

CONVOCATION 2009:
A HISTORIC GATHERING OF
THE FOUR NORTH AMERICAN
PROVINCES p. 12

Pmo Patri Generali
 Rm S. Augustini
 Deus interim, qui consolatur et in omni tribulatione nostra, consolatur
 nesciat has dispositiones nostras ad maiorem ipsius Domini gloriam, et
 nostri decus, et incrementum, etque uberiorem fidelium utilitatem, et
 memine Iesu Christi, et Beatissime Virginis Mariae de Bono Consilio
 ejus auspicio novam Provinciam consecramus, et nuncupari decernimus
 ex toto pectore auguramur. Datum in Conventu nostro S. P. Augustini
 Urbi die 17. Mensis Augusti anni 1796
 Dominicus Sighin ordin. Eremit. S. P. Augustini
 Georgius Berg
 Hispan. Adm.
 R. Richardus Tecker Germania A. S. ten.



LOOKING AHEAD

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mark your calendars today for these upcoming special events and celebrations throughout the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova.



Farewell to the Friars

The Monsignor Bonner Alumni & Chairpersons Ed '72 & Karen Stefanski invite the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova, in paying tribute to the Augustinians of Bonner past and present for their 56 years of faithful service to the students of Monsignor Bonner High School.

MAY 9, 2009
MASS OF THANKSGIVING
10:30 AM. AT BONNER AUDITORIUM

Springfield Country Club
400 West Sproul Road
Springfield, PA 19064

Parish Retreat with Fr. Michael P. Sullivan, O.S.A.

Father Michael P. Sullivan, O.S.A., travels the country year-round providing parishes with unique retreats that leave parishioners renewed, inspired and laughing. Join Fr. Michael for a retreat at Saint Mary, Mother of the Church Parish in Fishkill, New York, in April. Access his complete schedule of retreats at the link below.

APRIL 18, 2009 - APRIL 22, 2009

Saint Mary, Mother of the Church
103 Jackson Street
Fishkill, NY 12524-1117

PHONE 845-896-6400
WEB www.saintmaryschurch-fishkill.org

Celebration of the Year of Paul: "What happened to Paul on the road to Damascus?"

Pope Benedict declared a special Jubilee year to the Apostle Paul, which began June 28, 2008, and will last until June 29, 2009. This celebration is intended to renew dedication to the Gospel and to honor the bi-millennium of Paul's birth. To support the yearlong celebration, Villanova University has scheduled various lectures and events in collaboration with the Year of Paul. On, April 22, 2009, at 4:00pm, on the university's campus, listen to David Aune, Ph.D., and Professor of New Testament, give a lecture entitled, "What Happened to Paul on the road to Damascus?"

APRIL 22, 2009

4:00pm, Connelly Center, Cinema
Villanova University
800 Lancaster Avenue
Villanova, PA 19085

Ever Ancient, Ever New: Naming One's Spirituality

Attend a retreat lead by Fr. Robert Dueweke, O.S.A., which is inspired by post Vatican II era Augustinian Spirituality. On the beautiful grounds of Living Waters Catholic Reflection Center, come identity different aspects of your own spirituality. The retreat will include time for meditation, conferences and reflection.

MONDAY, JUNE 15 - SUNDAY, JUNE 21

Living Waters Catholic Reflection Center
103 Living Waters Lane
Maggie Valley, NC 28751

PHONE 828-926-3833
WEB www.catholicretreat.org

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4



8



12

IN EVERY ISSUE

Features

A Glimpse	14
The Augustinian Family	16
The Augustinian Fund	24

Columns

Letter from the Provincial	2
Volunteer Letters	3
Vocation Section	18
Ever Ancient - Ever New	20
News and Notes	21
Keeping Track	22
In Paradisum	23

THE AUGUSTINIAN

A publication for the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova.

CONTENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

ON THE COVER

The Magazine Cover is a copy of the original "Foundation Letter" dated August 27, 1796, where the elected "Father Friar Matthew Carr, O.S.A., Prior of the Philadelphia convent (to be)" departed from Ireland and carried this letter to the American mission. The Cover displays the last page which reads "establishes the "new Province" dedicated to "Beatissimae Virginis Mariae de Bono Consilio" (Blessed Virgin Mary of Good Counsel) and prayers for its success".

This historic letter celebrates the past, commits to the present and inspires for the future of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova.

P. 4

Being in South Africa: Reflections from an Augustinian Volunteer

In January 2008, Brian Strassburger boarded a plane headed into the unknown- Durban, South Africa. He had finished up a year as an Augustinian Volunteer in the Bronx, NY, but had the itch for something more. He signed onto the international program in South Africa looking for a challenge and a way to experience service at its toughest.

P. 8

Tuscan Origins of the Order of Saint Augustine

The international Augustinian community of San Gimignano resides in the Convento Sant'Agostino, founded in 1280 within the territory where the Order saw its beginnings. Some of the Order's original sites, where the stones speak without words, are nearby and can be easily visited.

P. 12

Convocation 2009: A Historic Gathering of the Four North American Provinces

The Augustinian North American Convocation 2009 will be a historic gathering of the North American Provinces to discuss Augustinian spirituality and mission, and to reflect on the history of Augustinians in North America.



LETTER FROM THE PRIOR PROVINCIAL

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the pleasant change of spring! Nature signals the difference in seasons, powerful changes, influencing how we relate to one another and the world around us. We find ourselves needing to get out of the house, to bask in the sun, to embrace life. Deeper, we revel in the Easter gift of redemption, the historical fact that God came to us in humanity and conquered our fear of death.

Augustinians are called to take note of changes in nature and the ways we are nurtured. These shifts of seasons and of self, help us sustain our commitment to one another. There is a constant newness in our relationships because we respond to opportunities to create ourselves anew, like nature does so well. When someone in our lives acknowledges our call to renew ourselves, to change, to be influenced and grow, appreciation and respect for the friendship is valued as a gift. Relationships are important; for friars, they are portals through which God touches us.

In this issue of The Augustinian you will be invited to experience our origins, our growth and the friars’ hopes for the future. The pages of this issue celebrate our life in common, a life in which you have an integral role. We are merely spinning around in a smaller world disconnected from the real universe unless people like you affirm our call, guide our mission and collaborate with us as we mutually live Christ and preach the gospel in our daily lives.

The pages of this issue of The Augustinian are also filled with blessings for the friars. You will read that our brother Michael Scuderi was ordained to the diaconate at St. Rita’s Church in Philadelphia where he will be assigned for ministry. Our Vocation Director, Kevin DePrinzio, is preparing to welcome a number of men into our initial formation program this coming fall. These nine men, pre-novices, those headed toward the Novitiate, and discerners, who are deciding whether or not the Augustinian life is for them, are embarking on a journey which, hopefully, will lead them to becoming Augustinian friars.

In closing, let me say a couple of words about our leaving Monsignor Bonner High School where we served for the past fifty-seven years. So many fine relationships begun there are still vibrant and life-giving for us. The sadness we feel in departing is eclipsed by the gratitude we have for having been so blessed by friendships and vocations not only to the Augustinians but to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and other religious communities, and the Church.

