inherited Matthew’s passion as well!

An anniversary – even a numerically unexceptional one – offers the opportunity to look back, to remember, and to give thanks. It also invites us to recommit ourselves to the same passion that gave birth to a now long-lived initiative and, in that same spirit, to continue on.

# SEPTEMBER

## WORLD PEACE

John E. Deegan, O.S.A.

*Founder of Augustinian Defenders of the Rights of the Poor (A.D.R.O.P.),  
serving Philadelphia, Pa.*

**“Above all, the Church of children who see themselves as brothers and sisters will never end up considering anyone simply as a burden, a problem, an expense, a concern or a risk. Other persons are essentially a gift....The Church is an open house....That is why she can appeal to the longing for peace present in every man and woman...”**

(Pope Francis Homily: Prayer Vigil for Synod of Bishops, October 2015).

Pope Francis calls our attention to the longing for peace present in every man and woman. Who can deny that each of us wants peace in our own hearts and minds and in our relationships with our families, friends and community?

How, in a world marked by violence, hatred and war, do you create a just and peaceful world? In his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis states that religions have a right and duty to show that it is possible to build a society or just world by emphasizing a healthy pluralism, where we value differences as a “precious ally in the commitment to defending human dignity” and thus “a path to peace in our troubled world.” Pluralism is a reality that needs to be acknowledged and addressed if we are to build a just community, nation and world.

For Religious and lay people alike, love is the key to peace. Augustine tells us we should have one heart and mind intent on God. Peace in the monastery is attained through unity, love, and forgiving acceptance. “Unity centered on God is the destination; love is the road to it; and forgiving acceptances is, as it were, the means of transport, the vehicles by which we travel” (*The Rule of St. Augustine: An Essay in Understanding* by Sister Mary Agatha, S.P.B.). Love gives us inspiration to act and enables us to meet our brothers and sisters where they are and accept them for who they are.

A Monastery Chapter Room or a family kitchen table can be the scene for building a peace-filled community. Love fuels our readiness to forgive and be forgiven as we travel toward a world of peace-filled unity.

But, are we not naïve to offer to a violent world a model for peace based on unity, love and forgiving acceptance? Maybe, if we only reflect on the turmoil of today’s world. Pope Francis sounds a more positive note when, in his last day in Philadelphia, he declared: “God wants all of his children to take part in the feast of the Gospel. Jesus says ‘Do not hold back anything that is good; instead, help it to grow!’ To raise doubts about the workings of the Spirit, to give the impression that it cannot take place in those who are not ‘part of the group,’ who are not like us is a dangerous



FATHER JACK DEEGAN, O.S.A. (LEFT), AND BISHOP LOUIS DESIMONE, CONCELEBRATE MASS AT SAINT RITA OF CASCIA IN PHILADELPHIA.

temptation. Not only does it block conversion to the faith, it is a perversion of the faith!”

What can we conclude about the “longing for peace present in every man and woman...?” Do violence, war and disregard for human dignity mock our, perhaps, naïve hope that all may be one in Christ? I think not! In the freedom that each of us has to choose, the good lays the ground work for peace. In accepting ourselves, loving our brothers and sisters, and seeking to forgive and be forgiven, we can reach the unity centered in God that we all long for. Never raise doubts about the working of the Spirit, for the Spirit moves where she will. We should humbly pray, “Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.”



# OCTOBER

## WORLD MISSION SUNDAY

John J. Lydon, O.S.A.

*Treasurer of the Vicariate of San Juan de Sahagun, Peru*

In my vocational discernment in my last years of college, I hadn't considered the idea of being a missionary. In fact, going to Peru at the end of my theological studies was with the idea of serving my diaconate year in a country where I could learn Spanish and be prepared for ministry in a changing American Church.

A founder of Maryknoll once remarked that a missionary goes where he or she is not necessarily wanted, but needed, and stays until he or she is wanted but not necessarily needed. The American mission in Peru began in 1964, so I didn't feel unwanted when I arrived in Chulucanas, Peru, in 1983. Instead, I was definitely needed. The parish population was over 30,000 and we were a community of four. 1983 was the year of the greatest El Niño effect ever recorded; the torrential rains brought great destruction, death, sickness and disease. In my first few weeks, I was called upon to do "emergency baptisms" of newly born children who would be among countless victims of the onslaught of a modern experience of the biblical plagues of Egypt. I came for just one year, but have stayed more than 30 because I felt the need of the people. I felt their deep poverty, which never vanquished their faith; I felt their spirit, which lifted my own.

