

VOLUME IX . ISSUE III

# THE AUGUSTINIAN

FRIAR REFLECTIONS  
FOR A NEW YEAR p. 4

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“Everything is grace, everything is gift.”

— MICHAEL F. DI GREGORIO, O.S.A.



### 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.

### VOCATION 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.



### FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Friends,

This is our second devotional winter issue, repeated because of positive and touching comments expressed after the release of last year’s stained-glass issue. Most memorable were letters received from a gentleman who requested and distributed extra copies of the magazine...“the third went to a friend who was a nun and taught her entire adult life in Catholic institutions...I showed her the stained glass windows for each month and she asked me to stand up the Holy Family stained glass window facing her on her window sill. She is in hospice and is terminally ill.” His second letter, written two months later, said she had kept the stained glass image on her window sill until her death. “You made her happy.”

The images used for this year’s devotional issue are original photographs of relics and reliquaries, each paired with a friar reflection. It’s interesting to note that while the Church, via the Council of Trent in 1563, advocates the veneration of relics and accepts their benefits bestowed on us, Saint Augustine was a strong believer in their favors too. Consider an excerpt from Sermon 317, preached by Augustine in the year 425 A.D. when Saint Stephen’s ashes arrived in Africa:

*The blessed martyr Stephen, the first after the apostles to be ordained deacon by the apostles... shed luster on those lands when he suffered, and now that he is dead has come to visit these lands. Such a small quantity of dust has assembled such a big congregation here; the ashes can’t be seen; the favors received are visibly evident. Imagine, dearly beloved, what God must be keeping for us in the land of the living, if he grants us such favors from the dust of the dead...Let our hope and expectation of receiving temporal benefits be such, that we may deserve, by imitating that faith, to receive eternal ones.*

And so we send you our winter issue, with hope that each image and friar reflection will become a meaningful part of your year. —TEDDIE GALLAGHER

#### ON THE COVER:

Relic of Saint Augustine of Hippo. Cover photo and relic photos (except for May) by Bryan Smith

Photo of the relic of Saint Rita of Cascia by Daniel J. McLaughlin, O.S.A.

#### THE AUGUSTINIAN

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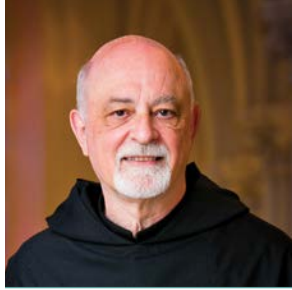
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## LETTER FROM THE

# PRIOR PROVINCIAL

### Dear Friends,

Exactly 50 years ago, on November 21, 1964, Pope Paul VI promulgated, in union with the world’s bishops gathered in Rome for the Second Vatican Council, a document entitled *Lumen Gentium*, rendered in English, *Light of the Nations*. In official ecclesial language, the document is known as the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, and sets forth Catholic teaching on fundamental aspects of the Church’s identity, structure, nature and purpose.

Among the teachings put forward in *Lumen Gentium* is the concept of the Church as “the People of God on pilgrimage,” which, in the words of the document itself, “like a stranger in a foreign land, presses forward amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God, announcing the cross and death of the Lord until He comes.”(1,8)

For us Augustinians, the causes of our gratitude on this pilgrimage together are many as we look back upon 2014. Some of these I shared with you in our last issue: in particular, the lives of friars who completed their journey in our midst. In the following pages of *The Augustinian* you will read of yet another friar, Father John Payne, O.S.A., who was called home to the Father suddenly and unexpectedly in October. We give thanks, too, for our Provincial Chapter, the effects of which are still unfolding; for the generous ministry and witness of our friars; and for the many friends and associates who surround us and make our life possible.

We give thanks, as well, for the new vocations the Lord has introduced to us and whose faces you will come to know more and more. I ask you to pray for them as they grow in their experience of Augustinian life, and seek to know God’s will for themselves.

A special word of gratitude goes to Pope Francis, who has declared 2015 the *Year of Consecrated Life*, which holds special meaning for us Augustinians and for the many tens of thousands of men and women religious throughout the Church. The invitation of this year, while calling us to grow in our particular vocation as consecrated men and women, will also afford us the opportunity to make our way of life better known to the wider Church. One of the ways we intend to do this is through this publication, which we hope, will bring us closer to our readers, and perhaps inspire some to consider the possibility of our way of life for themselves. In this year of special observance ahead please pray for us friars and for new vocations.

Once again this year we offer a series of reflections for the year ahead prepared by our friars for your consideration. We present, in word and image, the lives of some of the great men and women of faith whose stories continue to inspire and encourage us.

As we journey through the months to come, let us take consolation and inspiration from the great treasury of the Church, and particularly from those men and women who are lights illuminating the path that we travel, so that we, too, may reach the final destination that is now their home.

Wishing you an abundance of God’s blessings, and the grateful awareness of them!

In Augustine,

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

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## THE AUGUSTINIAN

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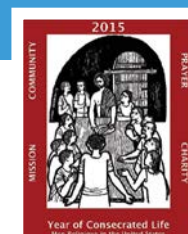
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**AUGUSTINIAN FRIARS CELEBRATE THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE**  
*Remembering our past...Living our present with passion...Embracing the hope of our future.*



# JANUARY

## RELIQUARY CALENDAR ALTAR MADE OF SAINTS FOR EACH DAY

Michael F. Di Gregorio, O.S.A.

*Prior Provincial, Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova*

On a Friday afternoon in October, I visited the National September 11 Memorial Museum at the World Trade Center site in New York City. Among the various media that are used to communicate the Memorial's message are artifacts, as small as glass shards, as large as fire engines, and even as massive as the very foundation walls of the original Trade Center towers. To visitors who pass in reverential quiet before the displays, these mundane artifacts seem to take on a sacred character. Given the context in which they are exhibited, and the powerful and tragic story which they tell, common objects have become blessed relics, and the setting in which they are displayed has itself become hallowed ground.

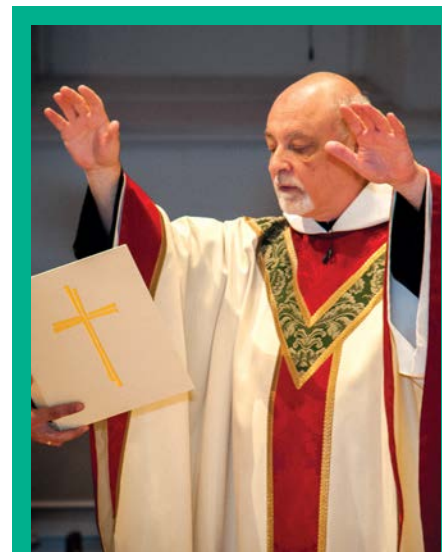
In Catholic and Orthodox tradition, as well as in some Eastern religions, the word relic has a precise and special meaning, and the very human experience related above helps to explain precisely why this is so. That which is ordinary and common assumes a character that evokes reverence when it is linked to a person or event which merits attention, respect and devotion. This connection, in turn, is rooted, for Christians, in our belief in creation and in the very mystery of the Incarnation.

In our faith tradition, God, who is all good, is the creator of everything that exists, and material things, therefore, participate in his goodness. The apex

of this handiwork, of course, is the human person, who among all creatures, not only best reflects the nature and goodness of God, but is the dwelling place of God's own Spirit, and has been ennobled by the taking on of created flesh by God's own Son.