Warm regards,

Donald F. Reilly, O.S.A.

Very Reverend
Donald F. Reilly, O.S.A.
PRIOR PROVINCIAL
PROVINCE OF SAINT THOMAS OF VILLANOVA

VOLUME III . ISSUE I

THE AUGUSTINIAN

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20nine Design Studios
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AUGUSTINIAN VOLUNTEERS, 2008-09.

AUGUSTINIAN VOLUNTEERS

LETTERS

The Bronx, NY

Defining Courage



It’d be a safe bet to say that at least ¾ of the time I tell people that I am volunteering in the Bronx I get some rendition of “THE BRONX?!?! The Bronx is so scary with so many dangerous people!!!! ” And more often than not it is followed with - -“That’s so courageous...”

Me? Courageous? I’d say signing up I certainly had a desire to serve. A hunger for adventure, definitely. I was unquestionably in need of a break from writing term papers. You could even blame my flair for spontaneity. But courage is not a word I would use to describe how I got here, especially after meeting some of my favorite New York City residents. Janice, Angel and Johnny Five have become the ultimate definition of courage.

Janice, a 21 year old resident of Siena House (the shelter where I work) provided me with my first definition of courage. She, unfortunately like so many others,

does not have any family members who support her. Her baby’s father is in the picture when he feels like it and when we met she was about to go through her first labor and delivery alone. Typically in situations such as Janice’s, one of the Sisters who work at Siena will go to the hospital with the woman. However, this time, I was asked. I have never been so flattered and yet so incredibly scared in my entire life.

Janice is my definition of courage with just the clothes on her back, her newborn baby and the paperwork saying she is eligible to remain in the shelter system.

My second definition is reaffirmed every single morning on my walk to work as I am greeted with the familiar “Hello! Hello! Blue-yies!!” (an accidental fumbling of the words “blue eyes” which turned into our own inside joke). Angel, a middle aged homeless man brings me a smile and more often than not, a full belly laugh each and every morning. He is always asking me how I am doing, telling me over and over and over how much he likes my eyes, proposing to me, letting me pet his dog Queenie, or showing me his latest dance move.

He is a very educated former school teacher who is down on his luck. He gets turned down from housing opportunities because he refuses to leave behind his beloved best friend Queenie. He has been asked to move out of friends’ houses because each time he moves in he also brings his entire entourage of homeless friends to the house because “If [he’s] got a place to stay, everyone else should, too.”

Angel is my definition of courage.

Johnny Five, my third definition,

exudes courage. He is a gentleman who has struggled with homelessness much of his adult life. In a city that glows, Johnny has called a dark cave under a roadway “home”. He has had his bout with drugs and alcohol and unfortunately, still slips into his old habits. Although his lifestyle is one which I can’t even begin to imagine or understand, he has proven that he is one of the most sincere, to the point, wild, courageous individuals I have ever met. His story is so hard to believe, as is his friendly demeanor and upbeat attitude considering his struggles.

I am in awe of his spirit and his pure determination. He falters between wanting to have an apartment and design clothing and slipping back under the streets to the place he calls home. He has nothing. Literally nothing and yet he is so giving. Johnny Five is my definition of courage.

Through Janice, Angel and Johnny Five I have learned that oftentimes courage comes with great sacrifice. It is formed out of necessity; commitment; anguish and, most importantly, love.

I now laugh when people call the Bronx “scary”. The hustle and bustle of the New York streets manages to lull me to sleep each night. The transit lines that overwhelmed me initially have become routine, gracing me with independence. Even the greeting from the #11 bus driver who picks me up each morning has become familiar. This big city has become my home and I am thankful for Janice, Angel and Johnny Five for sharing their story with me, showering me with love and friendship and giving the word courage a whole new meaning.

MEGHAN MCKENNAN

Augustinian Volunteer, Bronx 2008-2009

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEER REFLECTIONS CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.OSAVOL.ORG

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS! LETTERS TO THE EDITOR MAY BE MAILED TO COMMUNICATIONS@AUGUSTINIAN.ORG, OR WRITE TO: THE AUGUSTINIAN, P.O. BOX 340, VILLANOVA, PA 19085

BEING IN SOUTH AFRICA

REFLECTIONS FROM AN AUGUSTINIAN VOLUNTEER

BY BRIAN STRASSBURGER

"SO HOW WAS AFRICA?" THE QUESTION IS INNOCENT ENOUGH: I DID JUST RETURN FROM A YEAR LIVING ABROAD. BUT HOW BROAD CAN YOU GET?

IN JANUARY 2008, I BOARDED A PLANE HEADED INTO THE UNKNOWN- DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA. I HAD FINISHED UP A STINT AS AN AUGUSTINIAN VOLUNTEER IN THE BRONX, NY, BUT HAD THE ITCH FOR SOMETHING MORE. I SIGNED ONTO THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM IN SOUTH AFRICA LOOKING FOR A CHALLENGE AND A WAY TO EXPERIENCE SERVICE AT ITS TOUGHEST.

During my time in South Africa, I committed three days a week to a grade school working with the sports and reading programs, and spent those afternoons mentoring children at a boys' home run by Augustinian sisters. The other two workdays I helped patients at a local AIDS hospice. Between the chaos of dealing with overcrowded classrooms of 50 students to the emotional toll of working with the dying, I found my challenges. More than I can count!

As my year began to reach its close, I started looking back at my time to find ways to measure the successes I achieved. It was not as easy as I had hoped. It was tough to measure, and the more that I tried, the less those measures seemed to matter. Through this process, I came to realize something very important: my year was not about what I did or accomplished. It was about being. It was about being present in ways I never could have realized or comprehended before my year began.

In trying to evaluate my efforts, I realized that it was not appropriate to summarize my year based on how many patients I helped receive disability grants or who achieved higher grades because of my tutoring. Those were not the defining moments or experiences. The defining moments of my year could not be quantified like that: they were moments that I simply lived.

When Nomphilo, a young girl born with AIDS, through no fault or act of her own, was dehydrated and unable to take in food or liquid and needed to spend a night in the lobby of a government hospital on a drip, writhing in pain, there



WISEMAN, PICTURED IN FRONT OF HIS HOUSE WITH BRIAN, WAS A PATIENT AT THE AIDS HOSPICE, BUT WITH THE HELP OF ARVS AND A HEALTHY DIET, WISEMAN WAS ABLE TO GAIN ENOUGH STRENGTH AND WEIGHT TO BE DISCHARGED. MOST PATIENTS ARE NOT SO FORTUNATE.

was nothing I could do. But I was there.

When Keagan, an orphaned child at St. Theresa's Boys' Home, found out that his oldest brother had died by taking his own life, there was nothing I could do. But I was there.

When a terrible storm wiped out a section of the nearby rural township of Molweni and homes were destroyed and lives lost, and I traveled down there to see what had happened, there was nothing that I could do. So I gave up on that

thinking and decided to just be present.