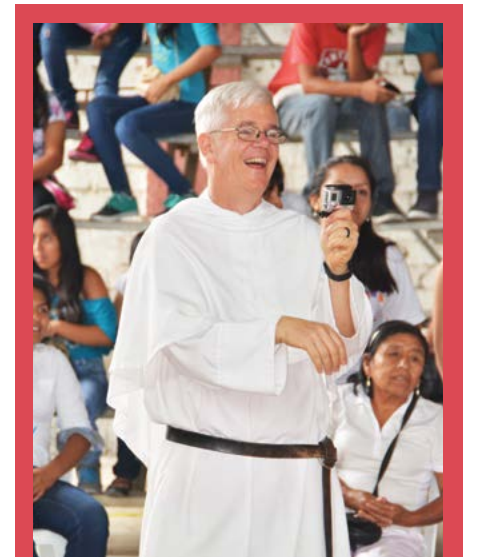
I presume most friars in any ministry can say that they get from the people of God far more than they give, and that

has been my experience for the three decades I have remained in Peru.

I have seen a great deal of change. After that first difficult El Niño year, I saw the poverty of the country only grow as their financial currency fell in value and inflation reached 7,000 percent.

During the late 1980s and into the 1990s there was a terrible terrorism movement, much like the modern-day ISIS, but not of radicals for a particular faith, but dedicated to a new form of communist ideology promoted by a mysterious university professor in the mountains of Peru, Abimael Guzmán, alias Comrade Gonzalo, the leader and principal founder of Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*). He promoted a vision of bringing Peru down in ashes so that a new "phoenix" would arise from the destruction. Car bombs exploded wherever, and assassinations scored their desired effect of sowing fear. In it all, to the south of our mission, in a city of Chimbote, three priests were killed by *Sendero Luminoso*, and in December 2015, they were beatified as the first martyrs of Peru.

The terrorist movement was eventually defeated, and the military repression that followed left 70,000 dead and missing. Those are scars that almost never heal, without the mission of mercy of the Church, preaching and promoting reconciliation and peace. To be here in those times was indeed a challenge, but not surprisingly, a time of profound



FATHER JOHN LYDON, O.S.A., AT A CELEBRATION IN PERU.

grace. You saw the best, among the worst; you saw the hand of God guiding a people through a modern passion, going from crucifixion to newness of life.

The life of the Church has been to a great degree in the hands of the laity. It is a Church where Vatican II took hold in many ways more than in our own country. Perhaps out of the greater need, or the greater poverty, but certainly because of so many previous missionaries learning to be guided by the values and experience of His Holy People in Peru, a vibrant experience of Church and faith has taken hold here. I have been blessed to be a small part in that journey.

# NOVEMBER

## ILLNESS AND THE FAMILY COMMUNITY

Francis A. Farsaci, O.S.A.

*Retired; most recently chaplain, Saint Joseph Villa, Flourtown, Pa.*

### “I am never more alone than when alone.”

These are the words of a person in emergency mode. Although we might cherish our space, all of us need others. In times of illness, we have to gather our inner forces, and try to adjust to our challenge. All of us need to belong to a community. It can be supplied by our family of origin, extended family, friends, neighbors or that which comes from our religious values. It can be created by people who take care of us. Saint Augustine understood human nature, and so he was very much into the idea of community and its ministry to the sick.

In my journey as an Augustinian, I have always been impressed by the care and concern of those Augustinians in positions of authority for the sick and suffering members in our community. Even from the beginning of my formation, my Superiors were outstanding in their responses to health and welfare of a brother who had fallen ill. I might add that, in my experience, all Augustinian friars have been also ready to help a family of a friar when needed.

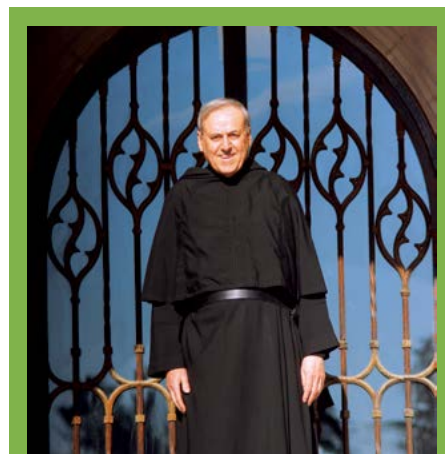
What are the challenges of the local community?