Belief in the goodness, even sacredness, of the human body as the temple of the Holy Spirit led the early Christians to find it fitting, and even comforting, to celebrate the sacred Mysteries of faith in the very place where the bodies of the martyrs were laid to rest. After the period of severe persecution of the Church had ended, and she emerged from the catacombs to celebrate the faith openly in public places, the custom of offering Eucharist around the relics of the martyrs continued, transformed now into the practice of placing fragments of martyrs' bones—or, in time, those of any saint—within the stone altars upon which Mass was said. Relics came also to be preserved in vessels known as reliquaries, for veneration by the faithful.

Reverence for the relics of holy persons has long been one expression of devotion toward saints and blessed, and satisfies the human longing, so important in many cultures and traditions, for concrete expressions of faith and relationships. As the tradition of such veneration grew over time, there developed a division of relics into categories or classes: the first being the body of a saint; the second,



FATHER DI GREGORIO GIVES THE FINAL BLESSING AT THE MASS OF THE 2014 CHAPTER.

some object used by the saint; and the third, something touched to the body of a saint.

In the end, the veneration of relics is a reminder, and a sign, that the life of faith concerns every part of who we are: body, mind and soul, for in creating us in every dimension of our being, “God saw that it was good” (Genesis 1).

May the memory of the many saints who accompany us throughout the liturgical year encourage us in our pilgrimage of faith, inviting us to rediscover always the good that God has begun in us, and allowing him to bring our good works to completion.







# FEBRUARY

## SAINT BLAISE

David A. Cregan, O.S.A.

*Department Chair, Associate Professor, Villanova University Theatre Department*

There is a wisdom that claims that the voice contains the sound of the soul. Perhaps this ancient awareness is at the root of why the faithful flock to churches and chapels on the Feast of Saint Blaise to have their throats blessed. While a healthy throat is essential for nourishing a healthy body, its more sacred task is as a conduit of the praying voice lifting in words of gratitude, the singing voice soaring towards heaven through sacred psalms and hymns, and the joyful voice praising God in the assembly of believers.

On this Feast, believers for centuries have witnessed to the fact that the human throat is a unique and sanctified instrument, linking health of mind and body; a perfect example of how our body and soul are united and blessed through our discipleship with the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ.

The words of the blessing of Saint Blaise follow us down through the ages, acknowledging the intercessory power of this third century saint, physician and bishop. Saint Blaise is ranked through the devotional practices of the Roman Church as one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers, devoted to protecting believers against various diseases. While for hundreds of years Saint Blaise's name appears as one in this litany of the holy healers, it is interesting to consider why his name has remained so powerfully present in the spiritual consciousness and the liturgical calendar while the others

have largely faded into history.

Throughout human history there has been a continual universal call rising up for deeper meaning in life. In this age of individuality, and its concurrent isolation, we as a community of faithful disciples of Jesus have a response to that cry. Through our faith, our prayer, and our liturgy, our very lives are woven together to create a link between one another and between Heaven and Earth. As a result of this connection we are compelled to share the heavenly wisdom that we receive in prayer and common life with a world hungry for voices of faith and hope like ours. We must tell others what we have learned in our conversations with God, a sentiment fully practiced by Saint Blaise.

What are the potential fruits of this blessing today?

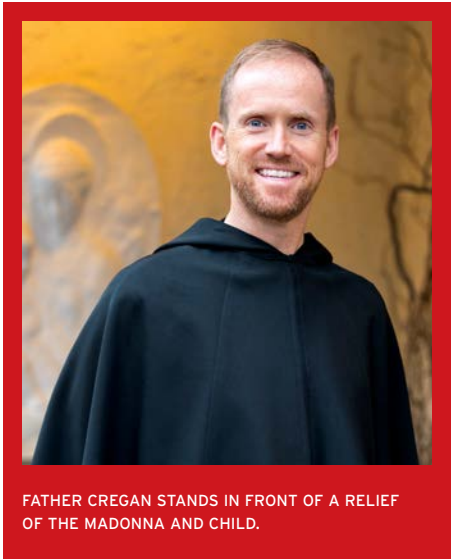
The blessing of the throat reminds us that the voice of our soul has a truth to speak, a truth from a life lived in pursuit of God. Our collective and individual voices, blessed on this Feast, have the potential to join a heavenly litany this day to pray for the courage to speak some of the wisdom of God we have gathered in faithfulness:

To speak for compassion...To speak for generosity...To speak for the voiceless.

To speak for acceptance...To speak for the frightened...To speak for humility.

To speak for forgiveness...To speak for gratitude.

By using this voice of heaven, the voice of his soul, Saint Blaise was imprisoned



FATHER CREGAN STANDS IN FRONT OF A RELIEF OF THE MADONNA AND CHILD.

and martyred for his refusal to deny Jesus. Perhaps when these candles are placed on our throats and we pray to be delivered from every disease of the throat and from every other illness, we might add our own prayer for a faith-filled voice of courage: that our spiritually healthy voices might have some small contribution in creating a world of healing, of peace and of hope in the promise of the coming of God's Kingdom. People of faith and service like you and me are very important these days. Our voices join with Pope Francis at this courageous time to bring into value all people, through compassion, generosity and hope.

*Saint Blaise, pray for us.*



# MARCH

## SAINT JOSEPH, PROTECTOR OF THE AUGUSTINIAN ORDER

Peter G. Gori, O.S.A.

*Pastor, Saint Augustine Parish, Andover, Mass.*

Relics are definitely one of those special “Catholic things,” wouldn’t you say? Objectively, it is not really all that strange. People go to great lengths to make and collect souvenirs from historical figures, sports celebrities, and others. I guess it’s the body parts in “first-class relics” of saints that can be considered over-the-top artifacts from another time and culture. Even in Saint Augustine’s time, relics could be suspect as to their authenticity. When I politely questioned my Augustinian Brothers about a relic in a street procession in Italy, they taught me a meaningful Italian expression: “Se non e’ vero, e’ ben trovato,” meaning, “If it’s not true, it should be.”

In the case of the saints, these are people whose lives have displayed what the Church regards as “heroic virtue” worthy of attention and imitation. Saint Joseph is certainly someone I have admired during my life and I have a lot of company in this. Catholics all over the world love and admire Saint Joseph. He is the declared Patron Saint of Austria, Belgium, Bohemia, Canada, Mexico, Peru, and (South) Vietnam. He is revered as the Universal Patron and Protector of the Universal Church, Protector of the Order of Saint Augustine, Patron Saint of Fathers, Workers and Carpenters. Many religious communities have been named after him. Everybody loves him!

Joseph was chosen by God to be the husband of Mary and the foster-father

of Jesus. The elements of that vocation are indicated in the gospel accounts. Right there we see what kind of man Joseph was. He struggled to do the right thing. At the same time, because of love of Mary and wanting to do the right thing, he was going to minimize the harm to her and her child. We see Joseph displaying the virtue of compassion. Then Joseph had his dream.

Through the medium of the dream Joseph learned what Mary had already learned, that this child was of God. Furthermore, the message to Joseph was not to fear and to take Mary as his wife. Joseph did so, thus displaying more virtues, namely courage and generosity and faithfulness.

With Mary, Joseph experienced the fascinating events surrounding the birth of Jesus—the visits from the shepherds in Bethlehem, who had been told by angels of the birth of Jesus, the long-awaited Messiah. Joseph and Mary both could identify with those who claimed to have had visits from angels! Then there was the visit from the three kings or Magi. With Mary, Joseph would ponder these experiences in his heart, learning to trust in God’s plan more and more. That’s another virtue of his, trusting.

