

the Augustinian

FALL 2024

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF
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OF VILLANOVA | *Page 2*

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FATHER BILL ATKINSON,
O.S.A. | *Page 6*





The Province of St. Thomas of Villanova
is pleased to announce
our next recipient of the

Saint Augustine Medal



Photo: Vatican News

CARDINAL ROBERT FRANCIS PREVOST, O.S.A.

Prefect of the Dicastery of Bishops

THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 2025

THE FEAST OF ST. AUGUSTINE

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the Augustinian

*Publication of the Province of
St. Thomas of Villanova*

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DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST,

The Province of St. Thomas of Villanova has much to celebrate and be thankful for these days. Fr. Michael Riggs, O.S.A., was ordained on May 4, and Br. Nicholas Anderson, O.S.A., made his first profession of vows on August 3. Cardinal Robert Prevost, O.S.A., was just announced as the recipient of the Saint Augustine Medal. We have added an online Augustinian Mass card shop to order Mass cards online, and we've celebrated over 160 years of service at two parishes in upstate New York. You will read about these milestones and more in this issue of *The Augustinian*.

Two of our celebrations are especially important. On August 25, 1874—150 years ago—our Province was officially formed. We will recognize this anniversary throughout the year as we remember the pioneering efforts of our brothers Matthew Carr, O.S.A., and John Rosseter, O.S.A., who arrived in the United States in 1796 to pave the way for Augustinian vocations, the establishment of our first foundation in St. Augustine Church in Philadelphia, the founding of Villanova University, and ultimately the formation of the Province of St. Thomas of Villanova. We also recognize Fr. Thomas Galberry, O.S.A., first prior provincial and former president of Villanova University, for his hard work and exceptional leadership to further establish our presence in the United States.

On June 10, the earthly remains of Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A., were exhumed from the Augustinian plot at Calvary Cemetery in West Conshohocken, Pa. and transferred to St. Thomas of Villanova Church in Villanova, Pa., where he was laid to rest in a sarcophagus in the beautiful Our Mother of Good Counsel alcove. I hope you will have the chance to visit Fr. Bill's tomb and ask for his prayerful intercession.

I extend my congratulations to our friars celebrating milestone ordination anniversaries and for the service that they continue to provide to our Province. I would be remiss if I didn't express my heartfelt gratitude to our friends and benefactors without whom none of this would be possible. I am grateful for your prayers, financial

support, and the many ways that you assist us. May God bless you abundantly for your generosity and commitment to our Order. May you enjoy this issue of *The Augustinian*.

Peace always,

Fr. Rob

Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A.
Prior Provincial

“
EACH OF US
STRENGTHENS
ALL OF US.
”

— St. Augustine

The Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova

150 YEARS AND ON

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

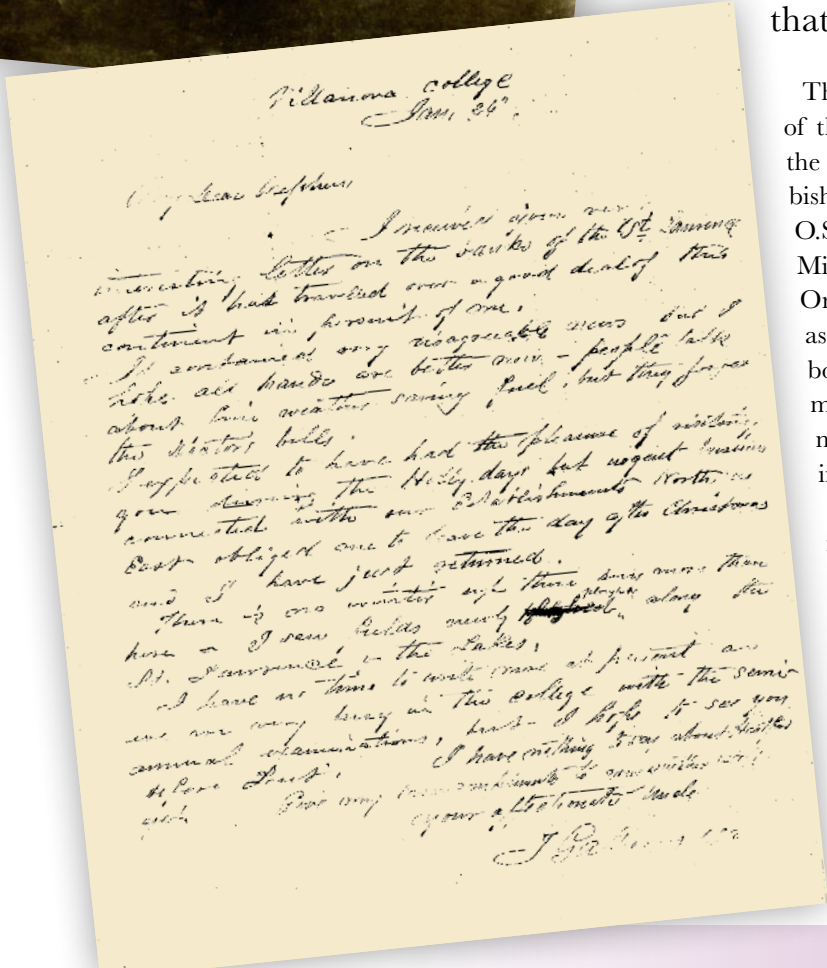
Three quarters of a century after Augustinian Fathers Matthew Carr, O.S.A., and John Rosseter O.S.A., arrived in Philadelphia with the clear intention to establish a branch of the Augustinians in the United States, efforts to achieve that goal remained incomplete.

Though they labored tirelessly on this soil for the remainder of their lives, saw the creation of a thriving parish, served the local Church faithfully, and assisted the country's lone bishop in a variety of offices and responsibilities, Frs. Carr, O.S.A., and Rosseter, O.S.A., lived to see only one recruit, Michael Hurley, follow in their footsteps and enter the Order. Fortunately, other foreign-born friars arrived to assist them, and after Carr's death, additional American-born candidates gradually embraced Augustinian life, making possible the extension of the community to new ministries and to places beyond the original foundation in Philadelphia.

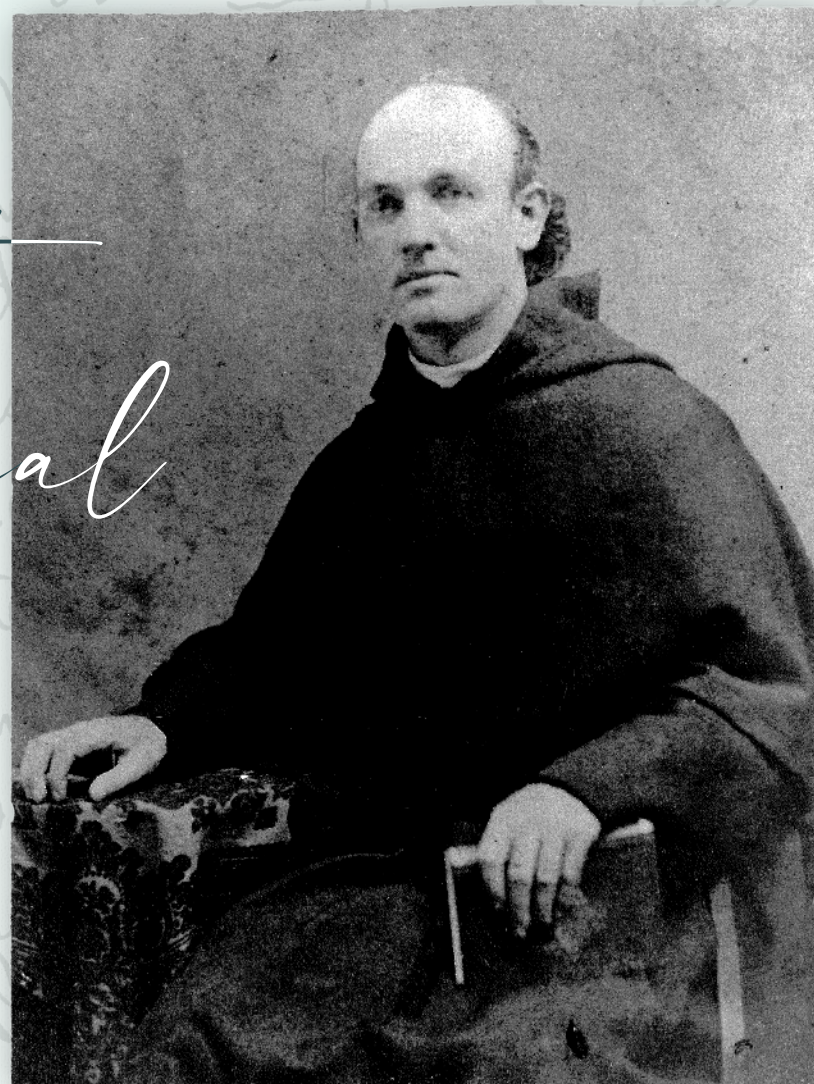
As the number of friars and their houses slowly increased throughout those early decades, conditions eventually reached a level of growth which allowed for the creation of an independent province of the Order according to Augustinian constitutional norms. Accordingly, in the decree of foundation dated August 25, 1874, Prior General Giovanni Belluomini called for the first provincial chapter in America to be held. There were by then 56 members of the American