- To recognize that sick people need their space to come to grips with their special needs
- To enable the person to join with the community prayer, Mass and meals as much as possible
- To be the presence of Christ, by being present as community

Sickness of a member brings to the community inspiration, courage and the vibrant example of the Christian accepting the challenge of the cross, but it can also bring out of the person bitterness and depression. Sick people are on the edge and sometimes find it very difficult to deal with illness as they face a crisis in their journey. The community must rise to the occasion and sometimes embrace tough love along with compassion and solicitude.

A friar might have special needs, which cannot be provided in the monastery health facility. This might mean that the friar must go to another facility to receive the specialized care necessary. It is a time of great sensitivity, because the friar will be separated from the support of his brothers. The community must, at times, make decisions that disappoint the challenged friar, and others as well. That is the tough love that must be embraced.

The last challenge and most important, as it is for all of us, is the end of life for a friar. Once again, the community has a significant role to play. We, as religious, have left our families of origin, and don't always have access to them. The presence of community, the sacraments of anointing, penance and the Eucharist are powerful witnesses to the love and comfort that Christ brings. Many times, presence of the community is the only solace that we can provide in the midst of suffering and difficult transition to the world to come. In that presence of community, we make manifest Christ, whose loving embrace welcomes us.



FATHER FRANCIS FARSACI, O.S.A., OUTSIDE SAINT THOMAS MONASTERY IN VILLANOVA





# DECEMBER

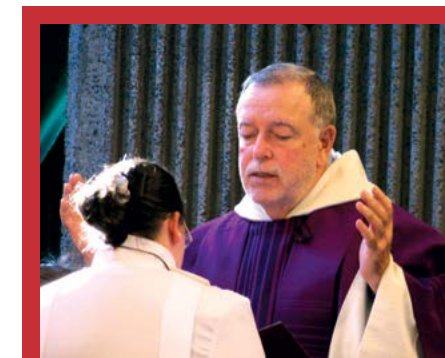
## THE ROOT OF LOVE

Aquilino D. Gonzalez, O.S.A.  
*Our Lady of Good Counsel, Staten Island, N.Y.*

**“See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are.” (1 Jn 3: 1)**

The relationship we share with God is that of parent-child, the same relationship that Christ has. Christ Incarnate also had a parent-child relationship with Mary and Joseph and, just like us, he learned from their example. Within the Holy Family, Christ is witness to the empathy and compassion needed to work together. In Joseph, Christ sees a man whose belief rules his actions. He is loving and steadfast as a husband who takes the pregnant Mary as his wife. In Christ’s Mother, Mary, he is witness to the love of self-giving. She models for her Son the self-sacrifice she is called to as the Mother of our Redeemer. As dutiful parents, presenting their Son at the temple, Simeon predicted that “a sword would pierce” Mary’s heart. Later, when Jesus remained in the Temple teaching and Mary and Joseph return to find him, he asks them, “Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” We are told, “Mary held all these things in her heart.” Again, belief in the purpose of this family sustains her.

The experience Jesus has with his earthly family, and the relationship Christ describes with God the Father, that of Father-Son, is one of nurturing, characterized by love, empathy and compassion – the compassion which is at



FATHER AQUILINO GONZALEZ, O.S.A., CELEBRATING MASS AT OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL, STATEN ISLAND, N.Y.

the core of Christ’s capacity to understand and minister to the needs of others.

Children learn by example; the quality of their relationships, and what they learn from their family and community, helps them to develop other relationships in their lives. With compassion and empathy, we can all have a deeper comprehension of Christ’s Incarnation, of the Holy Trinity and its capacity to contain and repair the suffering of the afflicted. Christ gives witness to the quality of the inter-relationship of the Triune God: empathic and compassionate. To follow Christ requires the development of love, and to manifest, as best as possible, the Father’s compassion towards humankind. To be Christ-like is to fulfill, in one’s life, the will of the Godhead. He draws us to himself.