I encountered a little girl whose house had been demolished by the storm. Amid all the drama, she had no real concept of the devastation around her. She was not easily or quickly won over, but a few high-fives with some goofy faces, and a connection was made. We were not able to communicate in a verbal sense. But I was there. I was present to her; I was more interested in her than the rest of the world around us. And because of that, we



BRIAN WITH BOYS FROM ST. THERESA'S: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) TYRONE, PHILANI, NKOSI, SIHLE, AND LUNGELU

WHEN A TERRIBLE STORM WIPED OUT A SECTION OF THE NEARBY RURAL TOWNSHIP OF MOLWENI AND HOMES WERE DESTROYED AND LIVES LOST, AND I TRAVELED DOWN THERE TO SEE WHAT HAD HAPPENED, THERE WAS NOTHING THAT I COULD DO. SO I GAVE UP ON THAT THINKING AND DECIDED TO JUST BE PRESENT.



were able to connect and to share.

That is the impact of presence: it connects people. It breaks down walls and builds bridges. What happens in the midst of that? Lives are changed, and people are transformed. That is what happened to me: my life was changed.

How can I be the same person that I was after a year of these experiences? It is impossible! How can I hear about AIDS again without picturing Nomphilo, whose roller coaster struggle lasted for months and ended tragically on the Fourth of July? I am a more sensitive person for knowing her.

How can I talk about home without thinking about Keagan who is deprived of any real concept of what home means? I am a more appreciative person for knowing him.

How can I talk about heroes and saints without thinking about the heroes and saints of South Africa like those who reached out to people who lost their homes in the storm, including the Augustinian friars? I am a more inspired person for encountering them.

My year was more than a year about stories or accomplishments. It was a year about people: their names and faces and lives. By being present to them, I was able

to share and grow because of it. And it made for the most rewarding experience of my life. I have never come closer to living the Gospel:

"Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?" And the king will say to them in reply, "Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." Mt 25

For this one year, I might have actually come close to answering that call. But a year does not make a life, and so that is the challenge I leave with: to make this past year, a year of presence, continue to be a year of the present.

So how was Africa? I was there. And I am a better person because of it. ✚



ST. THERESA'S BOYS OF COTTAGE 2, WHO BRIAN HELPED TUTOR AND MENTOR, WEARING HATS DONATED FROM THE US



TUSCAN ORIGINS OF THE ORDER OF ST. AUGUSTINE

BRIAN LOWERY, O.S.A. CONVENTO SANT'AGOSTINO SAN GIMIGNANO, ITALY

The international Augustinian community of San Gimignano resides in the Convento Sant'Agostino, founded in 1280 within the territory where the Order saw its beginnings. Some of the Order's original sites, where the stones speak without words, are nearby and can be easily visited.



“Sing a new song to the Lord” is a refrain that comes to mind whenever I think of the earliest days of the Order of Saint Augustine, which, living in this ancient convento, is often. It reflects what must have been a prevailing mood at that time. At different moments in the story of a religious family you can almost hear the music. Usually it comes from that first song, the one sung at the Order's foundation. Every now and then the melody returns and wants to be sung again, perhaps in a new key or with updated lyrics. That is why we make so much of important anniversaries like the Grand Union of 1256. We still believe in that song.

St. Augustine once said that anyone who has learned to love the new life has learned to sing a new song (Sermon 34, 1). He added that the song is new because the people who sing it are new, and Christ made them new (ibid. 6; cf. In Psalm 32 2, 8). What was it, then, that was so new about those men and their song back in the 13th century when they stood at the dawn of a new religious Order? And what was Christ working within them? A few thoughts suggest themselves. But first, a bit of history.

Actually there were two events within the space of twelve years that could be said to have made up the foundation of the Order of Saint Augustine. The first was the so-called Little Union of 1244, also called the “Hermit” union. The previous year pope Innocent IV invited 61 eremitical communities from the areas of Lucca, Pisa and Siena in Tuscany to join together as a new religious Order with the Rule and the monastic bent of St. Augustine. The following year these men celebrated a founding chapter and the Order of Hermits of St. Augustine of Tuscany was born.

What was the new Order like? We don't know much. Some names and places, a couple of dates, and a few events. One important document we have traces of is the roster of the General Chapter of 1250 at Vico Pisano in which one can find the locations of all the participating hermitages and the names of their delegates.

If we don't know much about the Order at that time, we at least are aware of its enthusiasm and its rapid expansion beyond Tuscany. And even beyond the Alps. The oldest English-speaking Augustinian foundation, Clare Priory near Cambridge, goes back to 1248, only four years after the union.

The spirit of the new Order was clearly contemplative, as was the eremitical life that preceded it. But now there was a different slant, given by Augustine's Rule. To the previous life of prayer and penance, Augustine added the distinguishing note of fraternal love: “Before all else, live together in harmony, being of one mind and heart on the way to God” (1,2). To the traditional ascetical practices, Augustine lent his sense of balance: “As far as your

WATERCOLOR OF CONVENTO SANT'AGOSTINO
BY BR. JACK STAGLIANO, O.S.A.

health allows, keep your bodily appetites in check by fasting and abstinence from food and drink” (3,2) ... It is better to be able to make do with a little than to have plenty” (3,5). Within the framework of the common life, he highlighted: “The degree to which you are concerned for the interests of the community rather than for your own is the criterion by which you can judge how much progress you have made. Thus in all the fleeting necessities of human life something sublime and permanent reveals itself, namely love” (5,2).

At the same time something else new was happening. The Order began to move into urban settings. In the general catalogue of 2005 you can find the foundation dates of certain Augustinian houses within important cities: Santo Spirito in Florence (1250), Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome (1250), Tolentino (1250) and Santa Trinita in Viterbo (1250). The eremitical life was beginning to be understood less rigidly and to show signs of evolving toward a broader expression.

The majority of the members, however, continued to live in outlying areas. To get an idea of just how outlying these areas were, you can find an amusing description of how to reach the remains of the hermitage of Valle Bona today by car and foot: “From Lucca follow Provincial Highway # 445 along the right bank of the river. After about 9 km, pass Borgo a Mozzano and look on your left for the road for Fabbriche di Valico (7.7 km); outside the village after about 2 km take the dirt road; a few hundred meters later cross the stream and climb up the hill to a farm house. That is what is left of the hermitage with its little church but no longer with its bell tower”.

The second foundational event was the Grand Union of 1256. There are two theories regarding this later union. One speaks of the Holy See’s grafting four eremitical Orders – the John Bonites, the Williamites, the Brettino Hermits and the Hermits of Monte Favale – onto the Augustinian Hermits of Tuscany, making it larger and stronger by the addition of new forces. The other speaks of a completely new Order freshly composed of the five previously existing Orders. According to the first theory, the foundation date of the Order of St. Augustine would be 1244; according to the second, 1256.