mission, consisting of 30 friar-priests, 13 brothers, 12 student clerics and 1 oblate. Of these, fourteen friars who were the official members of the Chapter by virtue of the office or title or degree which they held, gathered at Villanova on December 15, 1874 to celebrate the new province's birth, elect the first prior provincial, distribute responsibilities, and discuss the province's needs and direction.

We look back over 150 years of history, not to the beginning of the Augustinian experiment in America—which is considerably older thanks to friars like Matthew Carr, Michael Hurley, and their companions—but to the official foundation of the province under the patronage of St. Thomas of Villanova, and the election of its first prior provincial in the person of Fr. Thomas Galberry, O.S.A. A century and a half of religious life has contributed significantly since to the Church in the United States in the hundreds of friars who have embraced Augustine's vision of common life and have served the People of God in a wide variety of ministries and settings. The events of 1874 signaled not the end of a process but the attainment of a critical stage of development—a true coming of age—which made possible the necessary autonomy within the Order for the American Augustinians to advance further still in both the number of their members and the diversity of their works.



Father THOMAS GALBERRY, O.S.A.



First Provincial IN THE UNITED STATES

By Fr. Michael Di Gregorio, O.S.A.

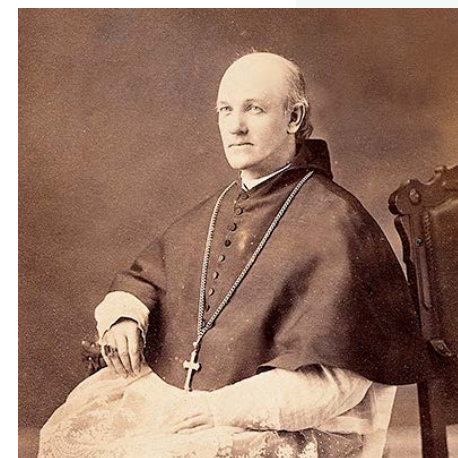
Thomas Galberry, O.S.A., was the 33-year-old pastor of St. Augustine Parish in Troy, N.Y., when he received word on November 30, 1866, from Prior General Paolo Micallef that he had been appointed commissary general (a position we now call major superior) of the Augustinians in the United States. He would maintain this position for the next eight years while holding concurrently the office of either pastor or president of Villanova University. These combined responsibilities weighed significantly on Thomas as he held in balance the administration of the specific local position entrusted to him together with the care and supervision of friars and their ministries in various places.

When the decree was granted on August 25, 1874 for the American friars to form an independent province of the Order, Thomas resigned as commissary provincial, happy to yield leadership to the friar who would be elected at the first provincial chapter the following December. He had served his confreres well in each of the positions he had held and looked forward to being relieved of the responsibility of government.

On December 16, 1874, the day following the chapter's opening, in an unmistakable sign of approval which the friars had for him in his role as commissary and confidence in his ability to lead them still, Thomas was elected to the office of prior provincial with twelve of the fourteen votes cast—one of the dissenters obviously being Thomas himself.

One of the first initiatives which Thomas undertook in his new role was to visit the friars in the eleven communities of the province then located in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. While engaged in this work, Thomas became aware of a report that began circulating in the press that he had been named bishop of Hartford, Conn. At first he dismissed the news as mistaken, but when he eventually discovered its accuracy, he wrote to Rome asking to be excused. The conversation back and forth between Thomas and Rome continued on for well over a year until a letter arrived in January 1876 with the message, "His Holiness, after weighing all matters, orders you to assume the entrusted duty and to be consecrated Bishop and go to the See as soon as possible." Thomas was consecrated fourth bishop of Hartford on March 19, 1876, the Feast of St. Joseph and the Third Sunday of Lent. Less than two weeks previously, his responsibility to the Province of St. Thomas of Villanova had ended with the appointment of another friar to succeed him as temporary vicar, but his attachment—personal and spiritual—to the Order did not end.

Thomas served as bishop of Hartford for little more than two and a half years, having won the affection and admiration of the people, priests and religious of his diocese, as well as that of many citizens of other faiths as well. He died suddenly and unexpectedly as he was traveling back to Villanova for a few days of rest among his confreres and friends. The date was October 10, 1878. He was forty-five years old. Brief had been his attachment to Hartford, briefer still his role as first prior provincial of the American Augustinians. Long lasting, however, his memory and the legacy he left to both.



Remember Me AT THE ALTAR OF THE LORD

Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A., Reinterred in St. Thomas of Villanova Church

By Sarah Reisert



Early in the morning on Monday, June 10, 2024, a small group of people gathered at the Augustinian plot in Calvary Cemetery in West Conshohocken, Pa. Their task was an unusual but important one: exhuming the remains of Servant of God Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A., from the plot where he had rested for almost 20 years. This was the first step in a week-long process that would see Fr. Bill's earthly remains reinterred in St. Thomas of Villanova Church in Villanova, Pa., to allow greater access to the faithful who wish to visit Fr. Bill's tomb and to seek his prayerful intercession.

For those who may not know his story, Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A., lived an extraordinary life. He entered the novitiate of the Augustinian Order after graduating from Monsignor Bonner High School and was set to become an Augustinian in the usual way, but on February 22, 1965, Bill had a toboggan accident that left him almost completely paralyzed from the neck down. Despite this, Bill expressed his desire to continue as an Augustinian and professed vows in 1970. It required a special dispensation from Pope Paul VI for him to be ordained the first priest with quadriplegia in 1974. He went on to teach at his alma mater, Bonner, for almost 30 years, and was known as a gifted teacher, encouraging moderator, and compassionate confessor.

Though Fr. Bill passed away in 2006 his story continues to inspire people, reminding us that no matter what cross we are called to carry, we can carry it with humility, a willingness to accept help from others, and constant reliance on the Lord. In 2017, the Cause for Beatification and Canonization of Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A., was opened, and Fr. Bill was named a Servant of God. One day, he may be named a saint.

Recognizing the fondness and devotion so many people have for Fr. Bill, the Augustinians decided to remove his earthly remains from Calvary Cemetery and reinter him in the magnificent St. Thomas of Villanova Church in Villanova, Pa. The church held deep significance in Fr. Bill's life: while a student at Villanova University and as a professed friar, Fr. Bill often attended Mass and prayed in church on campus. It is where he was ordained to the diaconate in 1973 and where his Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in 2006. The faithful gathered in the Villanova Church in 2017 for the official solemn opening ceremony for his Cause for Canonization, and in 2021 for the closing ceremony of the archdiocesan inquiry into the life, heroic virtues, reputation of holiness, and intercessory power of Fr. Bill. In the Province's efforts to promote awareness of the Cause, the Villanova Church served as the site for two milestone events: the tenth anniversary of his death in 2016 and the celebration of his fiftieth anniversary of ordination in 2024. It seemed only fitting that Fr. Bill's remains come to their final rest here.