Christ’s ministry is best understood not only in His reaching out to the meek, but also to those who bring about

terrible suffering to others, no matter the motivation. The Holy Trinity knows no selfish pride or objectives; “Learn of me, for I am gentle and humble of heart.”

Augustine understood Saint Paul well: “Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.” Augustine’s heart found peace for very a restless heart. Shown by his interpersonal and community relationships, Augustine understood that humankind ceases to be restless in communion with God.

“To put on the Lord Jesus Christ,” to be Christ, one in Christ, evidences the fruits of the personal and community experience of oneness with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as proclamation of God’s paternal, maternal and filial concern – God’s love – for all of humankind.

“This is what I insist upon: human actions can only be understood by their root in love... Love and do what you will. Whether you hold your peace, through love hold your peace. Whether you cry out, through love cry out. Whether you correct, through love correct. Whether you spare, through love must you spare. Let the root of love be within. For of this root can nothing come except that which is good.”

AUGUSTINE, SERMON ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN 4:4-12, NO. 8

## NEWS AND NOTES

FROM THE PROVINCE OF SAINT THOMAS  
OF VILLANOVA AND THE AUGUSTINIAN ORDER



1ST ROW: (L-TO-R) DONALD F. REILLY, O.S.A., MICHAEL F. DI GREGORIO, O.S.A., CHRIS GHEYSSENS, PETER M. DONOHUE, O.S.A., MARY DISIPIO (EVENT CO-CHAIR) AND JAMES R. FLYNN, O.S.A. 2ND AND 3RD ROW: (L-TO-R) JOSEPH S. MOSTARDI, O.S.A., CHRISTOPHER J. DRENNEN, O.S.A., FRANCIS J. HORN, O.S.A., JOHN E. DEEGAN, O.S.A., PAUL W. GALETTO, O.S.A., JOHN T. DENNY, O.S.A., HARRY J. ERDLEN, O.S.A., MICHAEL P. SULLIVAN, O.S.A., KAIL C. ELLIS, O.S.A., RICHARD G. CANNULI, O.S.A., BILL DISIPIO (EVENT CO-CHAIR), JOSEPH L. NAROG, O.S.A., JOSEPH D. CALDERONE, O.S.A. AND JAMES J. MCCARTNEY, O.S.A.

### Chris Gheysens, President and CEO of Wawa, Inc., Speaks at Province Event to Benefit the *Augustinian Fund*

On November 11, 2015, Augustinian Friars and 200 guests gathered at the Overbrook Golf Club in Villanova, Pa., to celebrate A Profile in Augustinian Leadership, with guest Christopher T. Gheysens, a graduate of Saint Augustine Preparatory School '89 and Villanova University '93, who is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Wawa, Inc.

"If you know about family then you know about Chris" said Father Paul Galetto, O.S.A., former President of Saint Augustine Preparatory School, who has known Chris since he was ten years old and introduced him at the event.

Chris Gheysens grew up in Vineland, New Jersey, where he learned about faith, work and family values from his heroes,

his father Ed and his mother Janice. He has been married for 18 years to his wife Trish, raising four children, Danielle, Nicole, David and Matt. Here are excerpts from his remarks on November 11th:

"What I want to share is how Augustinian values have played a significant role in my life and my professional life.

"I joined Wawa 1997. Why? Because I saw a place where values and family values came to life and they are the same values that I remembered my father and mother taught and showed me; they were the same values that Father Paul Galetto taught at the Prep and that I saw in the sphere of influence at Villanova—and not just the Augustinians, the people, the lay teachers, friends. I owe a lot of this to those values that were common themes: love, unity, caring, families, strengthening communities.

"People ask me all the time: What's the secret? There is no secret. There's just one piece of advice I give to everyone: 'Find a place, no matter what the job, no matter

what the role, no matter what the product or service that organization has, but in business, find a place where your values and the organization's values marry up perfectly... when those things marry up, you sleep better at night, but also you know you're in a place where you share values.' And that's what I found at Wawa.

"It was a place that recognized that values were really important. I go back and look the linkage back to the values that the Augustinians have, that my family has and now at Wawa. For me, as a leader creating and nurturing a culture founded in people, I spend my time thinking about values. How do you take a set of values and build them into a business?