More important, however, was the new nature of the Order. With the promulgation of the papal bull, *Licet Ecclesiae catholicae*, by Alexander IV, things changed radically. The Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine became a “Mendicant” Order. The Mendicant Movement, to which the Augustinians were being joined, was a revolutionary response to a revolutionary situation in Europe. Life had been evolving rapidly in

commerce and in society. Urban centers were springing up and boiling over with activity. Populations were growing quickly, and there came the need for a new evangelization. Religious Orders like the Dominicans and the Franciscans were born, with a life style that was closer to the people and more adaptable to serving. Their “friars” – as their members came to be called – were sent to preach to the people of the cities, to educate on

the faith, and to inspire the citizens to the Christian life. In 1256 a new Order entered their ranks. The Augustinian Hermits became the Augustinian “Friars”.

The image I have of those times is helped every time I visit nearby Siena with its crowded medieval streets, classy shops and important banking institutions. It was to centers like this that the new Augustinian friars moved from hermitages like Rosia along the road to the coast, Lecceto and San Leonardo by Lake Verano, and Sant’Antonio near the hot springs of Valaspra. Within the city walls they began to build one “convento” – as they called their houses - after another with its adjacent urban church in most of the important cities of Italy. Beyond the Alps, houses grew up throughout the European capitals and commercial cities.

Back in Siena, if you have the energy to go up to the top of the Civic Tower, you can look down on the roofs of the city and see four very large churches emerge out of four sections of the city, all equidistant

from each other. They are San Domenico, San Francesco, Sant’Agostino, and Santa Maria del Carmine, the homes of the four principal Mendicant Orders in Siena, the Dominicans, the Franciscans, the Augustinians and the Carmelites. This same pattern was repeated in many other medieval cities.

Within the history of the Augustinian Order there is no particular foundation myth. There are no charismatic figures to point to, no miraculous events, and no breath-taking manifestations of the will of God. It all seems rather matter-of-fact. After 40 years the Mendicant Movement was working well. Church authorities, with their good organizational sense, saw the value of uniting existing religious groups and placing them, each with its own originality, into the Movement for the common good of the Church. That is what we mean when we say that it was the Church herself who founded the Order.

With the event of the Grand Union the Order’s “new song to the Lord” definitely

changed key, and its words were updated. The hermits were no longer hermits, but friars. The strictly contemplative life moved into a more flexible mode. Out of the woods! Off of the hillsides! Yet the original melody could still be heard. There was still the genius of Augustine and the harmony his Rule gave to the common life. The air of contemplation was still recognizable. Only now another one of Augustine’s great qualities went into play, his spirit as pastor of souls. ✚



CONVOCATION 2009: A HISTORIC GATHERING OF THE FOUR NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCES

BY ABIGAIL PECHE

The Augustinian North American Convocation 2009 will be an historic gathering of the North American Provinces to discuss Augustinian spirituality and mission, and to reflect on the history of Augustinians in North America. The conference will be held June 8-12 at Pheasant Run Conference located in St. Charles, IL. This is also an opportunity for new and renewed friendship, an occasion to celebrate the past, to commit to the present and to plan for the future.

The Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova, the first of three Augustinian provinces in the United States, was founded 1796 and was formally established in 1874. Saint Augustine Church in Philadelphia, PA, the first foundation in the United States, was established by Irish friar Matthew Carr, O.S.A., upon his arrival in Philadelphia in 1796. (Photo Below)

Today, about 500 members of our Order live and work in the United States. The Villanova Province consists of nearly 225 Augustinians, living in communities in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania,

New Jersey, Washington, DC, North Carolina, and Florida, and as missionaries in Japan, Peru, and South Africa.

The Four Provinces, three in the United States and one in Canada, collaborate on many projects such as the North American Conference of Augustinian Provincials, the National Theologate in Chicago, the National Novitiate in Racine, the Augustinian Formation and Vocation Conference, the Augustinian Historical Institute and Augustinian Secondary Educational Association, the foreign missions and Hispanic ministry.

As the Augustinians of North America meet this summer, the Prior General of the Order, Very Rev. Robert Prevost, O.S.A. reflects on why this gathering is significant today and important for the future. Here are his responses to the questions:

When was the idea of a Convocation gathering of all North American provinces conceptualized and why?

Several years ago the Ordinary Provincial Chapters of two of the four provinces suggested that the friars of North America begin talking to one another about a common future which might or might not result in some type of federation of the provinces. The provincials, who have been meeting together annually over the course of many years, decided that it would be beneficial to invite the members of the Province Councils to take part in their annual meeting in February 2007. In discussing possible ways of promoting further dialogue among the Provinces, the decision was made to organize the Convocation. The idea was to promote a gathering of as many friars as possible so they could get to know one another better, become better acquainted with the living history of each Province, and to begin talking about our future as Augustinians in the United States and Canada.

What is the historical significance of this gathering?

In recent years, in various regions of the Order throughout the world, Augustinians are recognizing that there is much to be gained by working together, even across our traditional province lines. Latin America was a pioneer in many ways, with the creation of OALA, the Organization of Augustinians of Latin America, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. More recently, there have been movements

toward greater collaboration, sharing of resources and personnel, and even structural reconfigurations among groups of Augustinians. For example in Italy, where there were previously seven provinces, they gradually worked to unite into one. The Provinces of the Netherlands and Belgium will soon merge into one Province. In Brazil there is now a federation of three circumscriptions (two vicariates and one delegation) that had originally been established as missions of three different provinces in Europe. They have already decided to request becoming a new Province in the next Ordinary General Chapter. The conversation



PRIOR GENERAL ROBERT PREVOST, O.S.A.

occurring among the friars of North America is another instance of a desire for greater collaboration and of an openness to envisioning new and different ways of working together in the future. What will be occurring at the convocation in North America will be of interest to the entire Order which in various places has been examining and will continue to examine alternate ways of viewing ourselves and working together.

It is important to point out that there is already a great deal of collaboration going on among the four Provinces in North America. This includes the formation programs, Hispanic ministry, the education apostolate, and missions. It is therefore significant that many are looking for even greater cooperation, in sharing resources and working together to prepare for the future of the Order in Canada and the United States.

On a more immediate level, the fact that the four Provincials together went to such great lengths to visit all four of the Provinces during this past year is historic, and actually quite remarkable. They provided a great opportunity for dialogue and I think it was a great way to help

prepare for the upcoming Convocation.

As an international Order, what outcomes would you like to see evolve from this gathering for North America Provinces and internationally?

Certainly the coming together for a week of conversation, prayer, renewal of friendship and the making of new acquaintances, in itself is of great value. As Augustinians we consider our identity as brothers who share life in common to be a great value, and it is an important part of our witness to the Church. When Augustinians come together, whether in small groups of two or three or in much larger gatherings, there is an immediate sense of familiarity that takes place without much need for introduction. So one result of the gathering will be a greater awareness and appreciation of our unity, our brotherhood, the values we share in common and the good works we are doing in our various provinces. Another outcome, once again, will be the witness this offers to Augustinians in other provinces, and, we hope, to the people where we are serving throughout the world. In addition, I think that the younger members of the Order are asking important questions, and I hope that the Convocation will be a real source of hope and encouragement for them and for all who take part.

What specific goals would you like the four provinces to work toward at this meeting, if any?