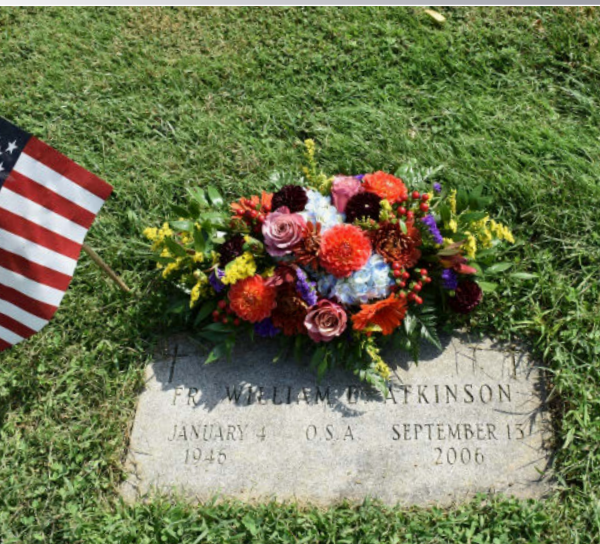
"As we know, our Church and Catholic faith have a rich tradition of preserving human remains for veneration," explained Prior Provincial Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A. "Throughout generations faithful pilgrims would visit burial sites where they could reflect, pray, and take inspiration from faithful disciples of Christ who have gone before us. They help to show us the way. Our brother, Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A., is one such faithful disciple."

Over five extraordinary days in June, the Augustinian community came together to prayerfully bring Fr. Bill to his final resting place. Come along as we give you an insider's look at this holy time through the eyes of the people who were there.



PHOTOS | Top: The statue of Our Mother of Good Counsel overlooking the Augustinian plot in Calvary Cemetery.

Bottom: Archbishop Nelson Pérez leads the Mass of Thanksgiving following the reinterment of the remains of Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A. Concelebrants included Prior Provincial Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A., and Fr. Thomas Dailey, O.S.F.S.



The plot of Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A., at Calvary Cemetery, adorned with flowers on the fifteenth anniversary of his passing.



Renee Cirino, assistant manager of Calvary Cemetery, with Prior Provincial Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A., at the Augustinian plot.

THE CEMETERY

The Augustinian plot at Calvary Cemetery sits atop a rolling hill, with a commanding view of the rest of the cemetery. The mortal remains of friars have been interred here since 1980, and watching over them is Renee Cirino, M.S., assistant manager of the cemetery.

The cemetery was not her first experience with the Augustinians. “My father, a Monsignor Bonner graduate, talked about a number of Augustinian Priests that taught him in high school,” she remembers. “When I taught in Catholic education, working with a biology teacher at Monsignor Bonner High School, I met Fr. Jack Denny, O.S.A., and Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A., along with other friars who were on the teaching staff at Bonner during this time. I remember being amazed by Fr. Bill and his dedication to the students at Bonner. Those boys respected him. He was well respected by the staff also.”

When Renee began working at the cemetery, she realized the Augustinians were under her care—a role she takes very seriously. “Seeing the Augustinian plots brought back many positive memories for me. I visited the section where their earthly remains are resting and looked around to see how the section was being maintained. I wanted to be a part of making their section at Calvary very nice.” Because of her efforts, a beautiful new sign marks the Augustinian plot so visitors can more easily find them.

Once the idea to reinter Fr. Bill’s earthly remains came about, Renee played a vital role. Reinterment is a complicated process. “Moving mortal remains is not simply a matter of excavation and transportation,” explains Fr. Thomas Dailey, O.S.F.S., in an article he wrote for *CatholicPhilly*. (Scan the QR code on page 11 to read the whole article.) Fr. Dailey is a member of the Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and is very involved in the Cause for Beatification and Canonization of Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A. “Because of Fr. Bill’s status as a Servant of God, the entire process is governed by formal procedures from the Vatican dicastery and is overseen by appointed members of an archdiocesan tribunal.”

“I was in correspondence with Fr. Robert Hagan, O.S.A., and guided him with the completion of the disinterment paperwork,” says Renee. “Once the paperwork was completed and notarized, we sent it to our corporate headquarters for approval. Once it was approved by corporate and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, we set a date to have Fr. Bill disinterred from Calvary. I also was in correspondence with O’Leary Funeral Home regarding the burial permit that was needed to complete the disinterment and reinterment process.”

Renee and Fr. Dailey were among the people gathered by Fr. Bill’s graveside that June morning, along with a photography team. Photography and videography would be a vital part of the process, clearly documenting for posterity every step in the disinterment and reinterment. The photography team had to sign non-disclosure agreements, not the only bit of paperwork signed by those in attendance—there were also sworn witnesses and notaries.

Fr. Bill’s remains were removed from his plot by cemetery staff, assisted by a team from the New Jersey-based Bradbury Vault Company. “Immediately afterward, his casket was transported to the O’Leary Funeral Home in nearby Springfield, Pa.,” explains Fr. Dailey. “There, the exhumation took place under the supervision of an archaeological consultant and a certified mortician, both of whom also have degrees in canon law and experience in working with causes of saints. After the procedures for the collection of relics were completed, the staff of the O’Leary Funeral Home prepared the remains for preservation.”

While Fr. Bill’s remains are no longer in their original place atop the hill in Calvary Cemetery, his casket has been reinterred where it lay for the past 18 years. Renee is already in talks with Fr. Rob about a new marker to indicate the spot where Fr. Bill rested for so long. “It was an honor to have this experience,” she says. “How often do you get to be a part of someone becoming a saint?”

THE SARCOPHAGUS

The sarcophagus in the Our Mother of Good Counsel alcove of the St. Thomas of Villanova Church looks like it’s always been there—and that’s by design. “We wanted to echo some of the elements present in the church: the columns, the pointed and rounded arches, the rose marble that you see throughout the current chapel,” says Lou DiCocco, pointing out each feature on the sarcophagus as he talks. Lou is the director and founder of St. Jude Liturgical Arts Studios, the firm brought on to create the new resting place for the remains of Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A.

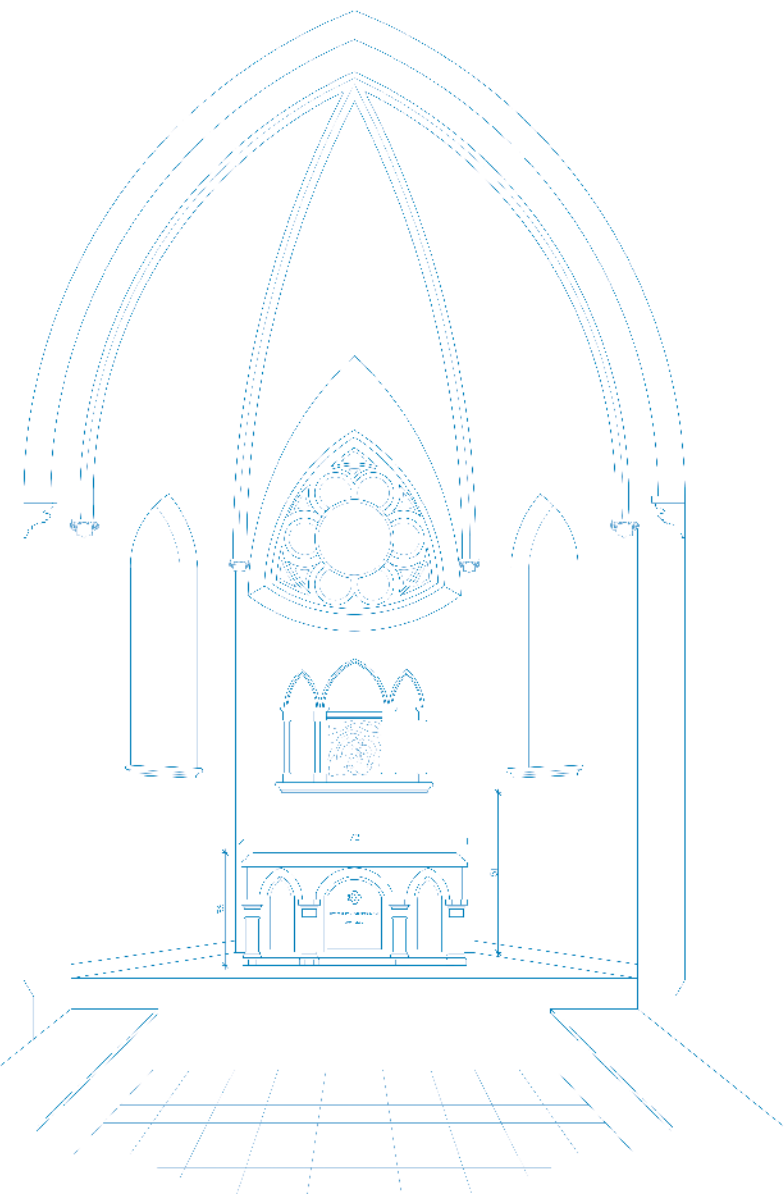
The studio, based in Havertown, has overseen a number of extraordinary commissions, including at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. When the Augustinians began looking for someone to take the job, it turned out we had one of the best in the business just down the street. “Fr. Michael Di Gregorio, O.S.A., and Fr. Joe Genito, O.S.A. contacted me, saying they got the permission from the Vatican to exhume the body and transfer the remains of Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A.,” Lou remembers. “From our beginning meetings, I wanted to develop something that would be fitting, but also that would match in architecture, shape, and materials.”