Shortly after the birth of Jesus, Joseph had another dream in which he was warned that the baby was in great danger and they had to flee to Egypt. In all of this he showed himself to be the protector of God’s greatest gifts to the



FATHER GORI ON THE CAMPUS OF MERRIMACK COLLEGE.

human race, Jesus and his Mother, Mary.

Saint Joseph is also recognized as the Patron Saint of a Happy Death. Some years ago an older priest surprised me by asking me why Saint Joseph was associated with a “happy death.” (I thought every priest would know this!) I explained to him that tradition tells us that Saint Joseph died at home, in his own bed, surrounded by Mary and Jesus.

In the end, whether we believe relics of saints to be authentic or not, it’s not what is really important. What is important is that we know the lives of saints, whose virtues provide timeless inspiration for us all.







# APRIL

## CROSS AND RESURRECTION

Luis A. Vera, O.S.A.

*Prior, Saint Thomas Monastery, Villanova, Pa.  
Provincial Counselor*

The Gospel of Saint Luke (LK 24: 13–35), tells us that on that day of the Resurrection Jesus appeared to two disciples on their way to Emmaus. Trying to elicit a conversation, Jesus asked them what they were discussing. “Now that very day the two [disciples] were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred.” “What sort of things?” Jesus asks. They recounted what had happened to Jesus of Nazareth; that he was handed over to a sentence of death and he had been crucified. Jesus had been crowned with a crown of thorns, taken to a column to be scourged and had been crucified in between criminals. But the disciples on the way to Emmaus still did not understand that Jesus had risen and, although they were his disciples, they did not recognize that Jesus was the one conversing with them on the road.

As we look at the reliquary that contains the relics of the True Cross, the Column of Scourging and the Crown of Thorns, we might be like the disciples on the way to Emmaus: unable to see the whole picture, slow to understand the great mystery before us. As we contemplate the different relics, we might tend to see only the suffering, passion and death of Christ, but we must go beyond! In looking at these

symbols of pain and torture, suffering and death, we are called to see the whole Paschal Mystery. When we contemplate the Cross, the Column of Scourging and the Crown of Thorns we are also called to contemplate the birth, life and Resurrection of the Lord.

We must be able to see the whole life of Christ, a life that calls us to a new life. In the midst of conflicts and divisions, in the midst of illness and war, in the midst of the many sufferings of a creation that groans and awaits the Day of the Lord, we are called to Resurrection. We are called out of darkness into God’s wonderful light. As we contemplate the different elements of Christ’s passion and death, we move from the burning ashes of a Wednesday that call us to proclaim Lenten fasting, prayer, repentance and almsgiving—to the light and the glory of Easter Alleluias on the way to Emmaus.

And as Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread and gave it to the disciples, their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. He is risen! He lives among us! Our hearts, like the hearts of the disciples on the way to Emmaus, burn with the fire of Christ’s love! Our eyes are opened and we recognize him in one another. Saint Augustine says, “The Lord’s Resurrection is our hope” (Sermon 261:1). As people of the



FATHER VERA DURING HIS HOMILY AT A MASS  
IN SAINT THOMAS OF VILLANOVA CHURCH  
ON THE CAMPUS OF VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY.

Resurrection, we live in that hope. Death has no more power over us! We are invited to walk in the light of the birth, life, suffering, death and Resurrection of Christ. The Paschal Mystery! Alleluia!



# MAY

## SAINT RITA OF CASCIA

Joseph A. Genito, O.S.A.

*Pastor, Saint Rita of Cascia Parish and National Shrine, Philadelphia, Pa.*

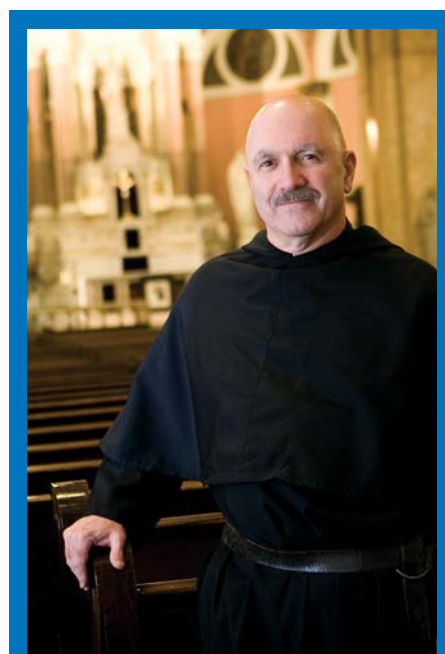
The National Shrine of Saint Rita of Cascia offers opportunities for people not only to learn about this appealing saint but also to experience, through symbols and art, a sense of physical proximity to her. Most powerful among them are her relics, a number of which are displayed in the Shrine for the faithful to reverence in various ways, whether it be kneeling in prayer before the main reliquary or kissing and touching the relic offered at the conclusion of the novena prayers. In every case, the power of the presence of the relic brings comfort to people whose stories parallel this saint. The faithful readily identify with Saint Rita, because when we say the Novena, we learn that her experiences covered every state of life. She was a wife and mother, a widow and a nun. She endured tragedy and grief at the murder of her husband and the fatal illness of her sons. She bore frustration at the denial of her requests to join the convent three times. In the course of her religious life, she willingly accepted the suffering of the persistently painful wound in her forehead. In short, she suffered in extraordinary ways, but also in ways that most people suffer.

Throughout all these challenges and obstacles, she remained steadfast in faith, a hallmark of her exemplary life. Time after time her faith was tested, and time

after time she responded by accepting the trials that came her way. From her youth, when she first wanted to join the Augustinian convent but obediently accepted the marriage arranged by her parents, through her old age as she was burdened with the wound that gave her great pain, she believed that conforming her will to God's will would eventually and ultimately bring her true happiness.

Saint Rita's example gives hope to all those who acknowledge their suffering before God and accept that, although it may never be taken away, they will be given the strength to bear it, as she did. However, there are reported cases of miraculous healings from various afflictions, as well as accounts from couples who were told they could not have children but whose faith in Saint Rita's intercession helped them believe and conceive. There are many women named Rita who can attest to that fact.

Reverencing her relic is a tradition which generates peace in the hearts of those who identify with her. It brings them closer to her as a real and true model of how ordinary human beings bear up under sometimes crushing obstacles and seemingly overwhelming odds. Often, people will press the relic to their hearts, heads or other parts of the body to beg for healing of their infirmities. But more often, they simply



FATHER GENITO, PICTURED AT SAINT RITA OF CASCIA SHRINE AND PARISH CHURCH.

kiss it in the hope that Saint Rita will help them find a way to cope. The relic of Saint Rita, then, is a great testimony to a remarkable woman whose life proclaims that faith does indeed heal, both body and spirit.

*Saint Rita of Cascia,  
Advocate of those in need,  
Pray for us.*





# JUNE

## SAINTS PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES

Robert J. Guessetto, O.S.A.

*Prior, Collegio Internazionale Santa Monica, Rome, Italy*

I live across the street from the Basilica of Saint Peter. Whenever I look out, first to the majestic columns and then into the massive square, my first thought is “how many people!” Once in the square, it’s unmistakable—pilgrims from every continent of the planet. That’s the point of it all, isn’t it?