The Provincials and province counsellors in their preparatory meetings during February of this year deliberately wished to leave a great deal of space for the work of the Holy Spirit in this gathering. While much planning and preparation has already gone into the process leading up to the Convocation, it has to do mainly with organizing a program for the week, that will allow for fruitful conversation among a large number of friars and opportunities to do some dreaming and planning together about our future as an Order in North America. The goals, therefore, remain rather general. We want to get to know one another better, to enjoy one another's company, to pray together (and it has been emphasized how important the celebration of the liturgy and common prayer will be), and to have an open and free conversation about who we are, where we find ourselves, and where we think the Lord is leading us. ✚



A GLIMPSE

St. Theresa's Boys' Home is run by the Augustinian Sisters in Durban, South Africa. It houses about 75 boys with ages between infancy-17 years old. Some of the boys are orphans, and the rest are referred to the home by social workers due to problems with abuse or neglect. Many have lost their parents to AIDS, some are infected themselves. In this photo, Minenhle stands in front of a wall of handprints from the boys.



THE AUGUSTINIAN FAMILY: A SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS BY NATALIE AGRAZ

PAUL IMBESI

Paul Imbesi graduated from St. Augustine's Prep, Richland, New Jersey in 1997 and Villanova University in 2001. He is currently a Sales and Marketing Specialist for North American Beverage and has recently been named to the Board of Trustees of St. Augustine Prep, serving on the Alumni Relations Committee.

NA: Paul, your family has a long history with the Augustinians. Your father graduated from St. Augustine's Prep and Villanova University, your mother has served on the boards of both of those schools. Tell me about your personal history with the Augustinians.

PI: Well, I started at St. Augustine's elementary school in Ocean City and from there went to St. Augustine's Prep in Richland, NJ. That's where I first met the Augustinians. We were one of the last small classes; my graduating class was only 42 students. Fr. Steve LaRosa was the head of the school then and my religion teacher. He was really quite a character. He really shaped the school, he saw the Prep through good times and bad. In Fr. Steve's mind nobody ever really graduated, he always saw us as his kids. He had this tough guy facade to the students but he really had a caring fatherly heart. I ran into him five years after graduation and he told me to get a haircut. That kind of thing. And Fr. Paul Galetto is really carrying on in the same spirit; his heart and soul are in that school.

NA: You developed a special relationship with another Augustinian, Father Appicci, before he died, tell us about that.

PI: I got to know Fr. Appicci during a rough patch in my life. I was kind of at loose ends in a job that I didn't like and thinking of getting back into journalism it was 2006 and he had been diagnosed with esophageal cancer. Just from talking to him I thought he would be a great interview. It was harder than I thought because he was such a humble man; he never wanted to talk about himself. He never told me about inviting Dr. Martin Luther King to Villanova during the civil rights movement, or speaking out against the Vietnam War or all the things he was responsible for in Chulucanas, Peru. I heard about most of these things in the eulogy at his funeral. Fr. Appicci was really a remarkable man he knew how to get things done, he knew how to change things and he did it by talking to everybody, working with everybody, bringing everybody to the table. I went to Chulucanas in November of 2007 with Fr. Scott Ness and Anthony Dellomo; it was great to see first hand, all the things he had talked about in the third world. It was great to see the things he cared so much about, the hospital, the seminary, the simple faith of these poor people. It made a big impression on me and I'm thankful I did it. It was also great to experience another culture. Problem solving in the third world is so much harder, they don't have the white board, action plan type of mentality. It's so much harder to get things done. You start spinning wheels you didn't even know you had.

NA: You're continuing a family tradition of service by filling a seat on the Board at St. Augustine's Prep. What have you learned from the experience so far?

PI: I've learned I have big shoes to fill! I'm still learning. The board does many things and is broken down into committees, each dealing with a different aspect of the school. I'm involved with the alumni and fundraising arm. One of the things I've always liked about the Prep is the diversity of the student body; they try to keep the tuition as low as possible so they can attract students from all walks of life. You don't have to come from a wealthy background to go to school there. That diversity is part of the soul of the school; they find great students everywhere and they have the same high expectations for everyone. Everybody feels included and accepted. To maintain this feeling we need to have scholarship money available and good facilities, resources are always a challenge.

NA: Did you see a common string going through the Augustinian institutions you have been associated with?

PI: Yes, it's an environment of encouragement and a level playing field, usually working on teams and in small groups. Everyone's out to work hard and do their best. On St. Augustine's Board, Fr. Don Reilly has said, we want everyone to participate; we're looking for the best ideas. It's a real collaboration, a real collaborative spirit. Everyone is valued, every opinion is heard. I felt the same spirit at St Augustine's Prep and Villanova as a student. It's a welcoming, supportive feeling.

NA: As the youngest Board member and an alum, your in a position to influence things now, what contributions do you hope to make to the Prep?

PI: First, I'd like to say I feel so honored to have been asked to continue our family's tradition of service and support to St. Augustine's. And yes, it's different sitting on the other side, the decision making side. The Prep like every other private institution will be facing tough times. We need all the time, talent and treasure we can capture and I hope to be able to communicate those needs effectively to the alumni. I think that is the way in which I can best serve the board and the school. I also hope I can employ some newer technologies that my generation is so familiar with to tell the story of St. Augustine's Prep. ✚

DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The Province's Development Council works tirelessly to advise and assist the Augustinians in raising awareness and funds to support the many good works the friars are engaged in. The Province is indebted to all who serve on the Development Council:

Donald F. Reilly, O.S.A., *Prior Provincial*
Charles P. Connolly, Jr., *Chairman*
Natalie Agraz, *Director of Development*
Margaret S. Boova
Thomas Buckley
James Delaney
Anthony Dellomo
Basil DiSipio
Peter Federico
Anthony Genovese, O.S.A.
Brad MacDonald
Anthony Madrigale
Claudia Madrigale
Mary Ellen Maggitti
William Mahoney
Joseph Makoid
James J. McCartney, O.S.A.
Jack Morey
Karen Morey
William "Tip" O'Neill, Jr.
James O'Connor
Michael Picotte
Robert Saldutti
John Smock

HONORARY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

William Hallissey
Gary Holloway

VOCATION

Amazing Grace

BY JOHN J. LYDON, O.S.A.

“This is the Good News of which I have become minister by a gift of God, a grace he gave me, when his power worked in me. This grace was given to me, the least among all the holy ones: to announce ... the immeasurable riches of Christ.” St. Paul, (Letter to the Ephesians 3, 6-8)

St Paul underscores the power of God’s grace in overcoming the many obstacles that life can throw at a person. On Sunday, Jan. 25th, the feast of his Conversion to the faith of Christ, we saw once again proof of God’s grace acting in the lives of three young men that finished their novitiate year and professed vows as Augustinians of the Vicariate of Chulucanas. Each of their stories is unique, as all human stories are, but they highlight in a remarkable way the power of God’s grace that St. Paul humbly wrote about.

Klever Mondrogon comes from a small village 2 hours walk from the town of Pacaipampa. It is not a flat easy walk, rather it is straight down the mountain, and then straight up again. It is thus no surprise that no one from his town every finished high school. The closest high school is in the town of Pacaipampa, so between him and a high school education is that daily walk down the mountain beginning at 5am and that daily walk back up the mountain arriving as the sun sets. Over the years many anxious to continue their schooling started out in that daily routine, but little by little they gave up either because their primary education was so deficient that the high school studies required extra efforts to catch up, or because the walk each day took its toll and the desire to make it to the end evaporated under the afternoon sun.