The result is a beautiful rose and white marble sarcophagus, engraved with the words “FR. WILLIAM E. ATKINSON, O.S.A. 1946-2006.” There are also four columns of green stone, once used in St. Cyril of Alexandria Parish in East Lansdowne, Pa., not far from Monsignor Bonner High School. “St. Cyril’s was a feeder church to Monsignor Bonner High School,” explains Lou. “We thought, what a great opportunity—maybe some students that Fr. Bill influenced and taught had attended this church and seen these columns.” Now they adorn Fr. Bill’s final resting place.

“It is our hope that this sacred space will provide greater access to the faithful who wish to visit his tomb and to seek his prayerful intercession,” says Prior Provincial Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A. “We hope that students, faculty, campus visitors, and the public at large will visit Fr. Bill’s tomb to learn about the life and message of this Servant of God and ask for his intercession.”

Lou DiCocco agrees. “The beauty of our faith is the communion of saints, and I think it is something for us to strive toward. I think Fr. Bill’s message is just a tremendous message for so many, especially today. We need that message for everything—for all of us.”

Scan this QR code to hear Lou DiCocco talk about the design of the sarcophagus.



A conceptual sketch by St. Jude Liturgical Arts Studios detailing their vision for the sarcophagus in the Our Mother of Good Counsel alcove.



Lou DiCocco, Founder & Director, St. Jude Liturgical Art Studios.

THE REINTERMENT

On the morning of Friday, June 14, the mortal remains of Fr. Bill rested inside a champagne-colored coffin in a viewing room of the O’Leary Funeral Home. In his black Augustinian robe, Prior Provincial Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A., said prayers over Fr. Bill before the coffin was carefully loaded into the back of a silver hearse. The procession headed to St. Thomas of Villanova Church for what would be a private two-part service for Fr. Bill’s family, friends, and brother Augustinians.

The service opened with the ceremony of committal. “In the ceremony of committal, prayers for the commendation of Fr. Bill’s soul to God were said following the Order of Christian Burial,” explains Fr. Thomas Dailey, O.S.F.S. “The remains were then bound with ribbon and stamped with wax seals before being placed in the sarcophagus. Also placed in the sarcophagus was a parchment, or rogito, documenting the exhumation and translation that was signed by the archbishop, the members of the tribunal, the canonical witnesses, and both the Augustinian prior provincial and postulator general.” (Something less official went in the sarcophagus with Fr. Bill as well: his Bonner cap. “Bill’s Monsignor Bonner family will be happy to know that his Bonner hat, which was in his casket, also

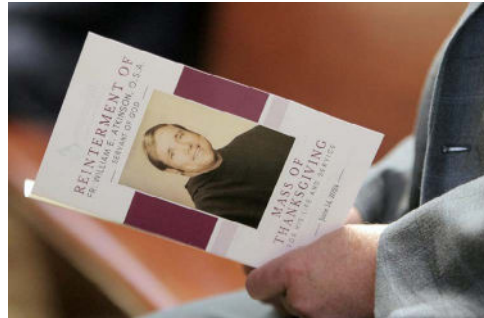
made the transfer,” said Fr. Rob during his homily that day. “I offered to switch it out for an O’Hara hat”—Fr. Rob’s own alma mater—“but no one would take it,” he said to laughter.)

Upon the close of the ceremony, a Mass of Thanksgiving for Fr. Bill’s life and service was held. The Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, D.D., archbishop of Philadelphia, presided. “The archbishop is a close friend of the Augustinians and collaborator throughout this process,” said Fr. Rob. “This Eucharistic celebration allowed us to gather to remember the life, faith, patience, inspiration, and perseverance of our brother Bill, and to give thanks to

God for his family, friends, caretakers, Augustinians, and others who walked with him as he carried his cross with the grace and strength that comes from the Lord.”

Fr. Dailey remembers, “In his closing remarks, the archbishop wondered whether Villanova University is now the only Catholic university to have a real ‘Servant of God’ on its campus. The archbishop encouraged the [university]

to include Fr. Bill’s story in the curriculum and expressed his hope that, as a result of this translation, many students will come to know Fr. Bill’s life story, his example of virtue, and especially his faith.”



Joan Atkinson Mullen, Fr. Bill’s sister, signs the parchment documenting the exhumation and translation of the remains of Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A.

Fr. Bill is now at rest under a beautiful mosaic of Our Mother of Good Counsel, a title long held dear by the Augustinians. We hope that Fr. Bill’s intercession will be a source of good counsel as well. “As we gaze at the image of Our Mother of Good Counsel, now sitting above the mortal remains of our brother Bill, we will indeed remember him at the altar of the Lord,” said Fr. Rob during his homily. “We will remember the strength he took from the Eucharist. We remember the many Masses he celebrated for others, his close relationship with Jesus, and the help he humbly accepted from his family, friends, brother Augustinians. May others come here and be inspired by the way God’s grace enabled Fr. Bill to rise from his cross and persevere.”

We hope you will come to St. Thomas of Villanova Church to feel Fr. Bill’s presence and spirit as you overcome the hardships that life inevitably throws at us all. Encourage others to come with you, to learn about Fr. Bill and his exceptional life. “Fr. Bill would be happy to see the many people who stop and pray here to take hope and inspiration from his life,” says Fr. Rob. “But more importantly, he would encourage us to now look and see what God is doing in us and what we can do for one another. Servant of God, Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A., pray for us.”



For more from Fr. Dailey about the reinterment, read his article “A New Resting Place for a Servant of God” from CatholicPhilly.com.



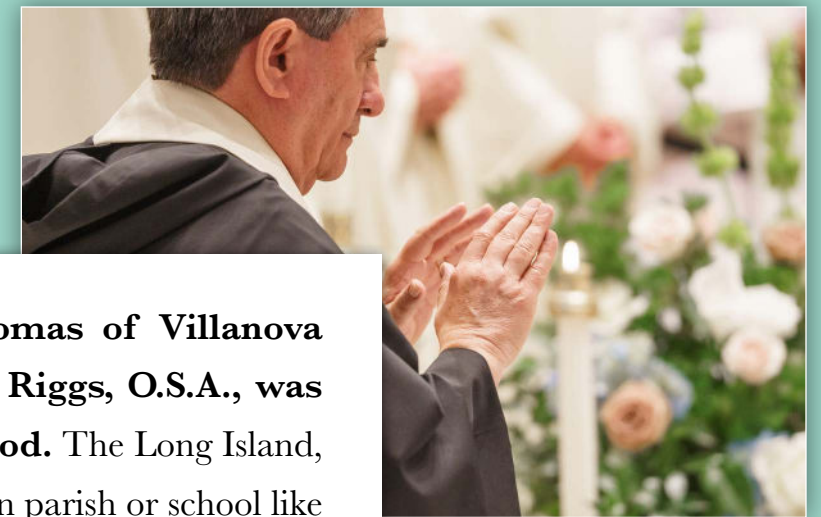
Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez places his seal on the gold wax atop the document box, which was placed in the sarcophagus alongside Fr. Bill’s remains.

