

THE YEAR *of*  
CONSECRATED LIFE  
ORIGINS OF THE ORDER

VOLUME X . ISSUE I

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# THE AUGUSTINIAN

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CALL TO ORDER p. 12

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# WWW.AUGUSTINIAN.ORG HAS A NEW LOOK!



## OUR NEW WEBSITE PACKS NEW FEATURES INCLUDING OUR NEW HOMEPAGE WITH:

- + A slideshow with top news and video.
- + “This Day in Province History” a new feature created and written by the Prior Provincial, Michael Di Gregorio.
- + Scroll down on the home page to see “Featured Quicklinks”—visual links to our most popular pages.

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- + Latest News
- + “Meet Our Friars”
- + Augustinian Saints

Plus you’ll find the same informative and helpful content you’ve come to rely upon.

If you receive Newsnotes, you’ll receive E-News from us with the latest news and events and videos. If not, you can sign up online.



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to George P. Lawless, O.S.A.; John J. Sheridan, O.S.A., (Archivist) and June Weiland (Assistant Archivist), Augustinian Provincial Archives at Saint Thomas of Villanova Monastery. **Chronology**, years 370 and 372, map *Territorial Expansion of Rome* by Velhagen & Klafing, from the William Shepherd Historical Atlas, 1911, courtesy of the University of Texas and Paul Rascoe. **Images on page 5 and Chronology**, years 354, 383, 384, 395, 412 and 430 by Benozzo Gozzoli, courtesy of Brian S. Lowery, O.S.A., San Gimignano, Italy; **Chronology**, years 386, 387, 387 (page 8), 397 (page 10) and **Back Cover** by Tito Troja, located at Old St. Augustine Church, Philadelphia, Pa. Photo and digital restoration by Daniel J. McLaughlin, O.S.A. **Chronology**, year 426, Carlo Crivelli.

## Main Reference Books:

*Confessions*, by Saint Augustine; *The Augustinians (1244 - 1994) Our History in Pictures*, 1995  
 Publicazione Agostiniana; *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, General Editor, Allan D. Fitzgerald, O.S.A.; *Saint AUGUSTINE*, Edited by Tarsicius J. Van Bavel, O.S.A.

## ON THE COVER

Philippe de Champaigne (1602-1674)  
*Saint Augustine*, circa 1645-1650  
 Painting, Oil on canvas, 31 1/8 x 24 5/8 in.  
 Los Angeles County Museum of Art  
 Gift of The Ahmanson Foundation

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### Saint Augustine

Augustine was born some 400 years after his homeland in Western North Africa had become an integral part of the Roman Empire. His ancestral heritage, his religious background and the cities where he lived were awash with paganism, Catholicism, Catholic schisms and a variety of religious groups and cults. George P. Lawless, O.S.A., an internationally known scholar and expert on Saint Augustine, spoke on Augustine’s life at a lecture at Villanova University in 2011, and it is reprised here. Father George has a fluency and familiarity with Augustine that gives us a rare, down-to-earth glimpse of Augustine’s journey from doubt to certitude. A chronology is offered to illustrate Augustine’s life.

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### The Order of Saint Augustine

The Order of Saint Augustine was formed in 1244, more than 800 years after the death of Saint Augustine. Father Michael F. Di Gregorio, O.S.A., Prior Provincial of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova, describes early monasticism of communities of hermits in Tuscany and their call from Pope Innocent IV to unite into a single religious order, following the Rule and the life of Saint Augustine.

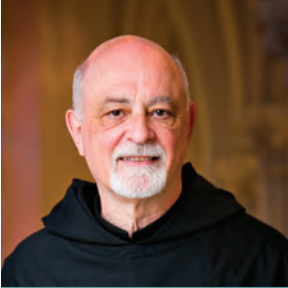
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### Father Bill Atkinson—Taking Up the Cause

The Augustinian Postulator General, Josef Sciberras, O.S.A., came to the Saint Thomas of Villanova Monastery in August, 2014 to determine if there was a basis to take up the cause of sainthood. *Spoiler alert:* Father Bill’s Cause is underway and you are invited to share remembrances, testimonies or notice of favors received through Father Bill.

## THE AUGUSTINIAN

A publication of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova.



# LETTER FROM THE PRIOR PROVINCIAL

## Dear Friends,

Spring's arrival, following what seemed a very long and hard winter for many, was most welcome! I greet each of you with a sincere wish for enjoyable seasons of light and rebirth.

As you read this message, we will already have passed the six-month mark in the Year of Consecrated Life initiated by Pope Francis in November, 2014. Many of you will have become increasingly acquainted with this special observance which the entire Church is celebrating, and which religious communities, in particular, are commemorating in various ways. We Augustinians have been doing so through special days of recollection, community discussions, and regional gatherings of friars, and we will continue our observance at our Province Retreat in June, as well as at a special gathering at Villanova in August. I ask you kindly, on behalf of all our friars, to keep us in your prayers as these events unfold.

We wish to draw you more closely into what this year means for us, and so much of the content which you will find in this current issue of our magazine treats of this theme. We want to speak of what our particular form of consecrated life is, how and where it developed, and what it means for us to call ourselves, and to strive to be, continually and authentically, Augustinians. It is very fortunate that we are able to do this at the very same time that we announce a significant initiative in the life of our Province, the preparatory steps in the beatification process of one of our friars, Father William Atkinson, in the 50th anniversary year of a life-changing event in his Augustinian journey. The testimony of a single friar can be the best announcement of what consecrated life is all about!

In this issue, I am very happy to introduce the new Director of Advancement for the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova. Madonna Sutter, about whom you will read in these pages, joins our administrative staff, bringing a great deal of professional experience, knowledge of the Augustinian spirit, and great enthusiasm in her new role. A significant dimension of consecrated life is tied to the theme of advancement: advancement of our mission, advancement of our values, advancement of the many things that make our life and ministry possible. We thank you for the many ways in which you, our friends and benefactors, are participants with us.

Lastly, we present herein, snippets from the life and work of several of our friars and candidates, who demonstrate, in various ways, our spirituality, our ministries, our role in the Church and in society. Among them are four of our most recently deceased confreres, friars who made great contributions to our Province and to the Order, and whose memory endures, in sentiments of gratitude and affection, in the hearts of so many people whose lives they touched and enriched. As you read a portion of their stories, I ask you to pray for them, giving thanks for their lives and for the good they have done.

Wishing you an abundance of God's blessings, and a grateful awareness of them!

In Augustine,

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

## THE AUGUSTINIAN

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MAP OF NUMIDIA

# SAINT AUGUSTINE: HOMETLAND

BY TEDDIE GALLAGHER

The cultural development of Saint Augustine's homeland of Western North Africa began between 8,000 and 2,000 B.C., when the indigenous people of Western North Africa (now known as Berbers) developed connections with the people in other regions of the Mediterranean Sea and western Europe. The desertification of the Sahara was a gradual change occurring between 2000 to 1000 B.C. and separated the people of the north from the south. The people of Western North Africa spoke their own language (known as Berber), which for centuries was a spoken language without a written alphabet. This oral language was traditionally taught by the mother to her children.

Around 1100 B.C., the Phoenicians, who were a confederation of sea merchants and traders from the eastern coast of the Mediterranean known as Phoenicia (modern-day Lebanon), established colonies on the coast of western North Africa in what is now Tunisia. Their language, known as Punic, is a Canaanite language of the Semitic family and its alphabet is one of the earliest on record. In 814 B.C., Phoenician colonists established the ancient city of Carthage on the coast of modern day Tunisia. By 500 B.C. Carthage was a cosmopolitan center of commerce, culture, and the arts, with its port sending products all around the western Mediterranean.

The Roman territory of Italy began its first war against Carthage, known as the

First Punic War, at sea in 264 B.C. and finally conquered Carthage in 133 B.C. Thagaste, where Augustine was born, and the area surrounding it, then called Numidia, became a Roman territory in 44 B.C.

At the time of Augustine's birth, his homeland in Western North Africa (now Algeria) had been dominated by the Romans for almost 400 years. Western North African settlements with fertile land prospered, as the region became the



THE EARLIEST IMAGE WIDELY ACCEPTED TO BE SAINT AUGUSTINE IS A FRESCO, DATED FROM THE MID-SIXTH CENTURY, FOUND AS A RESULT OF THE EXCAVATIONS BENEATH THE SANCTA SANCTORUM OF THE ARCHBASILICA OF SAINT JOHN LATERAN IN ROME.

“granary of the Empire,” shipping grains, fruit and beans to Italy and Greece. The burgeoning empire used mainly Africans for their military and civic presence. There had even been an African Roman Emperor, Septimus Severus, who ruled from 193 to 200 A.D.

It is commonly thought that Saint Monica, Augustine's mother, was a Berber and that his father, Patricius, a Roman *curialis* of Thagaste, was Latin and Phoenician, but this is not able to be confirmed. Many of the African Berbers converted to Christianity in the second and third centuries. Latin was the official language, but the people of Algeria and Carthage (Tunisia) continued to speak Berber and Punic, with some speaking a mix of Berber and Punic. Dialects of Berber are still spoken by people in Western North Africa and other countries around the world.