Like many before him, and like several other of his classmates, Klever began with the desire to finish high school. They all heard the stories of earlier groups that it wasn’t worth the trouble and difficulties involved. However, eager to try they began. One by one they stopped showing up and the group of friends going to high school dwindled until it was Klever alone. For five years (Peru has 6 years of primary education and 5 years of high school), Klever faithfully made the march back and forth and became the first one to finish high school in those circumstances. During those years he also developed a relationship with the parish in Pacaipampa and began to think about a religious vocation. A high school education is the basic requirement for entering a seminary in Peru. This animated Klever even more and upon his graduation he asked to attend the center of vocation discernment that the diocese runs in the town of Santo Domingo. From there he was able to see the



KLEVER MONDRAGON, SABINO PICHEN, ELEVI SANTOS, BISHOP TURLEY, FR. JOHN LYDON, FR. GIOBERTY CALLE, AND FR. JUAN SEMINARIO

difference between diocesan life and Augustinian religious life and opted to enter the Augustinians. After three years of philosophy studies in Trujillo he was admitted to the novitiate and is now a professed Augustinian ready to begin his theology studies.

Such a great obstacle stood in his way, but such is the power of God’s grace.

Sabino Pichen comes from a mountain town several hours away from Trujillo called Cascas. Augustinian religious sisters from Spain minister in the town that every so often has a resident priest and then may go several years without one. His mother is a deaf and mute, abandoned by his father. In a poor country like Peru there are no social safety nets, so there is nothing to give a hand to the deaf. Faced with the burden of trying to raise a son in an environment harsh to anyone that is deaf, it only seemed that Sabino’s fate would be a dark spiral down with his mother. However, the Augustinian sisters extended a hand to bring in the mother and to make sure the son was feed and got an education. That act of solidarity marked Sabino’s life and opened his eyes to the transformative power of love that the Gospel invites even strangers to show one another. Overcoming the great difficulties that life had given him, Sabino saw the power of God at work in his life and decided he wanted to try to share that experience with others as an Augustinian. His profession day once again showed the power of amazing grace.

Elevi Santos comes from a semi-tropical region that lies in a remote part of the country between Chulucanas and Trujillo on seldom travelled roads. Because it was remote, it became a haven of one of the terrorist movements that wrought tremendous damage in Peru from 1980 to 1995. As a child playing in the streets, each day the terrorists armed with machine guns walked the streets of his small town. The police and army, in charge of security, did not dare enter that region because of the many valleys and mountains that made ambush a certain fate. So the zone was considered to be a terrorist zone by the government and left to its own fate.

In order to have men serve as terrorist it was very common that they would enter a town and then kidnapped young men in their early teens. They would then indoctrinate them, train them, and under fear of a death sentence, make them comrades in the attempt to bring down all social order. As Elevi grew older

into his teen years, he and his friends knew this was always a possibility. They had to keep a vigilant eye always open, so at the first sign of terrorist coming into town they would flee into the underbrush and hide until it seemed safe. Several of Elevi’s friends did not make it and were scooped up in this evil strategy of terrorist recruiting. Most of them died in the years of guerrilla warfare that followed. However, Elevi did make it out of the town when he was old enough and headed to Lima to work and make a new life for himself. He had one aunt in Lima and headed there finding work as a cook in a restaurant in the area that surrounds the Augustinian house in Lima. In the parish where his aunt lives he participated in the youth group and there was told about different lives of the saints. He read about St. Augustine’s conversion and was immediately drawn to it. One day while working he mentioned to a friend about St. Augustine and the friend told him that the Augustinian friars were just around the corner from the restaurant. He decided to stop by and talk to the priest in the community and little by little wondered if he was also called to that lifestyle. He eventually decided to make the leap of faith and entered the Augustinian formation program. Finishing first in his class throughout his philosophy studies he continued on to the novitiate and made his profession of vows. To walk on the edge between a free life and a life of imposed terror, to go to the country’s capital city with no ties and look for work, and to mysteriously be brought into the Augustinian family, is surely a sign of the great victory of God’s grace in the life of Elevi.

Victory of God’s Grace

BY LUIS M. MADERA, O.S.A.

On January 25th, the liturgical feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, the paradigmatic Christian story of the victory of God’s grace, these three young men, overcoming obstacles that to many would have been insurmountable, made their profession as Augustinian religious. With Sabino was his deaf mother making the first trip in her life to Lima, accompanied by one of the Augustinian sisters. With Klever was his sister making the long trip to celebrate with him. And with Elevi was the aunt whose welcome mat made his stay in Lima possible. They and the many Augustinians who participated in the mass were witnesses as each of the young men came up in front of the altar and knelt to profess their vows. All were witnesses once more of the grace of God overcoming darkness and inviting new Augustinians to follow his light.



LUIS MADERA, O.S.A. AND JORGE CLETO, O.S.A. WITH PARTICIPANTS AT RETREAT.

PRAYER FOR AUGUSTINIAN VOCATIONS

Please join the Augustinians in praying for vocations to the Augustinian way of life:

Let us pray to the Lord of the harvest
Who calls men and women to
loving service.

All glory and praise are yours,
God of truth, light of our hearts,
for you guide your people
in the ways of holiness.

Help those who follow
in the footsteps of Augustine
to seek you through mutual love
and worship
and to be servants of your Church
as examples that others may follow.

Enlighten men and women to see
the beauty of common life
in the spirit of Saint Augustine
and strengthen them in your service
so that the work you have begun
in them
may be brought to fulfillment.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE AUGUSTINIANS?
VISIT WWW.AUGUSTINIAN.ORG

✚ TO CONTACT OUR VOCATION OFFICES:

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EMAIL vocations@augustinians.org

CALIFORNIA Fr. Tom Whelan, O.S.A.
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CANADA Fr. Francis Galvan, O.S.A.
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EMAIL frgalvan@sympatico.ca

CASA AGUSTIN/
HISPANIC DISCERNMENT Fr. Luis Madera, O.S.A.
PHONE 305.474.0576
EMAIL vocaciones@losagustinos.org

EVER ANCIENT EVER NEW

“Let neither of us say that he has found the truth. Let us seek it in such a way as if neither of us knows it. For it is thus that we shall be able to seek it with diligence and harmony, if without any rash presumption we do not believe that we have found it and know it.” - Saint Augustine (Answer to the Letter of Mani Known as The Foundation 3, 4)

Religious, academic, scientific, and political arenas are places of debate and controversy. That is not a bad thing. Spirited discussion, airing of different points of view, the freedom to propose ideas that can be vetted, aired, dissected, and evaluated from all sides is a good way to seek truth and understanding. But these discussions can be violent. The quest for truth is not a contest to be won, a battle to be fought, or a competition with winners and losers, right and wrong. When it takes on the characteristics of battle, no matter how civil it may appear, the quest for truth loses the humility that is the condition for the possibility of truth. Where there is fear of dominance of one view over all others, fear of humiliation for expressing a point of view that others have discredited, or fear of having a view dismissed outright because someone judges me as a person unqualified to express a point of view, then what is lost is the loss of truth itself. We find truth when it possesses us – we have no power on our own to possess truth.