"The Augustinian experiences, my family experience have shaped who I am, and whether I like it or not, trying to bring that into my professional business life has been a passion of mine." *For more pictures and information about the event go to page 32.*

### New Prior of the Federation of Augustinians of North America (FANA) Is Elected



Father Michael F. Di Gregorio, O.S.A., Prior Provincial of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova, has been elected Prior of the Federation of Augustinians of

North America (FANA). Father Michael was elected to the position at a meeting of the FANA council on November 14, 2015, held in Chicago. Father Michael succeeds Father Bernie Scianna, O.S.A., Prior Provincial of the Midwest Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel, who served two successive terms as Prior of the Federation.



### Saint Augustine's *Confessions* Available as a Phone App

Villanova University has published Augustine's *Confessions* as a mobile app. Based on the Maria Boulding translation of the thirteen books of St. Augustine's *Confessions*, the app provides a voiceover for the text, art and photos related to Augustine, and a timeline of Augustine's life.

Details are available at the following link:

**CONFESSIONS MOBILE APP**

### Rick Piatt, O.S.A., Named Director of the Rogers Center for the Arts at Merrimack College

Father Richard Piatt, O.S.A., was named director of Merrimack College's Rogers Center for the Arts this summer, with the agenda of opening the venue further to student artists and professionals. He created a new gallery in the center's Irving E. Rogers, Jr. lobby, for both students and professional artists. The new gallery



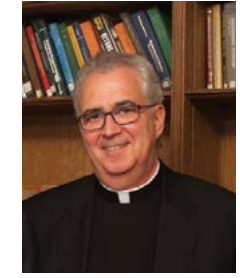
### Cause of Father Bill Atkinson, O.S.A., Presented to United States Conference of Catholic Bishops by Archbishop of Philadelphia, Charles Chaput, OFM Cap.

Father Bill's Cause for sainthood was presented to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops by Charles Chaput, OFM Cap., Archbishop of Philadelphia, at their General Assembly, held November 17, 2015, in Baltimore, Maryland. In presenting Father Bill's Cause and asking

for the bishops' support as he prepares to present it to the Holy See, Archbishop Chaput noted the "call to holiness for the family and [Augustinian] brothers who cared for [Father Bill]." Archbishop Chaput also said Father Bill's Cause "would be an encouragement" to those who share his type of disability, and that "he would fit nicely as a patron in the communion of saints." Father Bill, a quadriplegic, was injured in a tobogganing accident while at the Augustinian Novitiate.

*Photo Courtesy PAHRC from the Robert and Theresa Halvey Photograph Collection.*

### Peter M. Donohue, O.S.A., Receives the 2015 Barry Award



Father Peter M. Donohue, O.S.A., President of Villanova University, was named the recipient of the 2015 Barry Award, named in honor of Commodore John

Barry, Father of the American Navy. Each year, the American Catholic Historical Society's Board of Managers presents the award to an individual who has made significant contributions to the Church, the community and to their profession.

The award was presented to Father Peter at a dinner on November 20, 2015, at the Union League in Philadelphia, Pa.

complements the Rogers' McCoy Art Gallery for established artists. Merrimack's Director of Media Instructional Services, Kevin Salemme, who has contributed photographs in previous issues of *The Augustinian* magazine, had the prestigious first gallery showing in the new space. Father Rick also introduced The Atrium Concert Series, for weekly lunchtime musical performances. Father Rick has been at Merrimack since 2001. In addition to his duties at the Rogers Center, he is an assistant professor of theater in the Visual and Performing Arts Department.



FATHER BILL AT INGLIS HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA, PA.

You can read more about Father Bill at:  
[www.fatherbillatkinsonguild.org](http://www.fatherbillatkinsonguild.org)





CARDINAL PROSPERO GRECH, O.S.A.

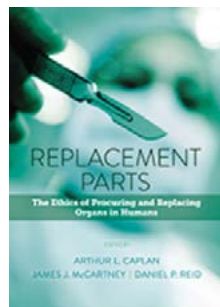


SUNSET, ST. PETER'S ROME BY CARDINAL PROSPERO GRECH, O.S.A.