The mission of our beloved Church, Peter’s and Paul’s mission, is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. For this, they came to Rome. This great feast of Saints Peter and Paul, first celebrated here, is all about preaching the Gospel, witnessing to Christ, facing opposition and persecution and advancing the mission of the Church, our Mother, our Family. Our Holy Father’s mission is that of Peter’s. In his own words at the 2014 Extraordinary Synod on the Family, “...these days will be lived with Peter and under Peter.”

The monumental grandness of the Basilica is that of an awesome sacred place to honor the tomb of the first of the apostles who looked upon the face of Christ, who walked with Christ, was instructed by Christ, loved by Christ. Here, the privilege and duty of a Christian pilgrim is to stand under the soaring cupola, before the lanterns of the confession, look down upon the tomb and make a heart-felt profession of faith: in the Trinity, in the Gospel, in the Church, all at the resting place of this Apostle, the eminent symbol

of unity in faith. It is a moment to ask for courage to live that faith, daily.

Today we honor Peter’s martyrdom, but curiously the first reading in Acts of the Apostles 12, 1–11 speaks of how Peter escaped martyrdom. He’s in prison, not in Rome, but in Jerusalem and is miraculously liberated from Herod’s prison chains by an angel of the Lord. A manifestation of God’s power and love...that his will for the Church not be obstructed. That liberation strengthened Peter’s faith, so that years later, when he was a prisoner here in Rome, he was prepared to give his life, knowing it to be a liberation in which the victory is God’s. How has the merciful, loving action of God, in our personal history, prepared us for the witness we are asked to give today?

My years here in Rome have been a gift. Here, I feel ‘tied’ to the Church. I rejoice in being a member of the Church, as here in Italy I feel ‘tied’ to the roots of the Order and rejoice in being a friar.

And Paul! Christ’s spokesperson, Christ’s voice; Paul writes and teaches with the heart of Christ. What eloquence and wisdom there is in Paul. How Christ loved and knew him and entrusted to him the incredible mission of making his Gospel sing!

Paul’s relationship to his communities was tender. He was amazed by and thankful for their goodness and their



FATHER GUESSETTO, PICTURED IN FRONT OF SAINT PETER’S BASILICA WITH THE STATUE OF SAINT PAUL IN THE BACKGROUND.

faith. Even in correction, his tone was respectful and gentle. They knew he was part of them; he held them in his heart and treasured that communion. I understand why Augustine was so devoted to Paul and was his faithful disciple. Augustine’s call to fraternal life in community draws from this fount of Gospel wisdom.

*Saints Peter and Paul, pray for us.*



# JULY

## MARY MAGDALENE, APOSTLE TO THE APOSTLES

Richard G. Cannuli, O.S.A.

*Faculty Member; Curator and Director of the University Art Collection  
of Villanova University, Villanova, Pa.*

Like a garment woven with gold thread, which has been patched with baser materials, like linen and cotton, we have to remove the baser threads in order to see the original garment, made of gold. Such is Mary Magdalene's story—one fused with others' stories in the Bible, whose true image needs to be restored.

There are many women in the Gospels with the name "Mary." Foremost is Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ. Then there is Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha and Lazarus; Mary, mother of James and Joseph; and Mary, wife of Cleopas. There are three unnamed women expressly identified as sexual sinners—the woman who wipes Christ's feet with ointment; a Samaritan woman, whom Christ meets at the well; and an adulteress, whom the Pharisees drag before Christ for condemnation. Mary Magdalene generally becomes mixed up with the three nameless repenting women, but none of these women are Saint Mary Magdalene.

So who is Mary Magdalene? This "Mary" is expressly identified as one of the women at the foot of the cross, who refused to leave Christ, which is why her courage and faithfulness are thought to be her most important attributes. All four Gospels explicitly place Mary Magdalene at the tomb. In John's Gospel, she is the first overt witness

to Christ's resurrection. Her witness, her presence at the tomb—not repentance, not sexual renunciation—is Mary's greatest claim. Unlike the men, who scattered and ran, who lost faith and betrayed Christ, the women stayed and chief among them was Mary Magdalene. John's Gospel (Ch.20) addresses this poignantly:

*It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved: 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb,' she said, 'and we don't know where they have put him.'*

Peter and the others rushed to the tomb to see for themselves, then dispersed again.

*Meanwhile, Mary stayed outside near the tomb, weeping. Then, still weeping, she stooped to look inside and saw two angels... They said, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' 'They have taken my Lord away,' she replied, 'and I don't know where they have put him.' As she said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, although she did not recognize him... Jesus said, 'Mary!' She knew him then and said to him in Hebrew, 'Rabbouni!' which means Master... So Mary of Magdala went and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord and that he had said these things to her.*

So what is the legacy of Mary Magdalene? In my estimation,



ARTIST AND ICONOGRAPHER FATHER CANNULI IS PICTURED WEARING HIS HANDMADE VESTMENT USED AS A BACKDROP FOR THE MARY MAGDALENE RELIC.

she is the greatest female saint after Mary, the mother of Jesus. Her great gift is that she was the first one Jesus appeared to after the resurrection. He entrusted her to go to his disciples announcing the great joy of the resurrection. In the traditions of the Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church, Jesus appeared to his mother first, then to Mary Magdalene, she who never departed from Jesus's side from the time of Jesus's public ministry to his passion, death and resurrection. Mary Magdalene is a study in faithfulness. Through her intercession and example, we may also proclaim the resurrected Christ when he comes at the end of time.





# AUGUST

## SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

Donald X. Burt, O.S.A. (1929–2014)

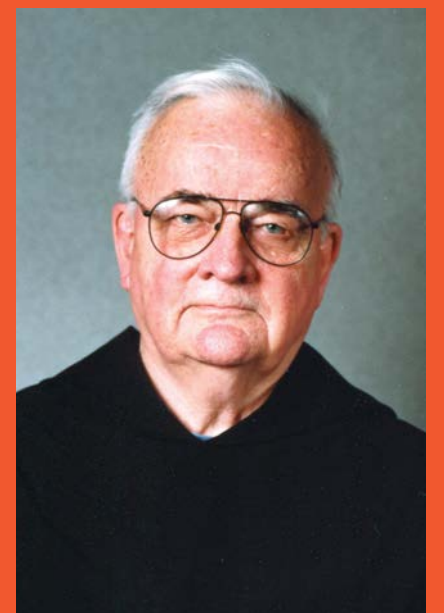
*Former Professor at Villanova University, Merimack College and Biscayne College*

### EXCERPT FROM FATHER BURT'S 2006 REFLECTION: "AUGUSTINE ON THE NATURE AND SEARCH FOR PEACE"

#### Importance and Conditions of Peace

Peace is one of the central concepts in Augustine's thought. The word *pax* in one of its various forms appears more than 2500 times in Augustine's writings. The reasons for this emphasis are evident. The driving force of all human action is the desire for happiness and no one can be happy without peace. There is nothing that we talk about, so fervently desire, so welcome when achieved, in a word, so good as peace (*City of God*, 19,11). The goal of every human is to find peace but the way to achieve it is difficult. Peace depends on a good will, a will that is driven by an ordered love, and in their present circumstances humans find such love hard to maintain. (*Commentary on Some Propositions from the Letter to the Romans*, 13-18; *Commentary on Psalm 121*, 12). Although in his earlier years Augustine seemed to believe in the will's unaided power to choose the good, he later became more and more convinced that the ability to choose rightly and love well was dependent on the grace of God. He thus concluded that peace is truly a gift of God more than a human accomplishment (*City of God*, 15,4). If humans accept that gift fully, it consoles and strengthens them in the midst of the pressures of life now and insures that their life after death

will be free of all strife (*Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 104,1). When peace is the primary object of a person's love in this life, greed is conquered and jealousy disappears (*Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, 52). This happens because peace is the one good that can be shared with many without diminishing one's own portion (*Sermon 357*, 1). For a person to have perfect peace there must be internal and external harmony. The body must have an ordered balance among its parts; the soul, an ordered satisfaction of its appetites. The sensitive appetites must seek neither too much, nor too little of those material things necessary for sustaining physical life. The intellectual appetites must reflect a correspondence between desire and moral values. A person's internal peace depends on good order between body and soul and health in the living whole. Peace between humans comes with an orderly friendship or "oneness of heart" (*concordia*). Peace in the family comes when such friendship is reflected in a harmonious arrangement of authority and obedience among those who live together. Peace, among citizens living in political community, rests on a harmony between rulers and those ruled. Finally, the peace of the heavenly city, that most ordered and harmonious