The Berbers and Phoenicians are members of the Caucasian race classification, which includes Aryan (Indo-European), Semitic (Semitic Languages) and Hamitic (Berber-Cushitic-Egyptian) subclasses. There has been speculation that Saint Augustine had dark skin and this may or may not be true, because there a wide range of skin colors in the subclasses of the Caucasian race and because there are no known images of Saint Augustine.

# SAINT AUGUSTINE

FROM DOUBT TO CERTITUDE

VERITAS



CHRONOLOGY

354 A.D.

AURELIUS AUGUSTINE IS BORN IN THAGASTE, NORTH AFRICA (NOW SOUK AHRAS IN ALGERIA) TO MONICA, A CATHOLIC AND PATRICIUS, A PAGAN WHO IS A ROMAN OFFICIAL (CURIALIS OF THAGASTE). AUGUSTINE HAS A BROTHER NAVIGIUS AND A SISTER, WHOSE NAME IS UNRECORDED. THAGASTE, SITUATED IN THE NORTH-EAST HIGHLANDS OF NUMIDIA, HELD NATURAL HABITATS FOR LIONS AND PANTHERS, CAPTURED AND SOLD FOR ROMAN AMPHITHEATER GAMES.

359 A.D.

AUGUSTINE ATTENDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN THAGASTE (NOW SOUK AHRAS) AND HIGH SCHOOL IN MADAURA (NOW M'DAOUROUCH, ALGERIA), 15 MILES SOUTH OF THAGASTE.

354-359 A.D.



372-373 A.D.

WHILE IN CARTHAGE, AUGUSTINE BECOMES AN ADHERENT OF THE MANICHAEAN RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT INSPIRED BY REVELATIONS RECEIVED BY A MAN WHO CALLED HIMSELF MANI. BORN IN 216 A.D. IN BABYLONIA, MANI WAS EXECUTED FOR HIS RELIGIOUS BELIEFS BY BAHRAM I, IN 277 A.D.

373 A.D.

AUGUSTINE RETURNS TO THAGASTE TO TEACH RHETORIC.

376 A.D.

AUGUSTINE RETURNS TO CARTHAGE TO TEACH RHETORIC.

372-376 A.D.



370-372 A.D.

370-371 A.D.

AUGUSTINE RETURNS TO THAGASTE FOR A YEAR, AS HIS PARENTS ATTEMPT TO GAIN THE MEANS TO FURTHER HIS EDUCATION. HIS FATHER, WHO HAS CONVERTED TO CHRISTIANITY, DIES UNEXPECTEDLY. A WEALTHY LANDOWNER HELPS THE FAMILY SEND AUGUSTINE TO CARTHAGE FOR FURTHER STUDIES.

371-372 A.D.

AS MARRIAGE BETWEEN CLASSES IS STRICTLY REGULATED BY ROMAN LAW, AUGUSTINE, A ROMAN CITIZEN, ENTERS INTO A MONOGAMOUS CONCUBINAGE RELATIONSHIP WITH A WOMAN OF A LOWER CLASS STATUS. A SON, ADEODATUS, IS BORN IN CARTHAGE TO AUGUSTINE AND HIS PARTNER.



by George P. Lawless, O.S.A.

A public lecture delivered by Father Lawless at Villanova University on November 29, 2011.



Sixteen centuries ago, during the Easter Vigil, 24-25 April 387, a thirty-three year old Roman from the province of Numidia in North Africa was baptized by Ambrose, bishop of Milan in the north of Italy. That decision to seek baptism together with his son, Adeodatus, and his friend Alypius, was to have incalculable consequences for the Christian Churches and for all of western civilization. That convert to Catholic Christianity was Aurelius Augustine.

Augustine was born November 13, 354, at Thagaste (now Souk Ahras) in modern Algeria. Situated some sixty miles inland from the Mediterranean Sea on one of three overland routes connecting the seacoast of Hippo (Modern Annaba) and Carthage, the backwater town of Thagaste featured little more than a hotel for travelers. With only an elementary school available to him in his hometown, Augustine, a serious but by no means exceptional student, attended high school at Madaura some twenty miles distant from Thagaste.

As a teenager, he associated with a group of teenagers who were called "Wreckers."

While he deplored their destruction of property, still he enjoyed their company in much the same way that he reveled in the company of other adolescent friends, when together they heedlessly stole pears from an orchard in an incident made famous from his *Confessions*. Augustine was no different from other boys from school, and he had an intense dislike for the study of Greek. However, the fact that he went to high school at all set him apart from many of his peers at Thagaste.

When he completed high school at fifteen years of age, Augustine returned home. As he was preparing to leave for advanced studies in philosophy and rhetoric at the end of the year, his father died. Patrick, the father of Augustine, was a man who lived all his life as a pagan and was converted to Christianity only shortly before his death. This significant loss happened at the very time that Augustine was experiencing a year of youthful idleness while his parents were scraping together enough money to advance still further their son's education. Now widowed and with three children, Monica the mother



## 384-386 A.D.

**384 A.D.**  
(FALL) AUGUSTINE IS APPOINTED OFFICIAL ORATOR IN MILAN.

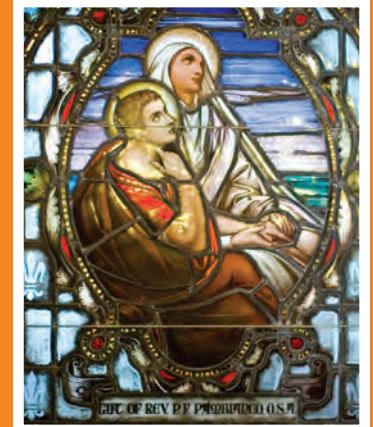
**385 A.D.**  
MONICA JOINS AUGUSTINE IN MILAN. AUGUSTINE VISITS THE BISHOP OF MILAN, AMBROSE, AND ATTENDS SUNDAY WORSHIP TO HEAR THE FAMED PREACHER.

**386 A.D.**  
MONICA ARRANGES A LEGALLY AND SOCIABLY SUITABLE MARRIAGE FOR HER SON. AUGUSTINE'S PARTNER, THE MOTHER OF ADEODATUS, RETURNS TO NORTH AFRICA ALONE. ADEODATUS REMAINS WITH HIS FATHER.



## 387 A.D.

**387 A.D.**  
AUGUSTINE, HIS SON ADEODATUS AND HIS FRIEND ALYPIUS ARE BAPTIZED ON APRIL 24 ON THE EVE OF EASTER IN MILAN BY BISHOP AMBROSE IN THE CATHEDRAL OF MILAN.



## 383-384 A.D.

**383-384 A.D.**  
AUGUSTINE, WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS, SETS SAIL TO ROME WHERE HE WILL TEACH, KNOWINGLY LEAVING HIS MOTHER BEHIND PRAYING IN A CHAPEL. MONICA RETURNS TO THAGASTE.



## 386 A.D.

**386 A.D.**  
AUGUSTINE HAS A GREAT MOMENT OF CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY IN THE GARDEN OF HIS RESIDENCE IN MILAN.



## 387 A.D.

**387 A.D.**  
AUGUSTINE LEAVES MILAN AND GOES TO THE PORT OF OSTIA TO RETURN TO NORTH AFRICA, BUT IS DELAYED FOR ALMOST TWO YEARS WHILE THE PORT IS CLOSED BY A BLOCKADE. DURING THIS TIME, AUGUSTINE AND MONICA EXPERIENCE A COMMON MYSTICAL MOMENT WHEN THEY TALK ABOUT DIVINE WISDOM. DESCRIBING THE MOMENT AUGUSTINE SAID: "WE DID FOR ONE INSTANT TOUCH IT..." (CONFESSIONS 9.10.23-25).

of Augustine, was singularly fortunate to have the help of a wealthy landowner and resident of Thagaste who was willing to provide the necessary financial support for his education at Carthage, a city some 170 miles away from home.

Ancient Carthage was notorious as a sizzling frying-pan for illicit loves, so much so that the Latin word play *Carthago*, Carthage, and *sartago* cauldron, in Augustine's *Confessions* prompted T.S. Eliot's poetic version of this youthful adventure: "To Carthage I came, burning, burning, burning, burning." Paganism had, indeed, been a powerful force at Madaura where Augustine spent his high school years and again at Carthage where he continued his formal education.

Having become the father of a son born out of wedlock at seventeen years of age, Augustine now settled into cohabitation with the mother of his son Adeodatus, a name which means "gift of God." When Augustine was eighteen years of age, he read *Hortensius* by Cicero which he afterwards described as a book that "altered my outlook on life" (*Confessions*, 3,4,7).

Near the end of his pursuit of philosophy and rhetoric at Carthage, Augustine joined an oriental religious sect called Manichaeism, to which he gave his allegiance for at least the next nine years of his young life.

When Augustine returned to his birthplace after the completion of advanced studies, his mother barred him from the house. Monica made more strenuous objection to her son's adherence to Manichaeism than to his cohabitation with a woman. With his proselytizing temperament, Augustine had already made converts to the Manichaean religion and told even his staunchly Christian mother that some day she too would become a Manichee. After having opened a school, Augustine found the environs of his native Thagaste too confining for his present ambitions. Even more distressing to him was the unexpected death of an intimate young friend; Augustine was disconsolate. Both of these circumstances in his life prompted him to leave his hometown rather hurriedly.