## Photographs of Cardinal Prospero Grech, O.S.A., Exhibited at Villanova University's Art Gallery

The Villanova Art Gallery, at the Connelly Center on campus, hosted an exhibit of photographs by Cardinal Prospero Grech, O.S.A., of Malta, from November 16 through December 11, 2015. The exhibit presented images, in color and black and white, of people, places and events in settings from India to Eire. The title of his exhibit was *A Thing of Beauty Is A Joy Forever*. To this, His Eminence added "even for a Cardinal," who, at 90 years of age, is still going strong.

## James McCartney, O.S.A., PhD., Co-edits New Book



Father James McCartney, O.S.A., PhD., has co-edited a book, *Replacement Parts*, which addresses the ethical challenges raised by organ transplantation.

Topics include the determination of death and the dead donor rule; possible strategies for increasing the number of available organs, and more. Father McCartney is an associate professor in the Philosophy Department and is an adjunct professor in the School of Law at Villanova University. He has served as a consultant for several major health systems in the United States.



MICHAEL DI GREGORIO, O.S.A., PRIOR PROVINCIAL (L), AND KAIL ELLIS, O.S.A., AT THE ALUMNI MEDALLION AWARDS CEREMONY

## Kail Ellis, O.S.A., Honored as Villanova University Names its Alumni Medallion for Him

Father Kail Ellis, O.S.A., PhD., was recently honored as the Alumni Medallion awarded by Villanova University's College



PORTRAIT OF THE PRIOR GENERAL ALEJANDRO MORAL ANTÓN, O.S.A., BY GIUSEPPE ANTONIO LOMUSCIO

## Prior General Alejandro Moral Antón's Portrait Placed in Augustinian Curia

The portrait of our Prior General, Alejandro Moral Antón, O.S.A., has arrived in Rome and will be placed in the Curia next to the portraits of the previous Priors General. This portrait, created by the artist Giuseppe Antonio Lomuscio, will hang on the wall of the second floor of the Curia and will join the long line of other portraits of Prior Generals that adorn the walls of the ground floor and the first and second floors of the Generalate.



ALUMNI MEDALLION NAMED IN HONOR OF KAIL ELLIS, O.S.A.

of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) was named after him. Father Kail currently serves as assistant to the president and has served at Villanova University on the faculty, as dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and vice president for academic affairs. The medallion is awarded to notable alumni every year during Villanova's Alumni Medallion Awards.



## IN PARADISUM



### Neil J. McGettigan, O.S.A.

BORN: 6/21/27  
FIRST PROFESSION: 9/10/47  
ORDAINED: 9/8/1953  
DIED: 11/18/2015

Neil Joseph McGettigan was born on June 21, 1927, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the son of Joseph McGettigan and Mary Quigley. He had five brothers and two sisters. Neil was baptized on July 10, 1927, at Saint Gabriel Church, Norwood, Pennsylvania. He attended Saint Francis de Sales Parish School, Philadelphia (1933 – 1941), and West Philadelphia Catholic High School (1941 – 1945). He then was admitted as a postulant to Augustinian Academy, Staten Island, New York, for the 1945 – 1946 academic year, and was received into the Order as a novice on September 9, 1946. At the completion of his novitiate year at New Hamburg, New York, he professed first vows on September 10, 1947. He attended Villanova College (1947 – 1950), from which he received his Bachelors Degree in Philosophy. He then pursued theological studies at Augustinian College, Washington, D.C. (1950 – 1954), and also received an MA in English Literature from The Catholic University of America. He professed solemn vows on September 10, 1950, and was ordained to the priesthood on September 8, 1953,

at Saint Thomas of Villanova Church, Villanova, by John Cardinal O'Hara, Archbishop of Philadelphia.

Father Neil's first assignment, in 1954, was to Saint John of Sahagun Friary where he taught for one year at Archbishop Carroll High School, Washington, D.C. He then was assigned to Saint Joseph Friary, Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania, with a teaching assignment to Msgr. Bonner High School (1955 – 1964). During this period he also pursued graduate studies in English Literature at the University of Pennsylvania. Father Neil was assigned to Our Mother of Good Counsel Monastery and Merrimack College, North Andover, Massachusetts, where he was Assistant Professor of English (1964 – 1974); Dean of Freshmen (1968 – 1970); and Assistant Director of Liberal Arts (1970 – 1974). There then followed an assignment to Casa San Lorenzo and Biscayne College, Miami, Florida, where he was Assistant Professor of English. In the period 1975 – 1976, he studied at Saint Paul University, Ottawa, Canada, and received an MA in Pastoral Counseling. He was assigned to Saint Augustine Friary, Casselberry, Florida (1976 – 1978), and ministered in the Diocese of Orlando's office of campus ministry at Stetson University, Deland, and Florida Technological University, Orlando. Father Neil was assigned to parish ministry at Immaculate Conception Parish, Hoosick Falls, New York (1978 – 1979); Saint Nicholas of Tolentine Parish,