FATHER BURT, WHO DIED ON APRIL 11, 2014, GENEROUSLY SHARED THE FRUIT OF HIS STUDY AND MEDITATION WITH OTHERS THROUGH HIS WRITINGS.

society, will be realized at the end of time when humans and angels will rejoice in God and rejoice in each other because of God (*City of God*, 19,13,1).



# SEPTEMBER

## SAINT NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINE

Nicholas F. Martorano, O.S.A.

*Pastor, Saint Nicholas of Tolentine Parish, Philadelphia, Pa.*

Nicholas Gurrutti, Saint Nicholas of Tolentine, was born in 1245 in Sant'Angelo, Pontano, Italy. He was named after Saint Nicholas of Myra at Bari, as his parents, Amata and Compagnonus de Gurrutti, childless at the time, had made a pilgrimage to his shrine and prayed for his intercession for a child. At a young age, impressed by the preaching of Reginaldo de Monterubbiano, the prior of the Augustinian monastery at Sant'Angelo, Nicholas asked for admission to the community and made his novitiate in 1261. Ordained in 1271, Nicholas of Tolentine was devoted to prayer and works of penance, especially fasting. Weakened during one fast, in a vision Mary and the child Jesus directed him to eat bread signed with a cross. He was strengthened and the custom of distributing "The Bread of Saint Nicholas" ensued. In 1275 he was sent to Tolentino and remained there for the rest of his life.

Nicholas devoted himself to prayer and fasting. At another time he had a vision of a deceased friar, Fra Pellegrino of Osimo, who told Nicholas he was in Purgatory, with other souls needing his intercession to relieve their suffering. For seven days, Nicholas offered Mass for the souls in Purgatory. He again had a vision in which the friar related to him how many souls were in heaven due to his action. After this incident became known,

many people approached Nicholas for Masses and prayers for their deceased relatives and friends. Nicholas embraced and engaged in the Corporal Works of Mercy that permitted Jesus to come alive through him.

But what is it that differentiates Saint Nicholas from other saints who lived the same virtues? It is his unique and special calling to help the Holy Souls in Purgatory. He made it his mission to offer Mass, do penance, pray and fast for them so that the Holy Souls could quickly enter their heavenly home.

Saint Nicholas died on September 10, 1305. In 1446, he was canonized by Pope Eugene IV, the first Augustinian friar to be named a saint. His body is venerated in the basilica at Tolentino and his feast is celebrated on September 10. In 1884, Pope Leo XIII named him patron of the Holy Souls in Purgatory.

Churches have been named for him in Rome, Venice, the Philippines, Atlantic City, New Jersey; the Bronx, New York and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Tolentine Hall, on the campus of Villanova University was named for Saint Nicholas and houses classrooms, as well as the Office of the University President.

Saint Nicholas and his special ministry to the Holy Souls in Purgatory continues here at Saint Nicholas of Tolentine Church in South Philadelphia, where a Mass for the Souls in Purgatory is held



FATHER MARTORANO IS SHOWN HERE AT THE OUTDOOR MASS FOR THE OPENING OF SAINT NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINE ITALIAN FESTIVAL AND PROCESSION OF SAINTS, HELD ON THE FIRST SUNDAY IN OCTOBER.

once a week to emphasize and encourage us to remember in prayer and Masses those who have died. So we pray: "Saint Nicholas, you were so attentive to the pleas of many needy souls and through your prayer and penance you hastened their enjoyment of the vision of God. Look with compassion on our beloved dead, especially \_\_\_\_\_, and obtain for them by your prayers the full forgiveness of their sins so that they may experience the happiness and peace of the Father's presence."

*Saint Nicholas of Tolentine, pray for us!*







# OCTOBER

## SAINT THÉRÈSE OF THE CHILD JESUS AND HER PARENTS

Francis J. Horn, O.S.A.

*Treasurer, Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova*

Thérèse Martin was born in Alençon, France, on January 2, 1873. She entered the Discalced Carmelite Monastery at Lisieux when she was fifteen years old and took the name Sister Thérèse of the Child Jesus. Later she became known as the Little Flower because she referred to herself as a little, not particularly important, flower in God's garden. In her writings, she described the basis of her spirituality as "the confidence of the little child who sleeps without fear in its father's arms." Her spirituality is described as the "little way," marked by simplicity, humility, confidence, love of others, and a total abandonment to God's merciful love.

In 1896, Thérèse contracted tuberculosis and suffered much for a year and a half. She died on September 30, 1897, at the young age of 24. After her death, she gained tremendous popularity from the publication of her autobiography, *Story of a Soul*. In 1925, Saint Thérèse was canonized by Pope Pius XI. In October of 1997, Pope John Paul II declared her a Doctor of the Church.

In her short life, Thérèse came in direct contact with relatively few people—she was a cloistered nun! But through her prayer and her suffering, which she offered up for others, she touched the lives of many. As her life became known through her own writings

and the writings of others, she has had a profound influence on many more. Along with Saint Francis Xavier, she is the co-patron of the missions, and with Saint Joan of Arc, the co-patroness of France. As the Little Flower, she is also patroness of florists.

Louis and Zélie Martin, the parents of Thérèse, were beatified in 2008. They became the first parents of a saint to be beatified and only the second spouses in the history of the Church to be proposed for sainthood as a couple. But Zélie and Louis were not declared blessed because of Thérèse; she became a saint because of them and their loving example.

Zélie and Louis are an inspiration to families of today. When they married, both were successful small business owners who continued with their careers while raising a large family. They had nine children, four of whom died in their early years. Zélie died of breast cancer at the age of 47, leaving her husband a single parent to raise five minor daughters. Later in life, Louis suffered a stroke and spent three years in a psychiatric hospital. The couple faced life's challenges with a strong faith in God, which they passed on to their children (five daughters eventually entered religious life).

They found holiness in their day-to-day living, drawing strength from God and supporting one another



FATHER HORN BAPTIZES CILLIAN JOSEPH CUSICK, WITH MOM, MARY ROSE, DAD, KEVIN AND CILLIAN'S BROTHER CAVAN WITNESSING THE JOYFUL EVENT.

in the many difficulties that they faced. In recognizing them as a Blessed couple, the Church points to the mystery of the vocation of marriage. Their story speaks to us today because they teach us how and where to find God's love and how to respond to that love with our own.