The spiritual and psychological maturity required to engage in the search for truth requires humility more than any other virtue or ability. This humility opens us to the awareness of our own limitations and the limitations of our experience and perspective without diminishing the fact that I have something of value to contribute to the search. This humility further opens me to the possibility that another who has experiences and therefore perspectives different than my own may have something to teach me. The humility required to seek the truth begins when I understand that I have more to learn than I have to teach.

RAYMOND F. DLUGOS, O.S.A.

“Let’s pretend,” Augustine seems to say. Let’s talk in a way that allows each one to have a say and to be heard. Today, it seems, being “right” and showing someone else that I know what I am talking about has often led to verbal exchanges that look more like battles that efforts toward some greater truth or good. So . . . was Augustine really just trying to “set up” those to whom we was addressing this letter – the Manichees?

I went to my bookshelf to see the context; Augustine wants those on the other “side” to renounce arrogance and pledges to do the same. Rather than a ploy, in fact, he is trying to make sure that



that which we can end up fighting about. It’s a community affair – or at least a matter of two or three. Getting those two or three to share ‘in His name’ doesn’t ever seem to happen when the “I-am-right” attitude takes over. In the process, I think truth gets lost too.

ALLAN FITZGERALD, O.S.A.

“We are men made after the image of our Creator. ... We run among all the things beneath us - things which could not have been created, formed, nor ordered without the hand of the most essential, wise and good God - and through all the works of creation. We gather from some things more manifest marks, from other things less apparent traces of His essence. And, beholding His image in ourselves, like the prodigal child we recall our thoughts homeward, and we return to Him from whom we have fallen. There our being shall have no end, our knowledge no error, our love no offence.” [Saint Augustine, “The City of God”, XI, 28]

PATRICK LAFERTY, O.S.A.

There are certain tenets of clericalism that fly in the face of Augustine’s humble quest for truth that his statement epitomizes. They might be put like this: “I have the truth! Let me teach it to you. You must sit and listen and obey. To question me is to question truth. Your questions are not questions but statements emanating from your refusal to accept my legitimate, established authority. My office and position assure me and you of the authenticity of my claim. Do not question me!”

In his fight against the Donatists and other heresies of his day, Augustine did insist that his position was the truthful position - the position of the Church. But he labored to demonstrate it. He did not adopt the tenuous invulnerability of mere authoritative statements from on high. Augustine’s words serve as a warning that our fall back position in our struggle against modern fallacies and dangers should always have this element of compassionate collaboration with all God’s children, ever searching for the truth.

FRANCIS SIROLI, O.S.A.

the exchange was friendly; otherwise, no progress toward the truth of the matter would have been possible. When winning is the only thing, then people don’t matter.

It is nice to see how a man well-versed in polemics and fully aware of the truth he stood for could recognize how truth-seeking takes us beyond this-or-that conversation, beyond some momentary “victory”, beyond

NEWS AND NOTES

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

*Stay on top of news and events
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Diconate Ordination of Augustinian

The Ordination to the diaconate of Michael R. Scuderi, O.S.A. was held on Saturday, March 28, 2009 at the 5pm Mass at St. Rita of Cascia, Philadelphia, PA. After recently completed his theological studies in Chicago, IL, Michael is currently assigned to Saint Rita of Cascia Parish, Philadelphia, PA.



Augustinian Receives Award

Fr. Fritz Cerullo, O.S.A., the former pastor of St. Mary Church in Dover, NH, was awarded the first Wentworth Douglass Hospital Spiritual Care Award. In this first-time recognition of a spiritual leader, staff members honored Fritz for his devotion to the spiritual health of their patients.

CHAPLAIN JULIEN OLIVIER PRESENTED FRITZ CERULLO, O.S.A. THE AWARD



New House for Pre-Novitiate Program

The Province of St. Thomas of Villanova recently signed a sale of purchase of the former convent of St Colman Parish in Ardmore, PA to be used to house the Pre-Novitiate and Discernment programs. Only 3.5 miles from Villanova University, both its location and space will complement the increasing interest of men considering the Augustinian way of life. The mission statement of the new Bellesini Friary reads:

The Rule of Saint Augustine invites us to be of “one mind and one heart intent upon God.” In that spirit, and under the patronage of Blessed Stephen Bellesini, an eighteenth century Augustinian friar committed to the education and formation of young adults, Bellesini Friary is a house of initial formation for men in the Pre-Novitiate program. With an emphasis on prayer and community, Bellesini Friary also provides opportunities for men discerning the Augustinian way of life.

North American Conference of Augustinian Provincials (NACAP) in San Diego

The Provincials, Counselors, Secretaries and Treasurers of the four North American English Speaking Provinces met in San Diego, February 3-5th. Thirty-two Augustinians, including the Prior General, Robert Prevost, O.S.A. and Assistant General, Michael DiGregorio, O.S.A., attended this meeting at the Kolbe Center located on the campus of the University of San Diego. This was an opportunity for all of the leadership of the provinces to meet and discuss as a group. The meetings were informative and candid. This was the third gathering. They met together last February 2008 in San Diego.

KEEPING TRACK

Following the vow of obedience, friars find themselves called to where they are needed. Each issue of The Augustinian hopes to connect you with some familiar faces as we provide brief updates on friars serving throughout the Province. Watch here to track down that old classmate, pastor, chemistry teacher, chaplain, philosophy professor, coworker or friend.

Luis A. Vera-Sanchez, O.S.A.



Fr. Luis A. Vera-Sanchez, O.S.A., serves as Director of Students at the Saint Augustine Friary and the Catholic Theological Union, in Chicago, IL. In 2002, Fr. Vera-Sanchez was first assigned as prior and formation team member at the Augustinian College, Washington, DC before the Province's theological and formation program was transferred to Chicago, IL in 2007. Fr. Vera-Sanchez maintained the same positions until he was recently reassigned as the Director of Students.

Fr. Vera-Sanchez first encountered Augustinian friars in 1987, when he moved to New York, NY, to work and improve his English-language skills. He entered the Hispanic vocation program, Casa Tolentino, at Saint Nicholas of Tolentine parish, Bronx, NY, in 1988. Fr. Vera-Sanchez was received into the Order as a novice in August 1990, and after a year at Blessed Stephen Bellesini Novitiate, Racine, WI, he professed first vows on August 10, 1991. He professed solemn vows on March, 16 1996. He was ordained to the priesthood on October 10, 1996, at Saint Rita of Cascia Church, Philadelphia, PA, by Bishop Sean O'Malley, OFM Cap.

In 1996 Fr. Luis was assigned to Our

Lady of Good Counsel parish, Staten Island, NY, where he served as associate pastor until 1999. In 1999 until 2002, he studied in the doctoral program at the Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, IL, and obtained his D. Min. in spirituality and liturgical studies.