A DAY
FILLED
WITH
GRACE



Michael Riggs, O.S.A., Ordained *to the* Priesthood

By Sarah Reisert

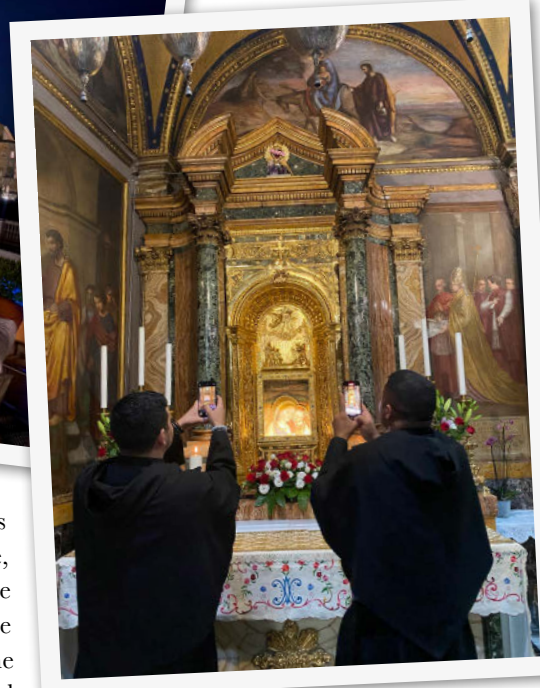


On May 4 in the St. Thomas of Villanova Parish Church, Michael Riggs, O.S.A., was ordained to the priesthood. The Long Island, N.Y. native didn't attend an Augustinian parish or school like so many of our friars; instead, he met the Augustinians through St. Augustine. "I didn't have the typical experience of knowing that this life was for me right from the start—that moment came to me in the midst of my working life," he remembers. "That was about the time I first read the conversion story of St. Augustine. I was blown away by it. Here is this man 1600 years ago in search of the same sort of things I was searching for."

Bishop Dan Turley, O.S.A., who ordained Fr. Michael to the diaconate in June 2023, returned to the east coast from his home in the Midwest Province to ordain Fr. Michael to the priesthood. Bishop Turley also received the first blessing from the newly minted priest, one of many that Fr. Michael bestowed on attendees that day. In a special moment, each Augustinian Friar in attendance laid their hands on the newly ordained Fr. Michael offering prayers as he begins his journey in the priesthood—and it wouldn't be an Augustinian ordination without a round of hugs once Fr. Michael donned his new priestly vestments.

"I can't believe how blessed I am that God has chosen me to carry out this sacred ministry. It was a humbling experience. But overall, it was a day filled with grace," says Fr. Michael. "The love and support I felt from my family, friends, Augustinian community, and parish communities was overwhelming! I'm greatly looking forward to my new life as a Catholic priest!"





A Reflection ON Pellegrinaggio

Words & Photography
by Fr. Michael Riggs, O.S.A.

There's something magnetic about a place where holy women and men have led lives of sanctity. Their deep, abiding relationship with Christ has radiated throughout the paths they walked. For those who long to be close to the presence of such holiness, we make a pilgrimage to those very places where the saints have trod.

This summer, a group of ten friars, led by Fr. Joe Mostardi, O.S.A., embarked to Italy on what we call the Augustinian Pellegrinaggio, a word which aptly means "pilgrimage" in Italian. This was the land where St. Augustine had some of his most transformative experiences with God as he recounts in his famous *Confessions*. It is also the place where centuries later, the Order of St. Augustine would be established, and where the life of the Order would thrive and produce great saints of our own.

This Pellegrinaggio was a significant experience for this particular group of friars, since the other nine of us recently completed our initial religious formation in the past four years. At this moment of our lives as friars, this pilgrimage served as the capstone experience of our formation in our Augustinian identity. After years of study, community living, and interior work, visiting the places where this way of life took form strengthened and solidified what has already been unfolding within us over the years as we come to understand ourselves as Augustinians.

We arrived in Rome to begin this spiritual journey. Our first few days were spent at our Augustinian College, which borders Vatican City and where Augustinian students from around the world live. The campus is also home to the Augustinian Curia where our Prior General and his Assistants General serve. One highlight was when we concelebrated Mass with Pope Francis on the Solemnity of Ss. Peter and Paul, right there at St. Peter's Basilica. Visiting the Vatican, this heart of Catholicism, and the Curia, the heart of our Order, left me feeling so alive and full of joy and hope as we connected with our common heritage.

From Rome, we visited the seaside city of Ostia where St. Augustine and his mother, St. Monica, shared a spiritual vision during one of their last conversations. In Augustine's *Confessions*, Monica shares with Augustine that nothing more keeps her attached to this world now that she has witnessed his conversion, and prophetically it is also in this city where she died just days afterward. When she fell ill, she instructed Augustine and his brother not to worry about where they would lay her to rest, but only to remember her at the altar of the Lord, and so she was buried right there in the city.

When St. Monica's remains were discovered, they were moved to the Basilica of St. Augustine in Rome. We had the privilege of celebrating Mass there beside her tomb, remembering all our mothers and those holy women in our lives that formed us in the faith.

Next, we went to the charming Tuscan village of San Gimignano, where the Augustinians manage a beautiful house of prayer and rest. Tuscany is where the Order of St. Augustine as we know it has its earliest roots. This region was home to several hermitages in the thirteenth century, uniting in 1244 to live under the *Rule* of St. Augustine. From here we visited some of the earliest foundations of the Order, including the hermitage of Lecceto, where a community of Augustinian contemplative nuns live today. The nuns greeted us with such joyful smiles and left us inspired to renew the contemplative dimension of our charism.

Departing Tuscany, we continued our Pellegrinaggio to Pavia at the Basilica di San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro. When we arrived, it was my turn to preside at Mass. It was an honor and a powerful moment of our pilgrimage since we were celebrating

the Eucharist just steps away from the remains of our spiritual father, Augustine. How moving it was to be with my brothers, so close to the man who brought us all together in one mind and one heart.

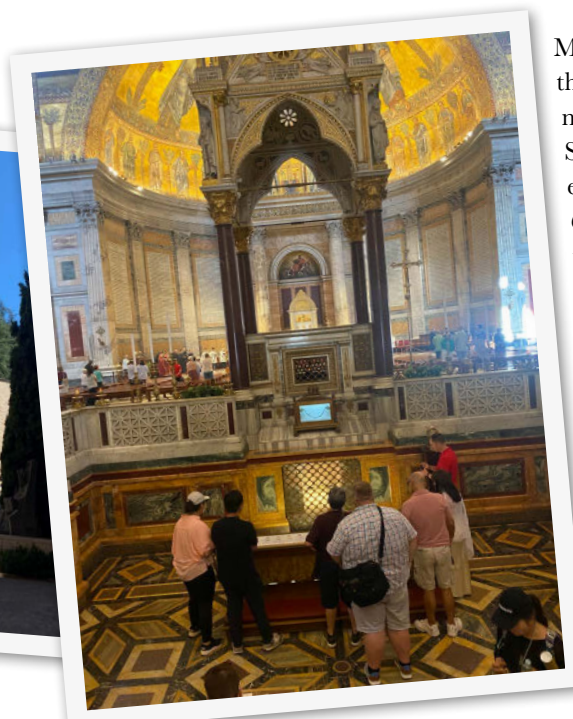
The blessings compounded as we walked the streets of Milan on our way to the Duomo (cathedral), knowing that St. Augustine walked these very streets to hear the preaching of St. Ambrose, ultimately leading to his conversion. When we came to the cathedral, we went down into the ancient baptistry where St. Augustine, along with his

friend Alypius and his son Adeodatus, were baptized into the Catholic Church. As we looked upon the dried-up pool with wonder, our group held a brief prayer service to renew our own baptismal promises in the faith. For me, this was the most spiritual moment of the entire pilgrimage, a powerful bonding experience as brothers in Augustine, reminding us that we are always in search of the truth that leads us to deeper faith.

Our final leg of the journey was spent in Umbria, where some of our Order's most beloved saints resided. We stayed at the very monastery where St. Clare of Montefalco lived, and from there we journeyed through the towering mountains to reach Cascia, where St. Rita spent her life. Many of us had a devotion to St. Rita since we have two shrines to her here in America, and as we approached the incorruptible body of this remarkable saint, we were awestruck by her presence and how her prayers have done wonders for us on our own personal journeys of faith.