# NOVEMBER

## ALL SAINTS AND BLESSED OF OUR ORDER

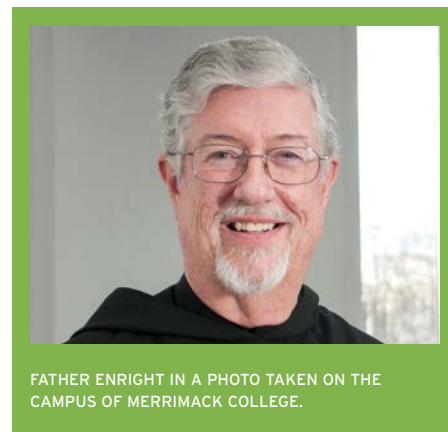
Edward J. Enright, O.S.A.

*Associate Professor of Religious and Theological Studies, Merrimack College,  
North Andover, Mass.*

The eyes of the human are thought to be windows into the soul of each person. Icons are venerated as windows into the transcendent. Relics, either the material remains of an individual saint or an object that has been in contact with his or her body, become a means by which the transcendent enters intimately into the immanent, making the transcendent accessible for veneration. When God decided to enter into human history through the incarnation of his Son, he decided that it would always be the way he would relate to the human and the natural. Thus the saints, men and women who grew in holiness, that is, journeyed toward union with God, by their imitation of Christ, became a means during their lifetime to continue in human bodiliness the experience of Godliness, first made available by Jesus the Christ, fully human and fully God. Once having entered into eternal life, their relics became a tangible means by which not only they remained connected with us, but their Lord and our Lord continued to be in touch with us in our various needs, as he had been in touch with us during

both his historical lifetime, and also the historical lifetime of his closest disciples. The saints in life and in death, through their relics, make the Communion of Saints concrete. The Church suffering and the Church struggling are helped by the Church triumphant to grow closer to one another in ways not otherwise available, except in the sacraments, the actions of Christ and his Body. Since natural creation and human bodiliness are so integral to the making present of Christ's seven ministries, the bodilessness of the saints, while not being sacraments, are sacramental in that they become further means by which Christ can carry out his ministries, especially to those marginalized by poverty, hunger, homelessness and sickness, both physical and mental.

While we Augustinians celebrate many of our saints and blessed individually or in special groupings, we also celebrate all of our saints and blessed on November 13 each year, the birthday of our holy father, Augustine of Hippo. In all likelihood, the relics we have available to us are ones connected with the most famous of our saints like Rita



FATHER ENRIGHT IN A PHOTO TAKEN ON THE CAMPUS OF MERRIMACK COLLEGE.

of Cascia, Clare of Montefalco, Nicholas of Tolentine, and Thomas of Villanova, but in that we treasure our communion with all Augustinians down through the centuries and right up until today, having the relics of these individual saints puts us in contact with all of our holy brothers and sisters who reside in the Church triumphant and who thus make available to us the many ministries of Christ embodied in all of our saints and blessed, both while they were alive and by means of their relics after their deaths. Let us give thanks to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that the Order of Saint Augustine has been gifted with so many of Christ's disciples.

### PICTURED: SOME SAINTS AND BLESSED OF THE ORDER

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** ST. AUGUSTINE AND ST. MONICA; BL. CHERUBIM; BL. STEPHEN BELLESINI; BL. CLEMENTIS FUHL; BL. MARIE CATHERINE OF ST. AUGUSTINE; ST. THOMAS OF VILLANOVA. **CENTER RELIQUARY: TOP:** BL. ANTHONY DELLA TORRE. **2ND ROW:** ST. JOHN OF SAHAGÚN; BL. CHRISTINE OF S. CROCE; BL. ELÍAS DEL SOCORRO NIEVES. **3RD ROW:** MARTYRS OF JAPAN; BL. ALFONSO DE OROZCO; BL. FREDERICK OF REGENSBURG; VEN MENOCHIO. **4TH ROW:** ST. EZEKIEL MORENO; ST. CLARE OF MONTEFALCO. **5TH ROW:** BL. ANGELO OF FURCI; BL. ANSELM POLANCO





# DECEMBER

## THE HOLY FAMILY

Joseph L. Narog, O.S.A.

*Pastor, Saint Thomas of Villanova Parish, Rosemont, Pa.; Provincial Counselor*



On the Feast of the Holy Family, we are reminded that family always is a work in progress. Just like those three dreaded words that probably come with more than a few Christmas presents—“batteries not included” or “some assembly required,” we need to invest our energy in and to work at building up our families.

Love and relationships require effort. They bring a responsibility: caring for, honoring, and being respectful of one another—despite generational differences, even as bodies and minds fail, even on those days we would rather take the gold, frankincense, and myrrh and run! We might be tempted to believe that such a thought never would cross the minds of Joseph and Mary. We may think that Jesus and they went through life easily, with hardly any problems. Many times we tend to place the Holy Family on a pedestal, far removed from our human reality, as though the angels washed the dishes for them.

Yet this year’s Gospel for the Feast shows otherwise. The twelve-year-old Jesus decides to stay behind in the Temple in Jerusalem, without telling his parents. Joseph and Mary become worried sick, looking for Jesus for three days. Imagine the tone in Mary’s voice when they find him—“Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety.” Sound familiar? Sound quite human?

We call this family “Holy” not because their life was perfect and without challenges, but because they remind us of our own call to holiness, through the good times and the bad. Jesus, Mary and Joseph provide a real and profound model of what it means to trust in God and in one another, echoed in the story of Hannah and her son Samuel in this Feast’s First Reading (1 Samuel 1:20-22, 24-28) and in the Second Reading (1 John 3:1-2, 21-24), where John assures us that “We are God’s children,” part of Jesus the Christ’s extended family.

So let us consider if there is a relationship that requires more energy on our part. Is there a family member we have been taking for granted? Like Hannah, do we dedicate our families to the Lord? Just as Luke’s Gospel (Luke 2:41-52) tells us, “Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor,” so too we can ask that he work in and through us, helping us build up our relationships, our families—piece by piece. Is it a mere coincidence that Jesus returned to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph, taking another eighteen years for his public ministry to commence? It is likely that he recognized, as well, that in life there always is “some assembly required.”

The fact is that even the best of families have at least some “anxiety,” something that requires attention and prayer. When I was growing up, my



FATHER NAROG POSES WITH HOLLY BERRY AND HER DAUGHTER ANNABEL, TO HIS RIGHT, AND TRACY HILDEBRAND AND HER GODSON WILLIAM CARICKHOFF, TO HIS LEFT, AFTER OFFICIATING AT THE BAPTISM, HELD IN SAINT THOMAS OF VILLANOVA CHURCH, ON THE CAMPUS OF VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY.

Mom started every long trip by saying, “Jesus, Mary and Joseph be with us on our way.” If we think about it, there is some real wisdom in that little prayer. The Holy Family understands; they have been there.



## NEWS AND NOTES

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



MEMBERS OF THE PRESS SURROUND BISHOP-ELECT PREVOST FOLLOWING HIS INSTALLATION AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE DIOCESE OF CHICLAYO, PERU.

### Former Prior General of the Order of Saint Augustine, Robert Francis Prevost, O.S.A., Named Bishop of the Diocese of Chiclayo, Peru



JOHN T. LYDON, O.S.A., ONE OF OUR MISSIONARIES IN PERU, TRAVELLED FROM CHULUCANAS TO ATTEND FATHER PREVOST'S INSTALLATION.