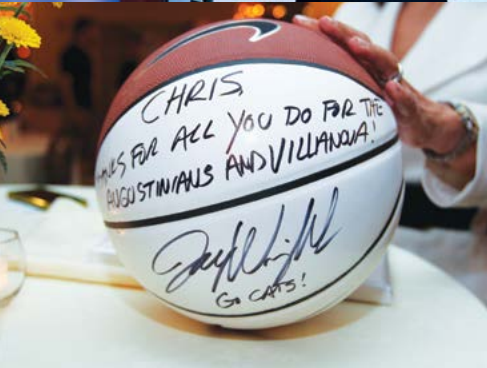
Jamaica, New York (1979 – 1980); and as associate pastor at Saint Augustine Parish, Troy, New York (1980 – 1988). During this time he studied at the New York Theological Seminary, New York, and received a D. Min. in Pastoral Counseling.

In 1988 he was appointed the Province's Director of Communications, which position he held until 1990. At the same time he served as a Residence Life Minister at Villanova University. For a number of years in the 1980s, Father Neil served as a spiritual director and team member of various associations, such as the Cursillo Movement, Residents Encounter Christ, and Emmaus Journey for Married Couples.

In July 1988, Father Neil was assigned to Saint Thomas Monastery, Villanova, Pennsylvania. In 1990, he was appointed to the faculty of Villanova University, where he taught in the English Department. He remained at the Villanova Monastery until March 2015, when, because of declining health, he was transferred to Arden Courts of King of Prussia, Pa. He returned to the Villanova Monastery on November 17, 2015, and passed away in the early morning of November 18, 2015, at the age of 88. Father Neil had been professed 68 years and a priest 62 years.



FATHER MICHAEL WITH JAY AND PATTY WRIGHT



### EVENT COMMITTEE AND AUGUSTINIAN ADVANCEMENT COUNCIL

1ST ROW: (L-TO-R) HARRY HALLORAN, HELEN HORSTMANN, TERRY SOUSA, KIM DEVINE, MARY GENE WOODS, MARY DISIPIO, EILEEN BRAZITIS. 2ND ROW: (L-TO-R) CHRISTOPHER SOLTIS, JAMES J. MCCARTNEY, O.S.A., FRANCIS J. HORN, O.S.A., RICHARD E. DEVINE, CAROL MCKIERNAN, ROBERT J. MCKIERNAN, MICHAEL F. DI GREGORIO, O.S.A., MADONNA SUTTER, BILL DISIPIO, ROBERT WOODS, STEVEN FABIETTI. 3RD ROW: (L-TO-R) NATALIE SOLTIS, JOHN HORSTMANN, ROBERT P. HAGAN, O.S.A., DONALD F. REILLY, O.S.A., CHRIS GHEYSENS, JOSEPH SOUSA, ERIC QUISENBERRY, JOSEPH L. NAROG, O.S.A.

Coach Jay Wright spoke on behalf of the *Augustinian Fund* on November 11, 2015, when Augustinian Friars and 200 guests gathered to celebrate *A Profile in Augustinian Leadership*, with guest Chris Gheysens (left), a graduate of Saint Augustine Preparatory School '89 and Villanova University '93, who is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Wawa, Inc.