Augustine returned to Carthage. There at little more than twenty years of age, he

read *The Categories of Aristotle*, a book on logic which helped shape the orderliness of his mind. There followed a gradual disenchantment with the Manichaean religion, but its ardent devotees prevailed upon their co-religionist to persevere. Their most distinguished teacher, Faustus, they promised, would eventually come to Carthage and respond to Augustine's many questions. Faustus finally came, but his torrent of words was all fantasy and fable. Augustine's disillusionment increased. To make matters worse, the students at Carthage proved to be reckless and disorderly with the result that Augustine's level of job satisfaction as a teacher was pitifully low. Putting all these considerations together, Augustine determined to seek new horizons. It was only the cruel trick of deliberately deceiving his mother and leaving her praying for him patiently in a local chapel that enabled Augustine to sail for Rome with his partner and their son. Monica went home alone. Augustine tells us: "I went to Rome."

### A YOUNG URBAN PROFESSIONAL

Dissatisfied with the failure of Faustus to make a strong case for Manichaeism, Augustine shortly thereafter despaired of finding the truth. He became a skeptic. Augustine started teaching again and soon discovered that Roman students refused to pay tuition and fees. Eventually, through the influence of Symmachus, the Prefect of Rome, his own merits as a teacher and the important fact that he was not a Catholic Christian, Augustine secured for himself the prestigious post of Public Orator at Milan. This ambitious young man from a middle-class provincial family in far-off Africa had now become an upper-class urban professional who would surely catch the eye of the Imperial Court.

Milan was a highly cosmopolitan city. Its sophisticated residents made fun of Augustine with his rustic North African accent. Not long after his arrival, Augustine visited the urbane and learned bishop of Milan, Ambrose, but the encounter had the nature of a courtesy call. More importantly, the meeting prompted Augustine to attend Sunday worship for

the sake of savoring the eloquence of the famous preacher. Although first attracted by Ambrose's delivery of the gospel, it was not long before Augustine showed interest in the gospel of delivery. He became less critical of the Bible with its confusing contents and its inelegant style. Gradually he became open to receive its message. At the same time, through his interest in philosophy, he attached himself to an established circle of people who were conversant with the Christian religion and Greek Philosophers, notably Plato, Plotinus and Porphyry.

The story of the conversion to Christianity of Marius Victorinus had a profound effect upon Augustine because he was, like himself, a noted and respected rhetorician. Indeed his first-hand account with many people of keen mind, for whom faith and reason were certainly compatible, slowly convinced Augustine that Catholic Christianity was, after all, intellectually respectable. In the meantime, some of the writings of the Platonists put him in touch with what was deepest in himself, his own ability to conceive of the "world within,"

that crucial link with the interior realm of the spiritual and the immaterial.

Monica, meanwhile, had joined her son shortly after his arrival in Milan. With her intrusive manner she apparently wasted no time arranging a suitable marriage for her son. As a result, Augustine's unnamed mother of Adeodatus was summarily dismissed and returned to North Africa. Augustine withheld her name from posterity, undoubtedly out of personal respect for her, but also for the obvious reason that his *Confessions* were widely circulated during his lifetime as Bishop of Hippo. From the beginning, both parties were aware that their liaison was destined to be ephemeral. This is why "mistress" is conceivably an ill-suited word for depicting Augustine's lover, his companion for more than a decade, and the mother of their son. There is no doubt in my mind that, in the long run, many years of living with this woman gave rise to some of Augustine's mature and enlightened reflections on love and friendship, trust, human affectivity and fidelity in marriage.



**388 A.D.**  
AUGUSTINE SAILS TO NORTH AFRICA AND GOES TO THAGASTE WHERE HE FOUNDS A LAY COMMUNITY.

**389 A.D.**  
ADEODATUS, SON OF AUGUSTINE, DIES IN THAGASTE.

**391 A.D.**  
AUGUSTINE IS ORDAINED A PRIEST IN HIPPO. BELOW ARE THE EXCAVATIONS OF BASILICA PACIS, IN HIPPO, WHERE AUGUSTINE EXERCISED HIS MINISTRIES.

## 388-391 A.D.



**397 A.D.**  
AUGUSTINE WRITES THE *RULE* AT THE REQUEST OF MONKS IN THE HIPPO MONASTERY WHEN HE MOVES FROM THERE TO THE BISHOP'S HOUSE. THE *RULE* WAS ALSO ADAPTED FOR MONASTERIES OF WOMEN.

## 397 A.D.

## 387 A.D.

**387 A.D.**  
NINE DAYS LATER MONICA DIES AND IS BURIED IN OSTIA. IN 1430, MONICA'S BODY IS TAKEN TO THE BASILICA DI SANT'AGOSTINO IN ROME.



## 395-397 A.D.

**395-397 A.D.**  
AUGUSTINE SUCCEEDS VALERIUS AS BISHOP OF HIPPO AND FOUNDS A MONASTERY FOR CLERICS IN HIPPO. HE BEGINS WRITING *THE CONFESSIONS*.



Augustine then became formally engaged to a young girl who was two years below the legal age for marriage. While he agreed to the terms of this legally and socially acceptable union, he took up with another woman to satisfy his sexual needs. In a sensate culture which greatly resembled our own, Augustine described himself as a man who was “hot for honors, money and marriage” (*Confessions*, 6, 6. 9).

Be that as it may, we ought not to overstress or exaggerate the sinfulness of Augustine's youth and middle years. Very likely the stable relationship which he cultivated

with the unnamed woman whom he loved contrasted significantly with other liaisons with little or no permanence. By remaining faithful to this woman for upwards of thirteen years, Augustine's behavior contrasted sharply with the marital

infidelity of this father. Also, he deeply loved both the woman and the boy. Her callous dismissal can be explained partially by the fact that the late Roman caste system discouraged people of different social status from marrying. There is in fact evidence to indicate that the Catholic Church countenanced such an informal liaison. ([Council of Toledo (400 A.D.)

Canon 17]; c.f. also Augustine, *The Good Marriage*, 5,5.) Neither Monica nor Augustine give a good account of themselves in the preemptory dismissal of Augustine's partner.

It was a period of strain both financially and professionally. While Augustine had friends in high places and they were good to him, the hard fact remained: he needed money and he needed a wife who had some. What then did Augustine do next?

He did what could not be predicted and what could not be explained. He resigned his teaching position, and he did it as abruptly as Monica had dismissed the mother of Adeodatus and sent her packing to North Africa. Except for some private tutoring, Augustine was out of work, having resigned his teaching position near the end of the school term.

What can we say about this uncharacteristic behavior? Not much with certainty, except to remark that Augustine appeared to be on the verge of a total rearrangement of his life. Augustine also manifested the symptoms of what we would today describe as a “nervous breakdown.” The facts of his life make it clear that the allurements of wealth and power, the possible governorship of a Roman province and prestige had lost their luster. Sex was the last stronghold to imprison Augustine as his erotic needs held out until the final stage of his conversion. The raging desires inside him were surely reflected in his prayer: “Grant me chastity and self-control, but please not yet” (*Confessions*, 8, 7, 17).

Augustine was determined to marry. In this matter, Monica was even more determined than he. In her mind, marriage was the only possible way for her son to live the Christian ideal. Augustine remained unsettled about the question of marriage. Although marriage might lead to wealth and power, it did not promise to satisfy his desire for wisdom. Perhaps, instead, it might lead him astray.

On this very question, Augustine engaged in earnest discussion with Alypius, his life-long friend. For those serious in the pursuit of wisdom, Alypius argues clearly and definitively in favor of the need for celibacy. Augustine was not so sure. At any rate, Augustine's journey toward wisdom, begun with the reading of Cicero, had met with disappointment in the Bible, had been sidetracked with the Manichees and seemed to be far from having reached its end in the dry abstractions of philosophy. This ever-burning desire for wisdom was not, apparently, sufficient explanation for the dramatic turn of events in his life.

### TWO STORIES OF CONVERSION

Two things happened that nudged Augustine closer to the moment of conversion. The first was a simple story that provoked his thoughts. The second was an experience so mysterious and so profound that Augustine himself found it difficult to describe in his *Confessions* some ten years later.

The simple story of conversion came to Augustine's attention during the visit of another North African named Pontician, who happened to notice that Augustine owned a copy of the epistles of St. Paul. This prompted Pontician to relate the story of two public officials who had found themselves in a dilemma much like that of Augustine. Young and ambitious and engaged to be married, they were in steady pursuit of those pleasures that the world offered to them. Yet these two government employees were so deeply affected by the invitation of Matthew's gospel (19:21) to sell all and give to the poor that they abandoned their possessions, gave up their careers in the imperial

service, and determined to follow Christ in a life of poverty. So enthusiastic was their conversion that they inspired their fiancées to follow their example and to enter a monastery for women.

The impact of this story forced Augustine to reflect upon his own life, as he tells us in *Confessions*: “Pontician told us this story and as he spoke, you, O Lord, turned me back upon myself. You took me from behind my own back where I had placed myself because I did not wish to look upon myself” (8,7,16).