On November 3, 2014, Robert Francis Prevost, O.S.A., former Prior General of the Order (2001–2013), was named Apostolic Administrator and Bishop for the diocese of Chiclayo, Peru, by Pope Francis. He replaces Bishop emeritus Jesús Moliné Labarta, who was Bishop of Chiclayo for 17 years. Bishop-Elect Prevost was installed as the Administrator of the diocese by the Apostolic Nuncio of Peru,

Archbishop James Patrick Green, who is a Philadelphian, a Villanova University graduate and cousin of our Vicar General of the Order, Joseph L. Farrell, O.S.A. Bishop-Elect Prevost is set to be ordained a bishop by the Apostolic Nuncio on December 12, 2014. Chiclayo, the fourth most populous city in Peru, is located halfway between the less economically developed Augustinian mission areas of Chulucanas and Trujillo, where Father Prevost served for over twelve years. During those years, from 1985 he was sent to the Vicariate of Chulucanas, Peru, and was appointed Chancellor of the Prelature. He returned to the United States in 1987, but

returned to Trujillo, Peru, in 1988, to initiate the first common formation house among the Augustinian Vicariates of Chulucanas, Iquitos and Apurimac. In this community, in service to the pre-novices and the professed, he occupied the post of Prior (1988–1992), Formation Director (1988–1999), Master of Professed (1993–1998), and parish priest of the Parish of Saint Mary of Monserrat. In the Archdiocese of Trujillo, Bishop-Elect Prevost, who has been a member of the Canon Law Society of America since 1985, worked as Judicial Vicar (1991–1998) and as Director of Studies at the Seminary *San Carlo y San Marcelo*.



BISHOP-ELECT PREVOST WAS INSTALLED BY APOSTOLIC NUNCIO OF PERU, ARCHBISHOP JAMES GREEN (SEATED RIGHT).



BISHOP-ELECT DONATUS AIHMIOSION OGUN.

### Augustinian Named Bishop in Nigeria

On November 6, 2014, Donatus Aihmiosion Ogun, O.S.A., of the Province of Nigeria, was named Bishop of the Diocese of Uromi, Edo State, Nigeria, by Pope Francis. Bishop-Elect Ogun was born on October 12, 1966, in Sapele, the then Mid-Western State, Nigeria. He entered the Province's novitiate in Jos in 1988 and professed first vows on August 28, 1989. He pursued his theological studies at Saint Augustine Major Seminary (1989–1993), professed solemn vows on August 28, 1992, and was ordained to the priesthood on July 31, 1993. He was assigned to Our Lady of Good Counsel Priory, Iwara Oka-Akoko (1993–1996). He then went to Rome to Collegio Santa Monica (1996–1998), and then to Saint Patrick's Friary (1998–2000), and completed studies in Canon Law, first the Licentiate and then the Doctorate, at the Gregorian University. In 2001, Bishop-Elect Ogun returned to Nigeria to the Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, Surulere. From 2002 to the present, he has been the Master of Professed, the Episcopal Vicar for Religious in the Diocese of Warri and Master of Students in formation. The date for Father's episcopal consecration and installation is January 31, 2015.

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FATHER STACK IS PICTURED WITH HIS HALL OF FAME PLAQUE.

### Monsignor Bonner Honors John P. Stack, O.S.A.

John P. Stack, O.S.A., Bonner Class of '65, was inducted into the Monsignor Bonner High School Hall of Fame at its 2014 Gala Awards Program, held on October 18, 2014, in Drexel Hill, Pa. Included in all the tributes to Father Stack was a tweet from Villanova's basketball coach, Jay Wright: "Congrats to Fr. John Stack on his induction into the Monsignor Bonner Hall of Fame. A well deserved Honor!! #NovaNation." Father Stack, a former Theology teacher and chaplain at Bonner, is currently vice president for student life at Villanova University.

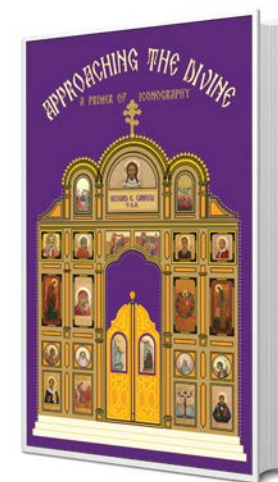


PRE-NOVICE ATSUSHI KUWAHARA, WHO JOINED THE AUGUSTINIAN FORMATION PROGRAM THROUGH OUR VICARIATE IN JAPAN, SPENT AN AFTERNOON WITH JOHN F. MCATEE, O.S.A., WHO SERVED A TOTAL OF 26 YEARS IN ALL FOUR OF OUR MISSIONS IN NAGASAKI, NAGOYA, FUKUOKA AND TOKYO. FATHER JOHN IS A FRATERNAL CONNECTION TO HOME FOR ATSUSHI, WHO IS PART OF THE BLESSED STEPHEN BELLESINI PRE-NOVIATE COMMUNITY IN ARDMORE, PA., STUDYING ENGLISH FAR FROM HIS HOME BASE IN FUKUOKA JAPAN.

### A New Book by Richard G. Cannuli, O.S.A.

*Approaching The Divine—a Primer of Iconography* is a collection of original icons "written" by Father Cannuli, a Villanova University Professor and Director and Curator of the University's Art Collection. Due out in December, it is published by Hope and Life Press.

[HTTP://WWW.HOPEANDLIFEPRESS.COM](http://www.hopeandlifepress.com)



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## THE YEAR OF *CONSECRATED LIFE* HAS BEGUN!

**IN NOVEMBER 2013**, Pope Francis proclaimed the Year of Consecrated Life to be celebrated in honor of Men and women in Religious Orders and Congregations, Secular Institutes, Societies of Apostolic Life and new forms of consecrated life. It started on November 30, 2014 and will end on February 2, 2016.

The proclamation of a 14-month celebration of those who devote themselves to God expands on the World Day of Consecrated Life, a day of Thanksgiving for the gift of consecrated life, begun in 1997 by Saint John Paul II, following the 1994 Synod on Consecrated Life and its role in the Church and the world.

The 1996 Post-Synodal Exhortation *Vita Consecrata*, described Consecrated Life as being “deeply rooted in the example of Christ the Lord...a gift of God the Father to his Church through the Holy Spirit.” The document also describes the call to a consecrated life: “All are called equally to follow

Christ...but those who are called to a consecrated life have a special experience of the light which shines forth from the Incarnate Word...The church entrusts to communities of consecrated life the particular task of spreading the spirituality of communion.” The document also included “all those individuals who, in their inmost hearts, dedicate themselves to God by a special consecration.”

Saint John Paul II chose February 2, *The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple* to be the World Day of Consecrated Life, as it is considered the backdrop of the first encounter of Christ with his people, Simeon and Anna, who were called there by the Holy Spirit.

Saint John Paul II wrote: “Consecrated persons live ‘for God’ and ‘from God’ and precisely for this reason they are able to bear witness to the reconciling power of grace.”

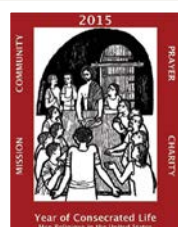
For the Augustinian Friars, Sisters and Nuns, who take vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, *Vita Consecrata*

made special note that “the profession of evangelical counsels (vows) makes them a kind of sign and prophetic statement for the community.”

Pope Francis announced the Year of Consecrated Life at a meeting of the Union of Superiors General of Religious Orders and had a special message for the formation of religious members: “Develop a tender heart.”

The Prior General of the Order of Saint Augustine, Alejandro Moral Antón, O.S.A. addressed the Sisters and Brothers of the Order in a letter where he quoted Saint Augustine when he expressed objectives to keep in mind for this special year: “To give thanks to the God who is the giver of all good things (*Rule VII*, 49), to take on the future as people who are blessed and happy in hope (*The City of God XIX*, 4, 5) and to live the present time with passion and with openness to the Spirit, ‘holding on to love, loving truth, desiring unity’” (*Sermon 267*, 4).