There are many other places we went that I never got to mention, but I'll leave you with this image. On our final day of the pilgrimage, we visited the Basilica of St. Nicholas of Tolentino, the first canonized Saint of the Order. When the ten of us came to the tomb of this saint, we all spent about twenty minutes together there in silent contemplation, a picturesque encapsulation of our life in community and our time of pilgrimage.

We cannot express enough our gratitude to our respective Priors Provincial and to our generous benefactors for making this Pellegrinaggio possible for us. The impact this trip has had on us will long sustain us in our ministry as Augustinian Friars.

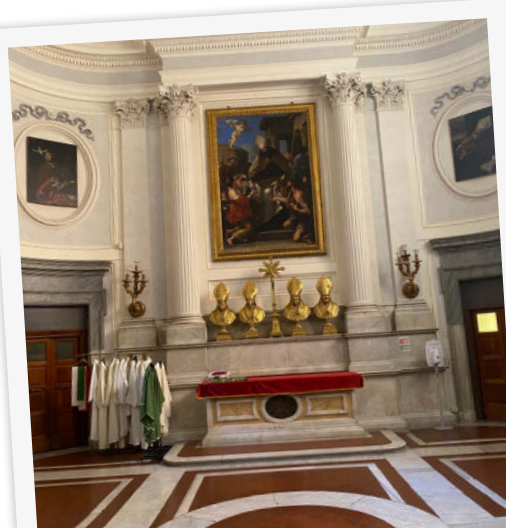


Behind the Scenes OF THE Pellegrinaggio

By Fr. Joseph S. Mostardi, O.S.A.

For the past 20 years, the Augustinians have brought our newest friars on a pilgrimage to Italy to explore the life of St. Augustine and the origin of the Order. Originally, the trip took place after our men in formation made their solemn profession. This experience was meant to fill in the gaps of what they learned through their years in initial formation by actually visiting the places where St. Augustine traveled during his four years in Italy, along with the various hermitage and ruins connected to St. Augustine, St. Monica, and the other Augustinian saints whose churches and monasteries are still active.

There's a second, equally important purpose to this trip: it's an opportunity for our young men to begin to experience the international flavor of our Order and the true meaning of Augustinian hospitality. The communities that provided housing and meals (along with the other communities we visit) made us feel right at home, sharing with us the history of the monastery or church. These places are steeped in historical importance for the Order, providing our pilgrims with a new understanding of what, until now, they have only read or heard about.



The research of Frs. Brian Lowery, O.S.A., and Thomas Martin, O.S.A., was essential to bringing this trip to life. Without their work, some of the various ancient sites we visit would be impossible to find. Coupled with their unique discoveries was the work of Fr. Jim Wenzel, O.S.A., in preparing a very comprehensive itinerary for Merrimack College. Merrimack brings students, faculty, and alumni on this pilgrimage every year, as does Villanova University. The big difference is timing – we Augustinians ordinarily spend 14 to 16 days overseas, whereas the college trips are shorter and not as extensive.

Adapting the work of Frs. Lowery, Martin, and Wenzel to fit the needs of our men in formation has been the work of many of us who have led this pilgrimage over the years. It takes almost a whole year to organize these pilgrimages because of the various places that we travel, and reservations for certain tours that need to be formalized months in advance. This particular trip took about 18 months to arrange because these men are already actively involved in parishes and schools, which made finding a time slot a bit more complicated.

Our young Augustinians leave the Pellegrinaggio with a deeper understanding of our charism. Their preaching will be radically different, for example, on the feast day of St. Rita, having now prayed before her body in the shrine in Cascia, or St. Nicholas in Tolentino, the first Augustinian saint—this experience will make a profound difference in explaining him and all these saints to their students or congregations.

There is no substitute for actual experiential learning, which is the real essence of this pilgrimage—not to mention the importance of these young friars who have spent years together in formation having the opportunity to spend this amount of time to share their ministerial stories with each other to see how they have each matured in their vocation. This is ongoing formation not only for them, but for me as well.



FR. JOE'S TIPS FOR GOOD ITALIAN FOOD!

“ It is very difficult to have a bad meal in Italy. The food is wonderful (and sometimes the food in our own monasteries is better than in the restaurants!). In San Gimignano, don't miss Il Trovatore. In Rome one of my favorite places is Sor'Eva, which is walking distance from the Vatican. ”



AUGUSTINIANS CELEBRATE 60 YEARS IN

Chulucanas, Peru

Words & Photography by Fr. John J. Lydon, O.S.A.



In 1964, the American Augustinians began their mission in Chulucanas, Peru, first with friars from the Midwest Province and then with members of the Villanova and California Provinces joining them. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of that mission and the founding of the Prelature (now a diocese) of Chulucanas which comprised a large geographical area of mountains and coastal plain in the far north of Peru.

In August there was a celebration to give thanks to God for the many blessings that have come to the people of Chulucanas through this 60-year mission. Cardinal Robert Prevost, O.S.A., along with the last Augustinian bishop, Dan Turley, O.S.A., traveled to join the present bishop, Cristobal Mejia, in the celebration.

Pope Francis also sent a special video message to the diocese to celebrate this milestone. In his message he stated that the Church of Chulucanas, since its founding, has been a model of what a synodal church means. He expressed gratitude to everyone who contributed to this model of church. Indeed, it is notable that as we often talk of a “synodal church” as being a new experience for us in the United States, the Pope highlights that this experience of church was alive and thriving in the Augustinian missions of Peru for decades.

As we mark this celebration, we give thanks for the many Augustinians who served in Peru and the benefactors who made that presence a possibility.



Scan this code to make a gift to the Fr. Richard D. Appicci, O.S.A., Fund for the Augustinian Foreign Missions and ensure the Augustinians' mission ministry in Peru now and in the future!



AUGUSTINE &... GOSSIP

By Fr. Francis J. Caponi, O.S.A.

In English, we don't have one word for the action of praising a person behind his back. If you want to describe the action of complimenting someone who is not present, you have to say something like, “He was praising her, although she wasn't in the room at the time.” There is no one verb that sums it up.

But we do have one word for the action of speaking about a person's problem or failures or sin behind his or her back: gossip.

Gossip is big business. There are television shows and websites and podcasts completely devoted to the latest rumors about actors and singers and athletes and politicians. Movies often portray friends bonding through the exchange of “good dirt” on someone in town or at the office.

It's hard for Christians not to be influenced by all this, so much so that we may wonder if gossip is even a sin. There are so many worse things in the world, right? Who doesn't enjoy a little gossip? And so we ask, “Come on, is it really that bad?”

But, of course, no one who is the victim of gossip ever asks that question. No one who is hit by the pain of learning that you are the topic of other people's whispered conversations ever asks, “Is it really that bad?”

Think about the Holy Family. How did Mary and Joseph feel when they overheard a neighbor saying, “The boy wasn't born quite nine months after the wedding, if you know what I mean.” What could Mary and Joseph do? Explain what really happened, and be laughed out of town? What could Joseph say upon overhearing some men remarking, “Didn't they have to leave the country around the time the child was born? Problems with the government, was it? Or were they on the run from her parents?” What must Mary have felt, walking to the well, when she overheard some of the women in front of her saying, “You know, the boy doesn't look anything like his father.” How her heart must have been pierced at that insinuation.

St. Augustine knew this pain, too, and better than most. As a famous sinner and “revert,” as a bishop and theologian, he was a man in the public eye, his words and actions subject to intense scrutiny, his mistakes celebrated—indeed, amplified and twisted—by his enemies. Every time Augustine walked into a room, he knew that some distorted version of his ideas, habits, personality, and history preceded him.

I think this explains, in part, the obvious pride Augustine takes in the memory of his mother as a kind of “rumor control,” a fourth century “gossip firewall.” He writes in his Confessions:



St. Augustine Reading Rhetoric and Philosophy at the School of Rome, Benozzo Gozzoli, 1464-1465.