The second episode is more difficult to grasp. Here readers of the *Confessions* may wish that its author had been less artistic in the telling. Some scholars actually dismiss the event as though it were a literary fiction. Augustine heard the voice, “as if” he says, of a boy or girl chanting a repetitious refrain: “Pick it up and read, pick it up and read.” (*Confessions* 8,12,29). Obediently he hurries to the spot in the garden where Alypius was sitting. There he snatched the epistles of Saint Paul, opened the volume and read the first text that met his eyes. It was Romans 13: 13-14. “No



**412 A.D.**  
AUGUSTINE BEGINS WRITING *CITY OF GOD*.

**413 A.D.**  
THE FIRST CHAPTERS OF *CITY OF GOD* ARE PUBLISHED.

## 412-413 A.D.



**430 A.D.**  
AUGUST 28, DEATH AND BURIAL OF AUGUSTINE.

## 430 A.D.



## 397-411 A.D.

**397 A.D.**  
PREACHES AT CARTHAGE DURING THE SUMMER AND PARTICIPATES IN THE COUNCILS OF CARTHAGE.

**411 A.D.**  
PARTICIPATES IN COLLATIO OF 411, A CONFERENCE SET TO RESOLVE THE INTENSE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE DONATISTS AND THE CATHOLICS. AUGUSTINE HAD LONG BEEN AGAINST THE DONATISTS, WHO CONSIDERED SACRAMENTS PERFORMED BY PRIESTS WHO BETRAYED THE CHURCH DURING TIMES OF ROMAN PERSECUTION NULL OR INVALID. AUGUSTINE OPPOSED THE MOVEMENT, BELIEVING SACRAMENTS WERE INSTITUTED BY CHRIST, NOT MAN. THIS CONFERENCE WAS RESOLVED IN FAVOR OF THE CATHOLICS.



## 426 A.D.

**426 A.D.**  
AUGUSTINE LEAVES HIPPO IN THE WINTER FOR HIS HEALTH; BEGINS *RETRACTATIONES*.



## 720-1337 A.D.

**720 A.D.**  
THE YEAR THOUGHT TO BE WHEN THE REMAINS OF AUGUSTINE ARE PLACED IN THE CRYPT OF THE CHURCH OF SAN PIETRO IN CIEL D'ORO, (SAINT PETER OF THE GOLDEN CEILING), IN PAVIA, ITALY.

**1337 A.D.**  
ON JANUARY 30, 1327, POPE JOHN XXII, GRANTS THE ORDER OF SAINT AUGUSTINE A HOUSE ALONGSIDE AUGUSTINE'S TOMB AFFIRMING ORDER'S SPECIAL BOND WITH ITS SPIRITUAL HEAD.

reveling or drunkenness, no debauchery or vice, no quarrels or jealousies! Rather put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the desires of the flesh.” This is a powerful message for any reader of the Bible. It gets right to the heart of Christian life. Why did it come to Augustine at this time? How did it affect him? Augustine shares this great moment of conversion with us in his *Confessions*:

*I had no wish to read further, and no need. For in that instant with the very ending of the sentence, it was as though a light of utter confidence shone in all my heart and the darkness of uncertainty vanished. For you had converted me to yourself, so I would seek not ambition in this world (8, 12, 29-30).* (Translation John J. O'Meara).

### EVERY DOUBT CONTAINS SOME CERTITUDE

By this time Neoplatonic philosophy had laid the axe forever to the roots of Augustine's materialism by instructing him that God exists beyond matter and that

God alone endows the human soul with some remarkable powers. He also came to realize that the Manichees made a mockery of human freedom by insisting that all human activity was the net result of mechanical forces warring against each other. His persistent fascination with astrology finally succumbed to the conviction that the fault lies not in our stars, but inside ourselves. His distaste for the Bible was diminishing, thanks to the preaching of Ambrose, which presented new and challenging insights into the meaning of God's words. The conflicting genealogies of Jesus as they were recorded into the gospels and so often ridiculed by the Manichees no

*The more he examined the puzzle and the more he searched the riddle that was himself, the more he felt a presence of God who was within him—“Yet all the time you were more inward than my inmost self...” (Confessions, 3, 6, 11)—“All the while I was outside, you were inside” (Confessions, 10, 27, 38).*

longer confused him. By urging him to read the prophet Isaiah, Ambrose unlocked the riches of the Old Testament and Augustine, for the first time, could grasp the legitimacy of referring to God as “mother,” “nurse,” “a mother-bird with her fledglings.” For Augustine, to apply human qualities to God, whether masculine or feminine, had been, in an earlier day, rank heresy. Augustine will later observe: “It is better to be a cripple limping along to God than a champion athlete on the wrong track” (Sermon 169.15). At this stage of his life, he had travelled far enough along the road of this restless journey to discover that materialism, skepticism, rationalism

and a self-centered psychologism were indeed all the wrong tracks.

It had been no easy path for Augustine to travel from doubt to certitude, from ignorance about God to his burning desire to possess God. But all along the way he found that every doubt contains some certitude. The one who doubts is at least certain of being alive and doubting. Without mystery, reason and intelligence offer no exit. The mystery of faith in God and the actuality of human freedom offer exits everywhere. Psychology that bends us back solely upon ourselves soon becomes mired in the pool of Narcissus. Religious faith that turns us towards God gives us the freedom of full, human life. This is how Augustine grew in his understanding of God and the mystery of human iniquity. “I created a human being, not avarice; I created a human being, not highway robbery; I created a human being, not marital infidelity” (Homily 3,9 On the First Letter of John).

When he searched within himself to assess the condition of his own soul,

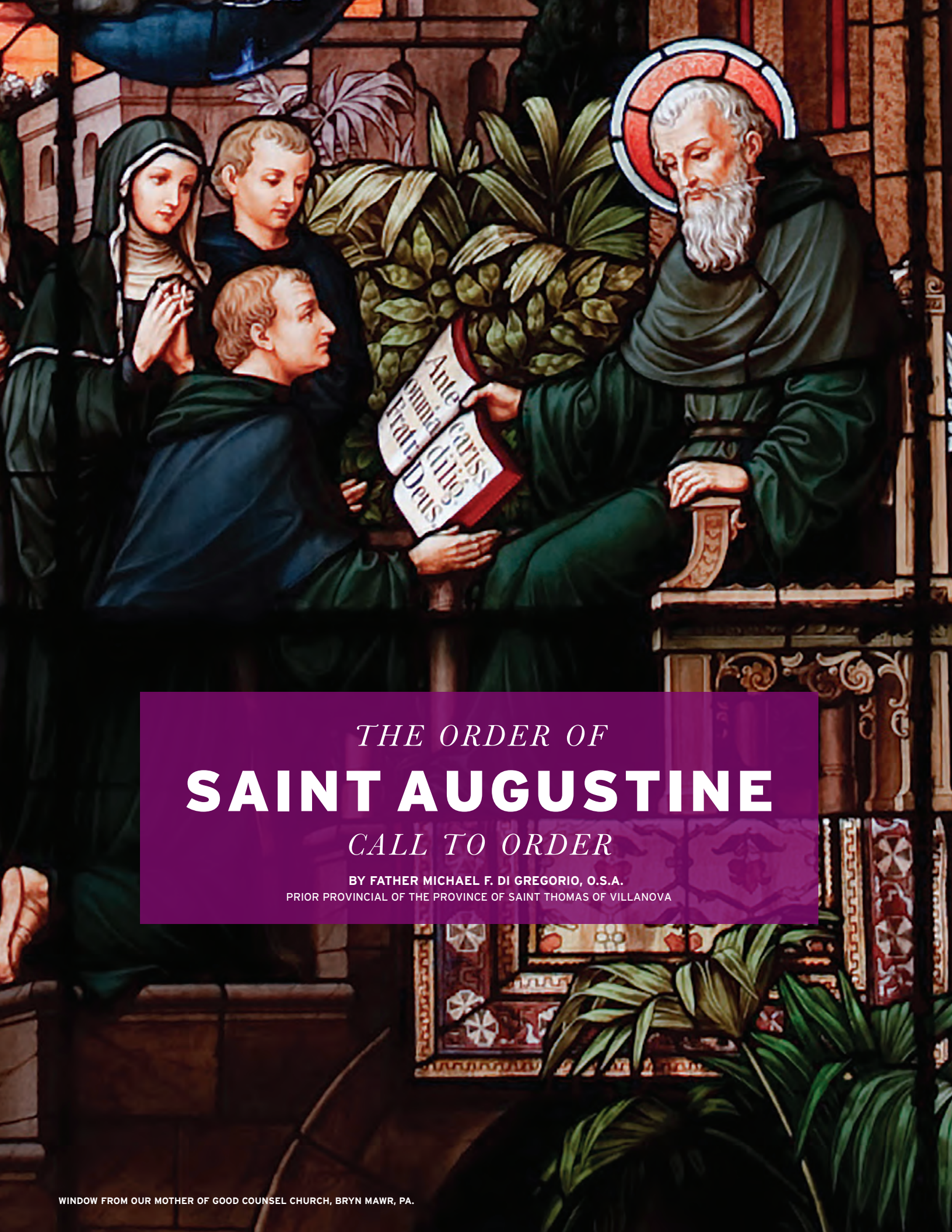
Augustine exclaimed, “I have become an enigma to myself” (*Confessions*, 10, 33, 50). Turning within himself and being intent solely upon himself, he had found nothing but doubt and confusion. This sense of emptiness inside led Augustine to cry out for God and for himself: “But where was I when I looked for you?...I could not find myself, much less you” (*Confessions*, 5,2,2). Acceptance of mystery in human existence gave Augustine his first solid step in this understanding of God. The more he examined the puzzle and the more he searched the riddle that was himself, the more he felt a presence of God who was within him—“Yet all the time you were more inward than my inmost self...”