ABOVE: THE 2014 CHAPTER PHOTO SHOWING FRIARS WHO WERE ABLE TO ATTEND THE MEETING, HELD IN JUNE 2014.



**AUGUSTINIAN FRIARS CELEBRATE THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE**  
*Remembering our past...Living our present with passion...Embracing the hope of our future.*



## IN PARADISUM



### John Francis Thornton Payne

**BORN:** 6/27/1961  
**FIRST PROFESSION:**  
8/4/1984  
**ORDAINED:**  
11/18/1989  
**DIED:** 10/9/2014

John Francis Thornton Payne was born on June 27, 1961, in Washington, D.C., the son of Ellis Augustine Payne and Gloria Bernice Thornton. The youngest of their five children, he was baptized on August 1, 1965, at Holy Redeemer Church in Washington. He began his education at Abram Simon Elementary School. After completing the sixth grade he went on to Assumption Catholic School and graduated from Archbishop John Carroll High School in 1979. The following year he entered the formation program of the Augustinian Friars and attended Villanova University, from which he received his B.A. degree in English. He was received into the Order of Saint Augustine as a novice on August 16, 1983 and made his first profession of vows on August 4, 1984 as a member of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova.

From 1984–1987, Fr. John attended the Washington Theological Union and earned an M.A. in systematic theology. He made his solemn profession as an Augustinian on May 15, 1988, and was ordained a priest on November 18, 1989, by Bishop John H.

Ricard, S.S.J., at Saint Augustine Parish, known as the Mother Church of African Americans and founded by former slaves and free people of color, in Washington, D.C. At this time he had already been assisting in ministry at Saint Augustine and he remained there as associate pastor until 1996. In this capacity he was responsible for the enhancement of the internationally known music and liturgical traditions of the parish, and co-wrote several music pieces with the renowned musician and songwriter Leon C. Roberts.

In 1995, Fr. John became Director of the “He Rose Project” at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. He helped to increase scholarship opportunities for young men of color and worked to raise college acceptance rates. He also developed the “Ennis Cosby Learning Center” for parents and students, with a focus on introspection, empowerment and concrete goal setting.

In 2000, Fr. John was named Dean of Students at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, and in 2007 Director of Student Affairs. In 2014, the Board of Directors appointed him Head of School, with an effective date of August 1, 2014. After a few short months in this latest position, Fr. John collapsed on Thursday, October 9, of an apparent heart attack, at the school.

For many years Fr. John Payne devoted his energies to the service of others, in parochial ministry, and in the education and professional development of the young, especially those who did not have easy

access to opportunities for advancement. As the chancellor of Washington’s public schools stated, “[Father Payne] had an abundance of faith in his students, showed them love every single day, and set an example that created a welcoming and thriving school community.” Father Payne exemplified Augustinian values of *Unitas, Veritas, Caritas*, (Unity, Truth and Love) and thousands reflected his impact upon them as they joyfully mourned a true spiritual leader.

A public wake was held on Sunday, October 19, 2014, at Saint Augustine Church in Washington D.C. Father John’s funeral Mass was celebrated at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, in Washington, D.C., on Monday, October 20, 2014, with 4,000 people in attendance. A memorial Mass was celebrated at the church of Saint Thomas of Villanova on Friday, October 24, 2014. The celebrant of both Masses was Father Michael Di Gregorio, O.S.A., Prior Provincial. Fr. Payne is buried in the Augustinian Plot at Calvary Cemetery, Conshocken, Pa.

### SHARE YOUR OWN REFLECTION ON THIS FRIAR

VISIT THE NECROLOGY PAGE AT [WWW.AUGUSTINIAN.ORG/WHO-WE-ARE/OUR-HERITAGE/NECROLOGY](http://WWW.AUGUSTINIAN.ORG/WHO-WE-ARE/OUR-HERITAGE/NECROLOGY) AND FILL OUT THE FORM. REFLECTIONS WILL BE POSTED SOON AFTER RECEIVED. THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART IN THIS INTERACTIVE NECROLOGY.



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 of the friars. The Province is indebted to all who serve on the Development Council:*

- Michael F. Di Gregorio, O.S.A.  
*Prior Provincial*
- Basil DiSipio  
*Chairman*
- Eric Quisenberry  
*Co-Chair, Annual Appeal*
- Robert McKiernan  
*Co-Chair, Annual Appeal*
- Anthony Dellomo
- Richard E. Devine, Jr.
- Raymond Falzone
- Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A.
- James J. McCartney, O.S.A.
- Michael Picotte
- Jonathan Poling
- Robert Saldutti
- Margaret (Meg) Sheetz
- Christopher Soltis
- James H. Stewart
- Michael P. Sullivan, O.S.A.
- Robert Woods

HONORARY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

- William Hallissey
- Gary Holloway, Sr.

Another Year, Another Opportunity for Grace



PICTURED: MARGARET (MEG) SHEETZ

This past October, Margaret (Meg) Sheetz, a member of our Development Council, was named to the Baltimore Sun’s *50 Women To Watch* list, recognized for her leadership as President and Chief Operating Officer at Medifast and her contributions to the Community.

Impressive, especially if you consider that the 2013 census listed 328,471 women in the Baltimore Metro area.

What is impressive to us, is that along with her family life, her work at Medifast, management of two Foundations, membership on the Board of Directors for Stevenson University and the Villanova President’s Leadership Circle, Meg cares enough to contribute both leadership and financial support to the Augustinian Friars through the Development Council and the Augustinian Fund.

Like her mother Shirley and her father, the late Bradley T. MacDonald, a founding member of the Augustinian Development Council, whose untimely death in 2012 brought Meg to the Council, Meg lives a grace-filled and grace-giving life.

It reminds us that, although grace comes from God, grace can be passed on, in small ways and in very large ways. Every day is an opportunity to receive and give grace, “You shall be like a watered garden, like a spring whose water never fails” (Isaiah 58:11).

As we greet another year, we wish all of you another year of grace and many opportunities to share that grace with others.  
—TEDDIE GALLAGHER

PLANNED GIVING

For assistance with planned giving to the Augustinians, please visit [www.augustinianfund.org](http://www.augustinianfund.org) and click on “Other Ways to Give.”

You can also contact Francis J. Horn, O.S.A., at 610.527.3330 ext. 233.

We are pleased to present two new videos on our “Augustinian Friars” YouTube Channel!



The first is a video clip of the Installation Mass of Father Michael F. Di Gregorio, O.S.A., as the 39th Prior Provincial of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova, celebrated on June 9, 2014, at the church of Saint Thomas of Villanova. It can be viewed at the link below:

INSTALLATION MASS



The second video is a release by the Villanova and Midwest Provinces with combined footage from their recent First Professions. It was filmed in August 2014, at the chapel of Saint Thomas of Villanova in Rosemont, Pa., where Colin Nardone professed his first vows, and at Saint Rita of Cascia Shrine Chapel in Chicago, Ill., where Nick Mullarkey and Joe Siegal professed their first vows. The video of the First Professions can be viewed at the link below:

FIRST PROFESSIONS



To learn why friars have chosen the Augustinian way of life, check out our Vocation Video “The Call.” Over 2200 people have viewed this video on YouTube.





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*joyful presence of God*  
*in our world.*



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