“There was another great gift with which you had endowed this bondswoman of yours, in whose womb you created me, O my God, my mercy, and that was the gift of acting as peacemaker whenever she could if friction occurred between souls at variance. She would hear many a bitter accusation from each against the other, of the kind that lumpy, ill-digested discord is wont to belch forth when someone dyspeptic with hatred spews out acid talk to a present friend concerning an absent enemy; but never would she repeat to one anything the other had alleged, except what would be effective in reconciling them. This would have seemed to me a boon of small account, did I not have sad experience of innumerable hordes of people, inspired by what rampant, grisly gangrene of sin I cannot conceive, who not only betray to angry people what their angry enemies have said, but add things unsaid as well, whereas it ought to be easy enough for any who have kindly feelings toward their own kind to avoid provoking or aggravating the enmity of others by reporting malicious gossip, except in cases where they have made sure they can extinguish it again by peaceable speech. Such was she, because you, her intimate teacher, instructed her in the school of her heart.” [IX.9.21; trans. Boulding]

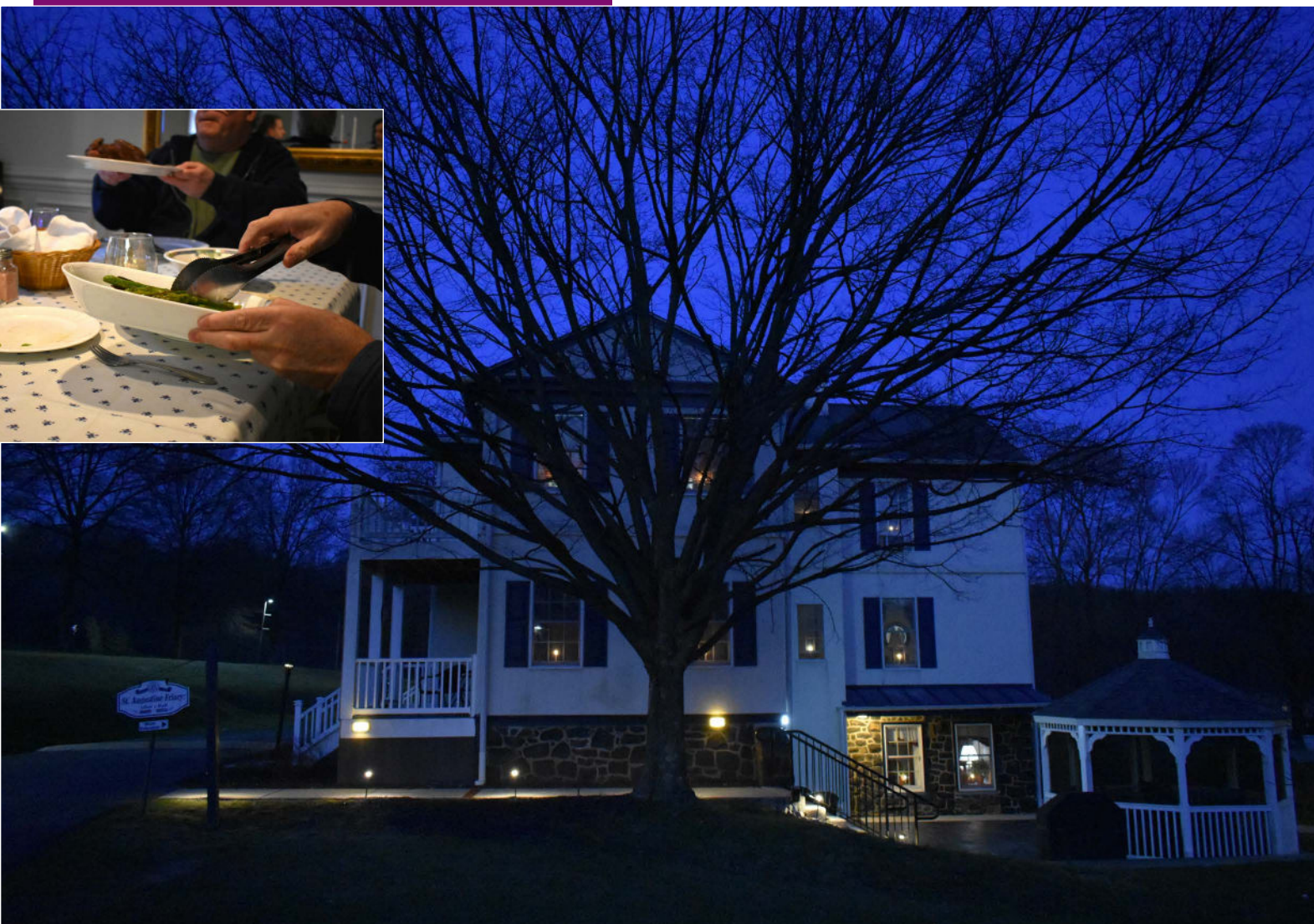
St. Monica rejected what Pope Francis calls the “dark joy” of gossip.

Perhaps, in view of global hunger and injustice, gossip doesn't sound so bad. But we are Christians. We are supposed to care both for the pain of people suffering in places we will never visit, and the pain of the people we live next to, work with, and pray with. We cannot always solve the problems of those we see each day, but we can use the divine gift of speech to build up, to comfort, to teach. And like St. Monica, we can use the divine gift of silence to break the heavy chains of malicious motives and whispered words.

at home
with...

St. Augustine Friary at Albers Hall

By Sarah Reisert



**CAMPUS OF MALVERN
PREPARATORY SCHOOL**
MALVERN, PA

Fr. Kevin M. DePrinzio, O.S.A., Community Prior
Fr. Christopher J. Drennen, O.S.A., Community Treasurer
Fr. William C. Gabriel, O.S.A.
Fr. Patrick B. McStravog, O.S.A.



A white farmhouse, two centuries old, sits on the campus of Malvern Preparatory School.

It has two levels of graceful railings along the rear, and an elegant gazebo to one side. Candles glow from the windows, a Pennsylvania Dutch tradition representing welcome to travelers and the warmth of those inside. “I put up those candles at Christmas,” Fr. Patrick McStravog, O.S.A., tells me. “I persuaded the other guys to let me keep them up.”

Fr. Patrick is one of four Augustinian Friars living at the St. Augustine Friary at Albers Hall, on the campus of Malvern Preparatory School in Malvern, Pa. This is his second time living in Albers Hall, returning in 2021 after an earlier stint from 2000 to 2008. He works at Malvern Prep in the facilities department, though he is quick to point out that he does not run the facilities department and is happy to leave that job to others. “I can’t wait to not be in charge of anything,” he laughs. “I used to work in the summer when I was here in 2008. There’s nothing to do here in summer; the students aren’t here and they could always use a little help. I like being outside, so I always enjoyed that.”

Fr. Bill Gabriel, O.S.A., is the community’s newest member, joining in 2022. At only 30 years old he does the lion’s share of bringing down the average age of the friars in the house, making them the second-youngest community in the Province. Fr. Bill leads Malvern Prep’s Office of Mission and Ministry. “I oversee a team of amazing people who run global programming. We do international exchanges with other Augustinian high schools, and organize Christian service trips, both domestic and global.”

“The team is phenomenal, and you’re able to be present to students in moments of crisis and celebration,” he continues. “You’re able to be a part of some of the operation discussions, like looking at feedback or planning new events, trying to always connect the Augustinian Catholic identity to what we’re doing. I spoke to coaches the other day for spring sports about ‘this is who we are as an Augustinian organization.’”

Fr. Chris Drennan, O.S.A., has been at Albers Hall the longest—fourteen years. He’s a Malvern Prep graduate in addition to the school’s current director of Augustinian spirituality & outreach. The early bird of the bunch, he celebrates the 6:20 AM convent Mass for the I.H.M. sisters at Villa Maria High School twice a week, and goes to Ss. Philip and James Parish in Exton, Pa. to help with their 6:30 AM Mass on other weekday mornings. “And then on weekends, too—I’ve been helping there for fourteen years. That’s the Parish I grew up in. I always say I haven’t gotten far in life,” he says wryly.



Community life at Albers Hall begins each day once Fr. Chris returns from his morning rounds, with prayer at 7:05 AM. “And then from there, we come in the dining room for breakfast depending on what’s going on,” says Fr. Kevin DePrinzio, O.S.A. “The two days that I teach—Monday and Wednesday this semester—I quickly come in, get coffee, and then get on the road, but other than that, it’s usually breakfast in here. But Chris tends to eat before then, if he’s been up for a while already.”