**George P. Lawless, O.S.A.**, is an international scholar and interpreter of the writings of Augustine. Author of *Augustine of Hippo* and *His Monastic Rule*, Father George received his doctorate from the *Angelicum*, Rome.

(*Confessions*, 3, 6, 11)—“All the while I was outside, you were inside” (*Confessions*, 10, 27, 38).

Augustine never thought of himself as a saint; that we should regard him as a saint would indeed surprise him. When surrendered to God, his love for eloquence loosened his tongue in praise of God. When surrendered to God, his intellectual sharpness earned him greater eloquence and the understanding of profundities. When surrendered to God, his unquiet and restless heart became quiet and found rest in the silent mysterious presence of God that was always deep inside him. †



THE ORDER OF  
**SAINT AUGUSTINE**  
CALL TO ORDER

BY FATHER MICHAEL F. DI GREGORIO, O.S.A.  
PRIOR PROVINCIAL OF THE PROVINCE OF SAINT THOMAS OF VILLANOVA

The beginnings of the Order of Saint Augustine reveal a fascinating partnership of divine grace and human effort. The former is manifest especially in the example of holy lives; the latter in the practical decisions of gifted individuals. While the official date of the Order's founding is March, 1244, the circumstances that gave rise to this appointment in time take us back even earlier.

The latter years of the twelfth century saw a phenomenal stirring of lay spirituality which became manifest in various ways. Among these was the emergence of a vibrant eremitical movement, wherein men and women devoted to poverty, prayer, and the pursuit of Gospel values, chose a life marked by withdrawal from the affairs of society. At times, individuals went off into remote areas alone to pursue a secluded life; in other instances they banded together in small groups and withdrew to out of the way places. In some cases individual hermits attracted like-minded followers, such that communities of fervent Christian ascetics grew up around them. Such was the case with two individuals who, in different parts of the Italian peninsula, unknowingly became architects of the future Augustinian Order. One was John Bono, a native of Mantova, who was born about 1168. After pursuing a rather carefree existence until the age of forty, he was struck by an illness that caused him to reconsider his lifestyle, and upon recovering, he devoted himself to penance and prayer in the region of Romagna. In a short time, his example attracted others who became his disciples. In 1225, this community decided to become more formally established in the Church, and so adopted the *Rule of Saint Augustine* as a guide for their life. Within a short time they expanded rapidly across northern Italy and, though most were laymen, began to engage in preaching and pastoral care, which was not altogether unusual for non-clerics at the time.

A somewhat similar situation had developed even earlier in the region of Grosseto in Tuscany, where a Frenchman known as William of Malavalle, having undergone a religious conversion, settled down to pursue a life of prayer and penance. Sometime before his death in

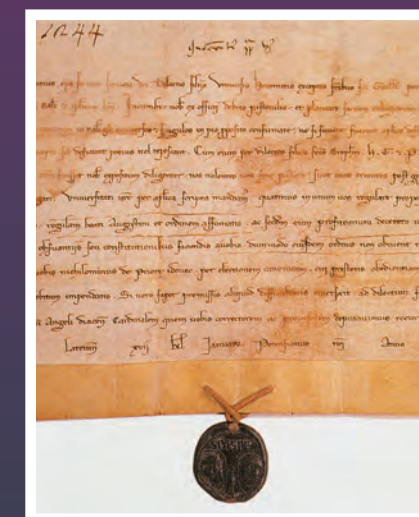
February, 1157, he was accompanied by a disciple, who cared for him during his final months, and after his death, wrote a summary of William's sayings that became known as *The Rule of Saint William*. The burial site of this penitent ascetic became a destination for pilgrims traveling through Tuscany, and some settled there in order to follow William's way of life. With his canonization in 1202, devotion to William spread, as did the number of disciples who founded other communities in central and northern Italy and in other northern regions of Europe.

On December 16, 1243, Pope Innocent IV issued a Papal Bull addressed to all Tuscan hermits, with the exception of the "Brothers of Saint William in Tuscany," calling them to unite in a single religious Order according to the *Rule* and way of life of Saint Augustine, and to elect a prior general in accordance with canon law, to whom they were to give obedience and due respect. Furthermore, the Pope appointed as their supervisor and guide in the undertaking, Richard Annibaldi, Cardinal Deacon of Sant'Angelo. Each community of hermits was to send one or two representatives to a Chapter, or gathering of leaders, which Cardinal Richard was to convoke, in order that the directives of the Pope might be carried out.

This Chapter was held in Rome in March, 1244. There, all agreed to accept the *Rule of Saint Augustine*, constitutions were drawn up, agreement was made to recite the divine office according to the usage of the Roman curia, and a uniform habit of black color bound by a leather belt was adopted. Subsequent Papal Bulls confirmed various points of the Chapter and decreed additional characteristics of the new Order, including permission for those who were priests to hear confessions and to preach the word of God. The earliest title of the Order was Hermit Brothers of Tuscany of the Order of Saint Augustine, which after



OVER 770 YEARS AGO, POPE INNOCENT IV CALLED TOGETHER SEVERAL EREMITICAL COMMUNITIES IN TUSCANY TO UNITE INTO A SINGLE RELIGIOUS ORDER WITH THE "RULE" AND WAY OF LIFE OF SAINT AUGUSTINE.



THE BULL "INCUMBIT NOBIS" WAS ISSUED ON DECEMBER 16, 1243. THE DOCUMENT IS IN THE AUGUSTINIAN GENERAL ARCHIVES, ROME.



THE GRAND UNION OF 1256 TOOK PLACE ON APRIL 9, 1256 WHEN POPE ALEXANDER IV ISSUED A BULL CONFIRMING THE INTEGRATION OF MAJOR AND MINOR HERMIT ORDERS.





“Our Order, we might say, was founded from the ground up, by men who desired to pursue a specific path in life, and who were confirmed and directed in this by the Church itself, in the person of the pope.”



BRONZE SCULPTURE BY THOMAS RODR, O.S.A., (1927-2011)

1252, with greater expansion of members into other regions, became simply Hermit Brothers of Saint Augustine.

On July 15, 1255, another pope, Alexander IV, issued a Papal Bull that was to extend the Order even further. This was addressed to the priors of the Orders of Saint Augustine and Saint William, and later would include other communities of hermits as well: those of Monte Favale, of Brettino, and other smaller groups in other parts of Italy. All of these latter communities or congregations were now to be united to the Hermit Brothers of Saint Augustine. The Chapter that saw them gathered was held in March, 1256, in the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome. It, too, was convened under the direction of Cardinal Richard Annibaldi.

At both of these historic moments, 1244 and 1256, an important aspect of the Church’s interest, and an explicit decree of the Popes, was that these new Augustinians transition into a new-found form of religious life: the Mendicant Movement, which was characterized by a mixed or middle way among religious, in which a life

of contemplation is combined with a life of apostolic ministry, and where members depend for their livelihood on the charity of the people they serve.

**Members of the four principal Mendicant Orders—Dominicans, Franciscans, Augustinians and Carmelites—are not hermits, who live apart from others, nor monks, attached to a single place, but friars, who practice common life, and are available to go where they are needed.**

Two anomalies are connected to the Augustinian Order at its beginning. The first is that the Order, named for Saint Augustine of Hippo, was not founded by him, in contrast to some other Orders of the Church which take their name from their charismatic architect and author. Our Order, we might say, was founded from the ground up, by men who desired to pursue a specific path in life, and who were confirmed and directed in this by the Church itself, in the person of the pope. It

was they who adopted Saint Augustine, his Rule and spirituality and made them their own.

The second anomaly is that the *Rule* and spiritual path of Saint Augustine, which date to the early 5th century, were so perfectly appropriate to the new expression of religious life emerging in the 12th and 13th centuries! And they continue to be appropriate even up to the 21st!

**THE RULE OF SAINT AUGUSTINE**

Following his conversion to the Catholic Church and baptism in the cathedral of Milan, Augustine made plans to return to his native Africa, and there devote his life to an ongoing search for the God who had captivated his heart. He resolved to do this with others who shared his faith and his ambition to learn and to grow. He established in his family home at Tagaste a type of monastic life, where, with his son, Adeodatus, his good friend, Alypius, and several others, Augustine engaged in the study of Scripture, the sharing of faith and manual work. Later, when visiting the city

of Hippo and called to become a priest, he established a second monastery in the garden near the cathedral where he was to assist the local bishop.