Francis J. Cerullo, O.S.A.



Fr. Fritz Cerullo, O.S.A., will be working with the Development Office of the Provincial Offices beginning in June and will be working out of Andover, MA. He recently had been pastor of Saint Mary parish in Dover, NH for eight and a half years. Fr. Fritz has been engaged in parochial ministry since 1994 when he was assigned to Saint Augustine Parish, Andover, MA. Since then he has offered consulting for development to various parishes, schools and agencies. Fr. Fritz gained his knowledge and experience in development when he served as Director of Development at Merrimack College for 12 years (1982-1994).

Fr. Fritz was received into the Order as a novice on September 9, 1963, and after a year at Good Counsel Novitiate, New Hamburg, NY he professed first vows on September 10, 1964. He professed solemn vows on September 10, 1968. He was ordained to the priesthood on August 28, 1971, at Saint Denis Church, Havertown, PA, by Bishop Peter Van Diepen, O.S.A., Bishop of Manokwari, Indonesia.

Prior to his assignment at Merrimack College, Fr. Fritz served at Saint Rita of Cascia parish, Philadelphia, PA, (1971-1977) where he founded the Saint Rita Community center, an inter-generational program for elderly and youth.

Thomas P. Dwyer, O.S.A.



Fr. Thomas P. Dwyer, O.S.A., has returned to Japan, after recuperating from surgery at Saint Thomas Monastery, Villanova, PA. Before his surgery, Fr. Tom, who volunteered for the Japanese mission in 1959, has returned to Saint

Augustine, Fukuoka, Japan.

Fr. Tom was received into the Order as a novice on September 9, 1950, and after a year at Good Counsel Novitiate, New Hamburg, NY, he professed first vows on September 10, 1951. He professed solemn vows on September 10, 1954. He was assigned to Collegio Santa Monica, Rome for his theological studies, (1955-1959), and was ordained in Rome on December 20, 1958.

Shortly after his ordination, Fr. Tom began his ministry in Japan. While serving there he has worked at each of the four mission parishes: Our Mother of Consolation, Nagasaki; Saint Augustine, Fukuoka; Saint Augustine, Tokyo; Saint Monica, Nagoya. In each of these communities and parishes Fr. Tom served in a diversity of capacities including, associate pastor, pastor, prior, treasurer, as well as regional superior.

John E. Breshnahan, O.S.A.



Fr. John E. Breshnahan, O.S.A., currently resides at Saint Thomas Monastery, Villanova, PA, since 1995. Prior to his time at Saint Thomas Monastery, Fr. Breshnahan spent many years providing service to the Augustinian community by teaching at colleges such as Merrimack College, North Andover, MA, Villanova University, Villanova, PA, and at Augustinian College, Washington, DC.

Fr. Breshnahan was received into the Order on September 9, 1928, and he professed his first vows on September 10, 1929. He attended Villanova College, (1929-1933), where he received his BA in philosophy. He professed solemn vows on September 10, 1932. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 6, 1936, at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC, by Bishop John McNamara.

In 1968, Father became the librarian at Augustinian College, a position he held until 1995 when he came to serve at Saint Thomas Monastery. As librarian, Fr. Breshnahan advised many theological students of our community and of many other communities, as they researched topics for their class projects and papers.



IN PARADISUM

The following Augustinian friars were called home to God in recent months. You can read full biographies of these Augustinians, and post your own reflections or favorite memory, online at www.augustinian.org



FRANK P. CUCCINOTTA, O.S.A.

BORN: 8/31/1922
FIRST PROFESSION: 4/26/1966
ORDAINED: 11/19/1966
DIED: 12/11/2008

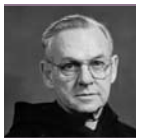
“Then and now, Frank was a Man of God. I have the deepest respect for him, then and now. He, like so many Augustinians, then and now, reflect the life of Christ in unique and authentic ways. Requiescat in pace”



GEORGE R. MORGAN, O.S.A.

BORN: 8/19/1939
FIRST PROFESSION: 9/10/1962
ORDAINED: 11/19/1966
DIED: 1/5/2009

“For thousands of Merrimack College alumni, Fr. George was an embodiment of the College's Catholic identity and Augustinian heritage. He brought the Augustinian mission of care and compassion to all he worked with.”



GEORGE J. CALLAGHAN, O.S.A.

BORN: 12/29/1929
FIRST PROFESSION: 9/10/1950
ORDAINED: 5/26/1956
DIED: 12/24/2008

“In the midst of his final years of sickness, he sought to journey with other who were in pain and experienced fear. He offered encouragement to those around him.”



THOMAS F. MARTIN, O.S.A.

BORN: 12/28/1943
FIRST PROFESSION: 9/4/1962
ORDAINED: 12/20/1969
DIED: 2/20/2009

Thomas Martin, an Augustinian friar from the Midwest Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel, taught for 14 years at our Province's Villanova University.

“He is remembered as someone who was a friend and companion to those seeking to discover God's loving presence in the mystery of life.”

Dear Friends,

I am writing to you today because I have a concern. My concern is probably similar to yours; how are families going to make it through this difficult time with an unstable economy and loss of jobs? Wherever we turn, bad news follows bad news. We Augustinians are living and working with those who are hurting. In this country and in our missions abroad, we witness first hand the consequences of loss and the stress that accompanies financial worry.

Companioning people through difficult times is what we have done in our country for the past two hundred years. We inherited this perspective on life from those friars who brought it with them from Ireland. Our parishes, our schools, and our missions, place us in direct contact with those who need our support. In order to stand with those who rely on our presence, we have established The Augustinian Fund. The Fund has enabled us to sustain our commitments, support those in need and make a difference in the lives of our sick and elderly friars. This year's Fund goal is \$1,000,000.00. The brochure I sent you last Fall describes why that amount is needed.

I am asking you to support this year's Fund by giving what you can. I realize the boldness of my request. I also know your Augustinian heart and your generous spirit. You have been a gift to us with your generosity and friendship. I turn to you to ask for your support. My fellow friars are doing God's work. My responsibility is to make sure they have what they need to do that work.

If you have already contributed to this year's Augustinian Fund you have our deepest gratitude. If you have not yet had the opportunity, may I ask you to make a donation either online at www.augustinianfund.org or mail a gift to 214 Ashwood Road Villanova, PA 19085. I assure you, your gift will make a difference. Be assured of my prayers for you and your family. I ask for your prayers for my fellow friars and myself as we strive to live the gospel in our daily lives.

Sincerely,

Donald F. Reilly, O.S.A.

Very Reverend
Donald F. Reilly, O.S.A.
PRIOR PROVINCIAL

AUGUSTINIAN VOLUNTEERS



CARE OF SICK AND ELDERLY



MISSIONS



JUSTICE & PEACE



Coming this May!

*A newly updated Augustinian Fund website.
Look for it soon at augustinianfund.org*

KEY NEW FEATURES INCLUDING:

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- New and easier ways to donate including online donations
- New online augustinian fund store
- Updated photo gallery
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Augustinian Friars: One in Mind and
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