#### COACH JAY WRIGHT:

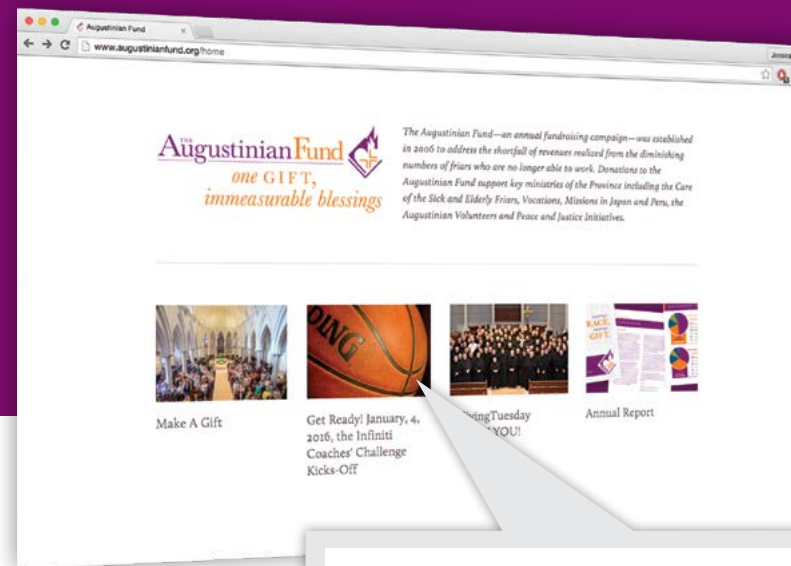
“Chris is such a great example of why we’re all here – the impact that the Augustinians have had on all of our lives. I look at Villanova as the place in our country that gets the smartest, the brightest and really the most competitive people. They have those qualities that all the successful people have. But then there’s something in them that makes them want to be a part of a community. They want to be a part of the Augustinian community. They get the great education....and then they go out into the world and decide: How do I help my community? How do I help my fellow man? How do I stay humble and use all of these gifts?

“The Augustinians are humble men who live their lives for all of us and they are not the kind of guys like us, who are competitive and out there promoting themselves. They are out there living for everyone and making everyone’s life better.

“We all get hit with a lot of charities, and they are all great... but one of them that we can really define and keep committed to in a strong way is the Augustinian Fund. If you think about all of the Augustinians who have impacted our lives, whether it’s our weddings, our Baptisms or whatever...we can help. We can help the older infirmed Augustinians, we can help Vocations, we can help all the missions around the world...it’s something unique that we all can do.

“Patty and I, our thing is the ESPN Infiniti Coaches Challenge. It’s our way of bringing some corporate help to the Augustinians. You are the people that can put the message out there. And on behalf of all of us at Villanova, who get to be impacted by the Augustinians every day, thank you.”

For more information on the event and Mr. Gheysen’s remarks see page 28.



Visit the new Augustinian Advancement Website at:  
*AugustinianFund.org*

### Infiniti Coaches' Challenge



Starting Monday, January 4, 2016 - Help Jay Wright win \$100,000 for the Augustinian Fund. Join us for the Infiniti Challenge and vote for Coach Wright at [www.espn.com/infiniti](http://www.espn.com/infiniti). Once again, Coach Wright has chosen the Augustinian Fund as his charity which supports the key missions and programs of the Augustinian friars of The Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova. There are four rounds of voting and the coaches receiving the most votes will continue on, and the winning coach will receive \$100,000 toward his charity (each coach will get at least \$1,000 for his favorite cause). So stay tuned for details and get ready to VOTE!

Learn about special ways to give:

Make a gift to the Augustinian Fund to support our five key ministries...

Donate online at [WWW.AUGUSTINIANFUND.ORG/DONATE](http://WWW.AUGUSTINIANFUND.ORG/DONATE)



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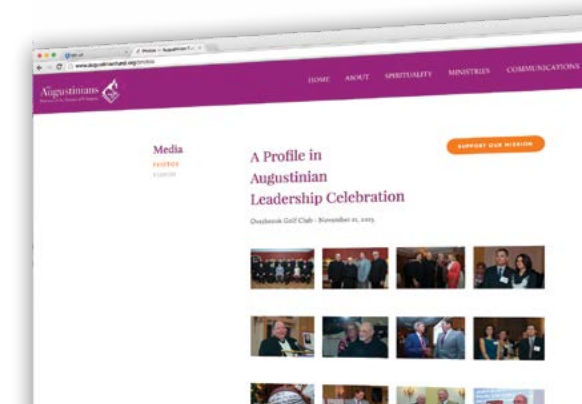


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For more information, contact Madonna Sutter, Director of Advancement at [madonna.sutter@augustinian.org](mailto:madonna.sutter@augustinian.org) or 610-527-3330, ext. 265