**Within four or five years, Augustine himself became bishop there, and in order not to disturb the life of the monks because of the heavy responsibilities which being a bishop entailed, he moved to the bishop’s house where he established yet another monastery, this one of monks who were priests or deacons, and who assisted him in ministry.**

It is at this point that the *Rule* was written. Now that he was leaving the first Hippo monastery, the monks asked him to lay out in writing the things that should guide them in continuing their life together. It was later adopted by some of the monks who became bishops themselves, and wanted to continue the life they had lived with Augustine in new places. It was also

adapted for monasteries of women.

It is significant that Augustine had been living this way of life for eight or nine years before he wrote the *Rule*. Therefore it was written out of lived reality and not out of pure ideal. The great inspiration for Augustine in his desire to live religious or monastic life was found in his reading of the *Acts of the Apostles* [4:31-35], where the early Christian community of Jerusalem “was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common.” Augustine saw here the way to live the Gospel most perfectly, most faithfully, and to do so in a way that was so natural for him, in the company of like-minded individuals. Augustine had experienced so profoundly the influence of other people in bringing him to the faith, it was logical for him to believe that other people would also help him to grow in the faith, and he them. Friendship was always one of the hallmarks of Augustine’s personality; it was a spiritual reality for him.

Among Augustine’s many works is one entitled “*On the Trinity*”. The Blessed Trinity is for Augustine the ideal community:

“Father, Son and Spirit united together in the bond of love. Unity and communion become then the hallmark of Christian life which is rooted in the fundamental mystery of the Trinity. Christian community and religious community cannot be a mere gathering together of persons, even of like-minded persons—it is communion in Jesus, who not only unites us to himself, but to all other believers as well.”

For Augustine, the essential element of Christian life is also the essential element of Augustinian life. The “before all else” for Christians in general, namely “that all may be one” is the “before all else” enjoined on Augustinians by the *Rule*, “be of one mind and one heart.” It is this which distinguishes Augustinian life in a special way from other forms of religious life. The “before all else” for Augustine and for his disciples, is not just one element of the Gospel. It is the heart of the Gospel! And, therefore, it is the heart of the *Rule*. †



# FATHER BILL ATKINSON, O.S.A.

## TAKING UP THE CAUSE

On a quiet night in the middle of August, 2014, a group of twenty-five invited guests gathered at Saint Augustine Friary in Villanova, to meet with the Augustinian Postulator General and me. The agenda was simple, if unusual! Fr. Josef Sciberras had come from Rome for an informal conversation with friars and laity, relatives, friends and confreres of Fr. Bill Atkinson, to determine whether or not this friar might be someday, a future canonized saint of the Church.

Fr. Josef offered a challenge to those gathered: *“Convince me that Fr. Bill lived a life of heroic virtue. Persuade me that he is a saint.”* One after another, individuals told the stories of their relationship with Fr. Bill and made their case for his character, his virtue, his fidelity, his ministry, his humor, his humility, and much more. By evening’s end, Fr. Josef acknowledged that he was convinced. If canonization were only that easy! But it signaled the beginning.

Fr. Josef’s work was before him. There seemed to be sufficient reason to believe that a serious and formal look should be made into Fr. Bill’s life. Questionnaires were distributed to those present, who were asked to take them home, fill them out, and return them to the provincial office, which, in turn, would send them off to the office of the Postulator at the Augustinian General Curia in Rome.

We’ve begun! And now we happily announce to all of our readers, and to the many friends of Fr. Bill, to all who benefited from his life and ministry and example, that we will take up the cause, and if God so wills, that we will put forward this worthy servant for the good of the Church and for God’s own glory.

To those of you who knew Fr. Bill, or who benefited from his ministry, or were touched by his example, we invite you to send your remembrances, testimonies, or notice of favors received, all of which will

be very helpful as we move forward. We will keep you informed on our progress through this magazine and, as time goes on, through other means as well.

Please direct all correspondence regarding Fr. Bill and his cause to:

**FR. BILL’S CAUSE**  
**Augustinian Provincial Offices**  
**P.O. Box 340**  
**Villanova, PA 19085**

We invite you also to spread the word. Let others know what has begun, especially those who have known Fr. Bill. And pray! Pray that in this Year of Consecrated Life, the example of this courageous and dedicated religious may continue to speak and to inspire.

**WILLIAM EDWARD ATKINSON WAS BORN ON JANUARY 4, 1946, IN PHILADELPHIA, ONE OF THREE SONS AND FOUR DAUGHTERS OF ALLEN ATKINSON AND MARY CONNELLY.**



He attended St. Alice’s Elementary School and Monsignor Bonner High School, and upon graduation, asked to join the Augustinian Order. He spent a year as a postulant at Augustinian Academy, Staten Island, New York, and then entered the Villanova Province’s novitiate of Our Mother of Good Counsel in New Hamburg, New York, on September 6, 1964.

The following February 22, 1965, while recreating with several other novices on the novitiate grounds, the toboggan in which he was riding hit a tree, leaving Bill almost completely paralyzed from the neck down. Amazingly, he survived the accident, and following extensive rehabilitation, expressed his desire to continue as an Augustinian. He began again his novitiate year at Villanova, professing simple vows on July 20, 1970, and solemn vows on July 20, 1973. A care team of friars assisted Bill during his time in formation, and for many years beyond, as he moved about with the use of a motorized wheelchair. Bill completed his years of college and theological studies at Villanova, and with a special dispensation from Pope Paul VI, John Cardinal Krol ordained him to the priesthood at his hometown parish of St. Alice in Upper Darby, Pa., on February 2, 1974, almost nine years after the accident that left him a quadriplegic. He celebrated his first Mass at the Field house of Villanova University.

From 1975 until 2004, almost thirty years, Fr. Bill was stationed at St. Joseph’s Friary, where he taught at Msgr. Bonner High School, was assistant school chaplain, senior class retreat coordinator, moderator of the football team, and the director of the after-school and Saturday detention program. He was known for his wonderful sense of humor, and was recognized as an excellent teacher, encouraging moderator, and compassionate confessor. Fr. Bill was the recipient of many awards and acknowledgements, among them an honorary doctorate from Villanova University in 2000.

In 2004, Fr. Bill moved to the Health Care Unit of Saint Thomas Monastery at Villanova University. He passed over to the Lord on Friday afternoon, September 15, 2006, surrounded by those who loved and cared for him. His funeral liturgy was celebrated on Tuesday, September, 19, 2006 in Saint Thomas Church, Villanova University, after several hours of visitation. Fr. Bill was buried the following morning in the Augustinian section of Calvary Cemetery, West Conshohocken, Pa.

## NEWS AND NOTES

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



BISHOP ROBERT F. PREVOST, O.S.A. OF THE DIOCESE OF CHICLAYO, PERU. RIGHT: BISHOP PREVOST'S COAT OF ARMS.



### Episcopal Ordination of Robert F. Prevost, O.S.A., in Peru

On December 12, 2014, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Robert F. Prevost, O.S.A., was consecrated Bishop of the Diocese of Chiclayo, Peru, by the Apostolic Nuncio to Peru, Archbishop

James Patrick Green. In November 2014, the Vatican released news of the appointment. Bishop Prevost is the former Prior General of the Order of Saint Augustine and he had served previously in the missions in Peru as a parish priest, Formation Director, Master of Professed and Chancellor of the Diocese of Chulucanas.

It is customary for each Bishop to have a "Coat of Arms" and a motto, affixed to a shield. Traditionally, the left side of the shield to those viewing it is dedicated to the area where the Bishop serves. Bishop

Prevost has chosen a *fleur de lis* on a blue background, representing Mary, as the Immaculate Conception—the Patroness of the Diocese of Chiclayo. The right side of the shield to those viewing it is representative of the person. In this case we see the seal of the Order of Saint Augustine representing Bishop Prevost. Under the shield is a scroll with his chosen motto in Latin, *In Illo uno unum*. These words shorten Augustine's assertion, *Nos multi in Illo uno unum* meaning, "though we Christians are many, in the one Christ we are one."



To receive a copy of *The Augustinian* magazine, send your name and address to [communications@augustinian.org](mailto:communications@augustinian.org).



LEFT: ATSUSHI AND HIROYUKI SHIBATA, O.S.A., REGIONAL SUPERIOR AND FORMATION DIRECTOR, VICARIATE OF JAPAN IN FRONT OF BLESSED STEPHEN BELLESINI FRIARY, IN ARDMORE, PA. RIGHT: HIROYUKI SHIBATA, O.S.A., AND MICHAEL DI GREGORIO, O.S.A., PRIOR PROVINCIAL, PROVINCE OF SAINT THOMAS OF VILLANOVA.

### Japanese Regional Superior Hiroyuki T. Shibata, O.S.A., Visits Villanova

Hiroyuki Shibata, the Regional Superior and the formation director in the Japanese Vicariate, came to the United States to meet with a pre-novice from Japan, Atsushi Kuwahara, who as an English speaker, is doing his pre-novitiate year at Bellesini Friary in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, and to meet with Atsushi's formation director. While here, Father Shibata met with the Provincial and addressed the Provincial Council on matters related to the presence of the Province in Japan and its work there.



FATHER ROBERT J. GUESSETTO, O.S.A.

### Robert J. Guessetto, O.S.A., Appointed Director of Professed Students

It has been announced that the new Director of Professed Students will be Father Robert J. Guessetto, O.S.A., of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova. Father Bob will be located in Chicago, where professed students are studying at Catholic Theological Union. He brings great experience to the position, having spent the last thirteen years in Rome as Director of Professed Students and since 2013 as prior of *Collegio Santa Monica*. Prior to going to Rome, he served in that same position as Director of Students at Augustinian College in Washington, D.C. He will officially take office July 1, 2015.

### ANNIVERSARIES 2015

#### ANNIVERSARY OF RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

##### 75 YEARS

James L. Nolan, O.S.A.

##### 50 YEARS

Arthur B. Chappell, O.S.A.  
Richard C. Ekman, O.S.A.  
James R. Flynn, O.S.A.  
James T. Spenard, O.S.A.

#### ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION

##### 50 YEARS

John J. McKenzie, O.S.A.  
Francis X. Gallogly, O.S.A.  
Francis A. Sirolli, O.S.A.  
Richard M. Nahman, O.S.A.  
Thomas M. Murnane, O.S.A.  
Dennis J. Gallagher, O.S.A.

##### 25 YEARS

James W. Cassidy, O.S.A.  
Stephen J. Baker, O.S.A.  
John T. Denny, O.S.A.

Attention! If you received a copy of *The Augustinian* for the first time in the mail, you can continue receiving it by e-mailing [communications@augustinian.org](mailto:communications@augustinian.org)



FATHER QUINN STANDS BEFORE HIS FAVORITE PAINTING DEPICTING THE DAY THEY REPLACED THE STEEPLE AT OLD SAINT AUGUSTINE CHURCH, WHICH HAD BLOWN ONTO THE VINE STREET EXPRESSWAY DURING A STORM AND CLOSED THE WALT WHITMAN BRIDGE, A MAJOR ARTERY CONNECTING CAMDEN, N.J. TO PHILADELPHIA, FOR TWO WEEKS.

## Art Exhibit for Walter J. Quinn, O.S.A., at Saint Thomas Monastery

On Wednesday, February 11, 2015, Saint Thomas Monastery hosted an opening for an art exhibit by one of its residents, Walter J. Quinn, O.S.A. It was a family affair with an array of foods prepared by the nursing staff, attended by forty Augustinian friars and friends, including his brother John and his great niece Melanie, a 3rd year student at Villanova University.

Inspired by the American painter Bob Ross and his *The Joy of Painting* public television series, Father Walter was 71 years old when, in 2001, he picked up a brush and started painting. Father had never sketched or painted anything before, but figured, "If Bob Ross can paint, I can paint." He was definitely right. The result is a unique play of realism against a refreshing American folk tale of landscapes that document the past fourteen years where Father's path as artist and Augustinian working for Priests For Life have taken him.



TO SEE ALL OF FATHER QUINN'S WORK, GO TO [WWW.AUGUSTINIAN.ORG/PHOTO-GALLERIES/](http://WWW.AUGUSTINIAN.ORG/PHOTO-GALLERIES/)

**AUGUSTINIAN.ORG HAS A NEW LOOK! VISIT OUR SITE AT:**

[WWW.AUGUSTINIAN.ORG](http://WWW.AUGUSTINIAN.ORG)



POPE FRANCIS GREETES FATHER JIM WENZEL, O.S.A.

## James A. Wenzel, O.S.A., Celebrates Mass with Pope Francis

Father Jim Wenzel, O.S.A., retired from Merrimack College in May of 2014. During his tenure at Merrimack, he began the *Pellegrinaggio*—a pilgrimage to Augustinian Italy tracing the footsteps of Augustine and the origins of the Augustinian Order. Designed originally to teach faculty and staff about Saint Augustine and the Augustinians, it was subsequently opened to students and is now part of a course offered at Merrimack, "Journey in Search of Augustinian Community."

Father Jim, who has a fondness for Pope Francis and his approach to pastoral ministry and preaching, wrote the Secretary of State at the Vatican and made known his desire to participate in a Mass with Pope Francis as a way to celebrate his 60 years as a professed Augustinian friar. On November 17, 2014, that desire was fulfilled, when Father Jim received the honor of concelebrating Mass with Pope Francis at the Chapel in *Casa Santa Marta*, the Pope's residence in Rome. Commenting on his experience, Father Jim said, "To concelebrate the Eucharist with Pope Francis and then to be able to speak with him for a few moments was one of the most profound moments of my life and a gift that I will always treasure." To read a profile of Fr. Jim, please go to [HTTP://MAGAZINE.MERRIMACK.EDU/A-PRIEST-FOR-ALL-SEASONS/](http://MAGAZINE.MERRIMACK.EDU/A-PRIEST-FOR-ALL-SEASONS/)

## LOOKING AHEAD

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mark your calendars today for these upcoming special events.



AUGUSTINIANS IN FORMATION IN THE U.S.

## Two-day Meeting of all Students in Formation in the U.S. at Villanova to Precede Profession at Saint Thomas of Villanova Church



On July 30-31, a two-day gathering of all students in formation, whether pre-novices, novices or professed, from all U.S. provinces will gather on the campus of Villanova University. First profession of men from all provinces in the United States will be celebrated on Saturday, August 1, 2015, at 4:00 PM Mass at Saint Thomas of Villanova Church. Friars from all provinces in the U.S. will be invited to the profession and to gather prior to the Mass to celebrate "consecrated life" as part of the year-long celebration of Religious men and women.

## Shrine of Saint Rita Receives Focus during



## World Meeting of Families

The Shrine of Saint Rita of Cascia in South Philadelphia is in the limelight as the Archdiocese of Philadelphia focuses on visiting shrines in Philadelphia, during the World Meeting of Families (September 22-27, 2015). An Augustinian nun, Saint Rita is known as the "Peacemaker." Pope Leo XIII canonized her in 1900. To learn more about the Shrine of Saint Rita of Cascia, please visit their website at [HTTP://WWW.SAINTRITASHRINE.ORG](http://WWW.SAINTRITASHRINE.ORG). To learn more about the shrines in Philadelphia, please visit the Archdiocese website at [HTTP://WWW.WORLDMEETING2015.ORG/PLAN-YOUR-VISIT/PLACES-WORSHIP/](http://WWW.WORLDMEETING2015.ORG/PLAN-YOUR-VISIT/PLACES-WORSHIP/)

## Augustinian Youth Encounter 2016

The Augustinian Youth Encounter will be held in Prague, Czech Republic, scheduled for July 19–25, 2016. Organizing Committee members visited and surveyed the Monastery of Svatá Dobrotivá, Zaječov, the site where the gathering will take place, as well as sports facilities, gardens and a school that will offer accommodations. They also planned the program of events and themes for each day, which will be presented to the members of the International Commission on Youth Apostolate for further study and approval.

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## IN PARADISUM

*The following friars were called home to God. You can read full biographies of these Augustinians, and post your own reflections or favorite memory, online at [www.augustinian.org](http://www.augustinian.org).*

*Gifts in memory of our deceased friars will be designated to the Augustinian Fund for the Care of the Sick and Elderly Friars.*



### Edmund J. Dobbin, O.S.A., President Emeritus, 31st President, '58 CLAS, Villanova University

BORN: 11/20/1935  
PROFESSED: 9/10/1954  
ORDAINED: 2/10/1962  
DIED: 3/8/2015

Fr. Edmund J. Dobbin, O.S.A., the 31st president of Villanova University, who led the University for 18 years, its longest-serving president, and a graduate of the class of '58, died on March 8, 2015.

A native of Brooklyn, after his family moved Edmund was raised on Staten Island, New York. He attended Augustinian Academy as a day student, graduating in 1953. After a year at Good Counsel Novitiate, New Hamburg, New York, he professed first vows on September 10, 1954. He attended Villanova University and received a BA in Philosophy. Continuing his studies at Augustinian College, Washington, DC, he received an MA in Theology in 1962. At the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC, he was ordained on February 10, 1962 by Bishop Phillip Hannan.

Fr. Dobbin first served at Malvern Prep, where he was disciplinarian, taught and was Chairman of the Mathematics Department while he completed an MA in Mathematics and Physics at the Catholic University of America, Washington, DC.

In 1967 he received an STL from The Catholic University of America, and in 1971, he received an STD from the University of Louvain, Belgium. Upon returning to the U.S., he taught Systematic Theology at Augustinian College. In 1987, he was assigned to Saint Thomas

Monastery and to Villanova University, where he served as vice president for academic affairs and associate professor of Religious Studies. Elected president of Villanova University in 1988, Fr. Dobbin held that position until 2006, becoming the longest serving president of the University in its history. As president, he heightened awareness of the Augustinian character and mission of the University. Curriculum was improved and new academic programs were added. During his term, he led two fundraising efforts, the University's endowment increased significantly, and he oversaw the expansion and beautification of the campus. At the last meeting of the Board of Trustees that Fr. Dobbin attended as president, the Board voted unanimously to confer the honorary title, President Emeritus of Villanova University. He is the only president of Villanova to have been honored with that title.

After stepping down as president of Villanova, Father remained a member of the Villanova Monastery community and returned to his chosen field as a professor of theology until failing health made it necessary for him to retire from the classroom. Fr. Dobbin reluctantly retired from teaching. "Teaching was always my first love," he said. "Nothing is more gratifying than being in a classroom and connecting with a student."

Fr. Dobbin died at the Villanova Monastery at the age of 79, after an illness of several months. He was buried in the Augustinian plot on the University's campus.



### Russell J. De Simone, O.S.A.

BORN: 12/10/1924  
PROFESSED: 9/10/1944  
ORDAINED: 11/18/1951  
DIED: 12/29/2014

Russell (Rosario)

Joseph De Simone, was born in Bridgeport, Pennsylvania, one of three brothers who became priests. He graduated from Bridgeport High School and attended Augustinian Academy, Staten Island, New York, for a year. He professed first vows on September 10, 1944, after a year at Good Counsel Novitiate, New Hamburg, New York. He received a BA (Philosophy) from Villanova College. He did theological studies at *Collegio Santa Monica* in Rome, and then studied at the Gregorian University, receiving the STL degree in 1952. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1951, in Rome, by Luigi Cardinal Traglia.

His first assignment was as a teacher at Archbishop Carroll High School, Washington, DC. Following this, he served in several parishes of the Province: Saint Mary Parish, Waterford, New York; Saint Nicholas of Tolentine Parish, Jamaica, NY and Saint Rita of Cascia Parish, Philadelphia.

He returned to Rome to study for a doctorate in Patristics at the *Augustinianum*, receiving the STD in 1970. Back in the U.S., he began his teaching career at Villanova University, where he also was Associate and Managing Editor of Augustinian Studies and the Augustinian Lecture Series, and Director of the Augustinian Institute at Villanova University. He also taught at the *Augustinianum* and the *Angelicum* in Rome.

Author of several books and many articles, he contributed to the series on the Fathers of the Church and also a Dictionary of Patristics and Christian Antiquity. He served as a chaplain at Haverford State Hospital, and assisted in various parishes, but continued teaching in Rome until 2000. After retiring, he lived and worked at Saint Justin Martyr Parish, Narberth, Pa., with his brother, Louis, an Auxiliary Bishop in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and an affiliate of the Order. He accompanied his brother in his Episcopal ministry within the Archdiocese. Due to failing health, Fr. Russell moved

to Saint Thomas of Villanova Monastery in August 2012. His brother, the bishop, visited Father Russell each day and accompanied him at community Mass and lunch. His care and devotion were an example to all.

A humble man of great simplicity, Father Russell died on December 29, 2014, just weeks after his 90th birthday.



### Maurice J. Mahoney, O.S.A.

BORN: 10/19/1933  
PROFESSED: 9/10/1955  
ORDAINED: 7/10/1960  
DIED: 12/29/2014

Fr. Maurice James Mahoney, O.S.A.,

was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts, one of seven children. After graduating from Central Catholic High School, he began higher studies at Merrimack College in North Andover, Massachusetts, in 1952. Two years later he was received into the Order and after his novitiate year at Good Counsel Novitiate, New Hamburg, New York, he professed first vows on September 10, 1955. He attended Villanova University and received a BA in Philosophy in 1957. Maurice was chosen to attend the *Collegio Santa Monica* in Rome for his theological studies. He was ordained to the priesthood on July 10, 1960, in the Chapel of the Sacred Heart in the Piazza Navona, Rome, Italy.

Returning to the U.S., Fr. Maurice was first assigned to Malvern Preparatory School, where he taught Latin, religion and public speaking (1961–1962). In 1962, he volunteered for the Province's mission in Japan, where he served in several parishes, including Our Mother of Consolation Parish, Nagasaki (1962–1975); Saint Augustine Parish, Fukuoka (1975–1987); Saint Monica Parish, Nagoya (1987–1988) and at Saint Augustine Parish, Tokyo (1988–2008). At various times during his assignments, he taught English at Kyushu University and Fukuoka University and he served as a member of the Japanese formation team.

In 2010, Fr. Maurice celebrated his 50th Anniversary as a priest both in Japan and in his hometown of Lawrence, Massachusetts. He will be remembered for his quick sense of humor, his eagerness to engage others in conversation and his

love for the Augustinian way of life. His 52 years of service to the people of Japan mark a proud chapter in the story of the Vicariate of the Japanese Martyrs and of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova. Father died December 29, 2014, and was interred in Nagasaki, Japan.



### Joseph A. Spinelli, O.S.A.

BORN: 2/2/1929  
PROFESSED: 9/10/1948  
ORDAINED: 2/5/1955  
DIED: 3/10/2015

Born in Vineland, New Jersey, Fr. Joe

graduated from Sacred Heart High School, before attending Augustinian Academy, Staten Island, New York, for a year of post-graduate studies. He was received into the Order in 1947 and professed first vows on September 10, 1948, after a year at Good Counsel Novitiate, New Hamburg, New York. He then attended Villanova College, from 1948 to 1951, and was awarded a BA in Philosophy. He did his theological studies at Augustinian College, Washington, DC, from 1951 to 1955, while doing graduate studies at Villanova University and The Catholic University of America. He was ordained to the priesthood on February 5, 1955, at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC, by Bishop John McNamara.

Fr. Spinelli's priestly service was divided between the teaching and parochial apostolate. In 1955, his first assignment was to Msgr. Bonner High School, Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania, where he was a member of the school faculty for 26 years. In 1981, he served at Resurrection of Our Lord Parish, Dania Beach, Florida. In 1983, after the Prior Provincial nominated him for the position, he served 23 years as pastor of Saint Elizabeth Seton Parish, Golden Gate, Florida. Fr. Joe retired from parish ministry in 2006, as his health began to decline and was assigned to Saint Thomas Monastery, Villanova, Pennsylvania.

Fr. Joe was known for his friendly, outgoing personality, contagious sense of humor, and love for people and community life. He died at the Monastery, peacefully, on March 10, 2015.

*“Everything is grace, everything is gift.”*

— MICHAEL F. DI GREGORIO, O.S.A.

## Meet Madonna Sutter, our new Director of Advancement

BY TEDDIE GALLAGHER

“The Augustinian commitment of service to the poor and marginalized is something that has always resonated with me. I am thrilled to be in a position to advance Augustinian ministries, and have the opportunity to make a difference,” — Madonna Sutter.



Madonna Sutter, our new Director of Advancement for the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova started on Thursday, April 30, 2015, and had quite an unusual first day. She spent three hours in the office and then went to the New York Athletic Club for an Augustinian Fund event, without skipping a beat! Her years of experience in handling fundraising events and her understanding of the Augustinian heart and ministries were on display on her very first day.

Madonna’s connection to the Augustinians and the people they serve are deeply rooted. In fact many of you will recognize Madonna as a fellow parishioner, a business woman working for Villanova alumni and external relations, or a season ticket holder for Villanova men’s basketball.

Madonna has been a lector and parishioner at Saint Thomas of Villanova Parish for almost 30 years. Her two boys, Michael and Mark, grew up in the parish and both are graduates of Villanova University.

Madonna holds a BA in Psychology and Elementary Education from Rosemont College and an MA in Educational Administration from Villanova University.

She held the position of associate dean of external relations at Villanova University School of Business where she was responsible for an outreach and engagement initiative to the broad external community. She created and implemented a Business Leaders Forum which brought together the school’s nine advisory councils—many of which she recruited—for networking and dialogue on important industry issues. Prior to this, she served as the associate director of alumni relations at Villanova University, managing over 50 alumni chapters across the U.S.

Beyond her Villanova connections, she held the position of vice president of institutional advancement at Rosemont College and served as Rosemont’s chief major gifts officer, reporting directly to the president. Prior to her time at Rosemont College, she has twice previously held the position of director of development, at Drexel University’s College of Business Administration (now Le Bow College of Business) and at Merion Mercy/Waldron Mercy Academy (Merion, Pa). Her most recent position was at The Baldwin School (Bryn Mawr, Pa), where she served as director of philanthropy.

As you can see, Madonna is in a very unique position to advance the mission and ministries of the Augustinians and she has the drive to make it all happen, with plans to expand work with Augustinian communities up and down the east coast.

If you would like to say hello to Madonna, you can reach her by e-mail at: [madonna.sutter@augustinian.org](mailto:madonna.sutter@augustinian.org) or by phone at: 610-527-3330, ext. 265.

### CARE OF THE SICK AND ELDERLY FRIARS

Many friars are lovingly cared for in the Saint Thomas of Villanova Monastery. Thank you for the grace and gift of home.



### FOREIGN MISSIONS

This Fund supports our ministries and our friars who serve in Peru and Japan. Thank you for the grace and gift to our foreign missions.



### AUGUSTINIAN VOLUNTEERS

Post-college graduates volunteer for a year of service in Peru and five domestic cities. Thank you for the grace and gift that connect young people to service and community.



### VOCATIONS AND FORMATION

Augustinian formation programs include the Pre-Novitiate, Novitiate and House of Theology. Thank you for the grace and gift to discern the Augustinian way of life.



### JUSTICE AND PEACE

Our Province Director of Justice and Peace, John E. Deegan, O.S.A., works for justice, so peace will follow. Thank you for the grace and gift to be a catalyst for peace.





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## THE DEATH OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

### PRAYER

*“Behold me here before  
you O my God... You,  
alone, will light my  
lamp, O Lord; O my  
God, you will illumine  
my darkness.”*

*(Confessions, 11, 25, 32)*