Fr. Kevin is the vice president of Villanova University’s Office for Mission & Ministry. He came to Villanova from Merrimack College in 2007 as the Province’s vocation director. “It was Fr. Peter Donohue’s idea. He said, ‘I’m going to give you a part-time position in campus ministry to give you more credibility on the campus, because if you just introduce yourself as vocation director, no one’s going to come and see you.’” In 2020, Fr. Peter made Fr. Kevin one of his vice presidents.

“I really do prefer to be a homebody,” Fr. Kevin says. “But there’s just times when I can’t be there. We typically pray at six, followed by dinner. The Holy Hour is *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy!* In fact, if you notice the way Bill introduced his team—‘this is my wonderful, amazing team’—that’s from *Wheel of Fortune*, when contestants introduce their ‘amazing spouses’ and their ‘beautiful kids.’” Fr. Bill groans in the seat next to Fr. Kevin but doesn’t deny it.

As we sip tea they lament that they are out of Malvern Prep honey, courtesy of the school’s beekeeping club. “We have four hives. I was told today that we’re going to double it to eight,” says Fr. Bill. “They’re not on campus right now—they’re in a temperature-controlled trailer in Chester County.” Fr. Patrick adds, “We have a real beekeeper who keeps an eye on them, so it’s not entirely up to the students to keep the bees alive.”

Albers Hall is a cozy place, and the friars who live there appreciate it and the community they have been blessed with. “I remember when I was vocation director, one of the questions I would ask the guys when they were seriously, seriously discerning was, ‘What are you going to be like to live with?’” says Fr. Kevin. “And they would go, ‘What? How am I going to be in community?’ Not ‘What is it going to be like to live with people?’ but ‘What am I going to be like?’ Because everyone brings their own family dynamics.”

St. Augustine Friary at Albers Hall has a new resident! Turn to page 23 to learn more about Fr. Michael Riggs’s move to this community.

Order of St. Augustine

60 YEARS OF PRIESTHOOD



Fr. Frank A. Farsaci, O.S.A.



Fr. Joseph W. Wimmer, O.S.A.

50 YEARS OF PRIESTHOOD



Fr. Albert P. MacPherson, O.S.A.



Fr. Donald F. Reilly, O.S.A.



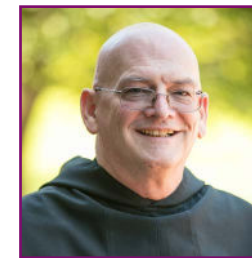
Fr. William J. Wallace, O.S.A.

25 YEARS OF PRIESTHOOD



Fr. David A. Cregan, O.S.A.

Following the vow of obedience, friars find themselves called to where they are needed. Each summer, as friars receive new assignments, *The Augustinian* provides brief updates on friars serving throughout the Province. Read here to track down that old classmate, pastor, chemistry teacher, chaplain, philosophy professor, co-worker, or friend.



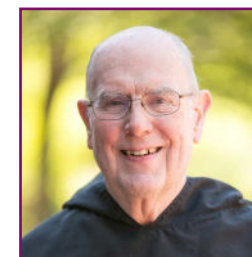
◀ Fr. Liam O'Doherty, O.S.A.

Fr. Liam is fresh off a three-year term serving at our two parishes in the Diocese of Albany, N.Y., St. Mary's in Waterford and St. Augustine's in Troy, though it's not the only time he served there. "St. Augustine's was my first assignment when I was ordained 48 years ago in 1976," he remembers, and he spent a year there before being stationed in Japan. Now that the Augustinians have left these two parishes, Fr. Liam will be in residence at the community of St. Nicholas of Tolentine in the Bronx, N.Y.



◀ Fr. Michael Riggs, O.S.A.

The Province's newest-ordained friar has begun his first assignment at Malvern Preparatory School in Malvern, Pa. He joins a long line of Augustinians who have served at Malvern Prep since the school's founding in 1842. Fr. Michael will be teaching theology and working in the office of mission and ministry.



◀ Fr. Bill Waters, O.S.A.

Fr. Bill just celebrated a decade as pastor of St. Augustine Parish in Philadelphia, Pa., and recently completed a million-dollar capital campaign to restore and refit this historic parish. He has earned a peaceful retirement and has moved to the St. Thomas of Villanova Monastery in Villanova, Pa. Fr. Paul Galetto, O.S.A., pastor of St. Paul's Parish in South Philadelphia, has assumed the role of parish administrator at St. Augustine's.



◀ Fr. Joe Genito, O.S.A., and Fr. Joe Narog, O.S.A.

After seven years as pastor of St. Thomas of Villanova Parish in Rosemont, Pa., Fr. Joe Genito, O.S.A., has returned to the city of Philadelphia to serve in residence at St. Augustine Parish in Old City. Returning as pastor to St. Thomas of Villanova Parish is Fr. Joe Narog, O.S.A., recently finishing a seven-year assignment as the Province's vocation director. Fr. Joe served as pastor of St. Thomas of Villanova once before, from 2010-2017.



◀ Fr. Bill Donnelly, O.S.A.

Fr. Bill Donnelly, O.S.A., has returned to St. John Stone Friary, living in the community in Villanova, Pa. He recently spent six months in upstate New York assisting Frs. Liam O'Doherty, O.S.A., and David Kelley, O.S.A., as the Augustinians prepared to leave the parishes of St. Mary's in Waterford, N.Y. and St. Augustine's in Troy, N.Y.

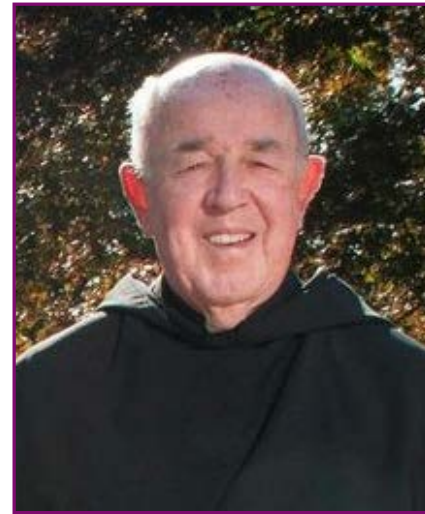
By Fr. Michael F. Di Gregorio, O.S.A.



Fr. David J. Kelley, O.S.A.



Fr. James J. MacDougall, O.S.A.



Fr. James Wenzel, O.S.A.

FR. DAVID J. KELLEY, O.S.A.

Fr. David J. Kelley, O.S.A., lately pastor of both St. Mary of the Assumption and St. Augustine Parishes in Waterford and Troy, N.Y., respectively, passed over to the Lord on Friday, June 28, 2024 at the friary in Waterford. He was 81 years old.

Fr. David, the only child of Arthur and Alice Murphy Kelley, was born on July 30, 1942 in Staten Island, N.Y., where he received his elementary and high school education. He graduated from St. John's University, Jamaica, N.Y., with a degree in Business Administration and worked for a time at General Telephone Company as well as for an insurance firm. As a member of the Legion of Mary at his home parish of Our Lady of Good Counsel, Staten Island, he discerned a vocation to the Augustinian Order. He enrolled in the province's post graduate postulant program at Augustinian Academy in 1966 and was received as a novice on September 2, 1967. Following his initial formation at Good Counsel Novitiate, New Hamburg, N.Y., he professed simple vows on September 3, 1968, proceeded to St. Mary's Hall, Villanova, to study philosophy, and then pursued theological studies at the Washington Theological Union, Washington, D.C. He made his solemn profession of vows on his 30th birthday in 1972, and was ordained to the priesthood on December 30, 1973, at his home parish by Bishop John Comber, M.M.

Fr. David's first assignment was, as a deacon, to St. Augustine Parish, Andover, Mass. in September 1973. He remained there following his ordination to the priesthood until he was reassigned in July 1976 as associate pastor at St. Augustine Parish, Troy, N.Y. In July 1988, he was named pastor of St. Joseph Parish Greenwich, N.Y. In July 1997, Fr. David was assigned to Assumption/St. Paul Parish, Mechanicville, N.Y., as associate pastor, and in December 2002, he became pastor of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Waterford, N.Y.

During his time at St. Mary's, Fr. David led the 100th anniversary celebration of the church's dedication, the 60th anniversary of its parish school, and the 170th anniversary of the founding of the parish. When the nearby parish of St. Augustine in Troy was twinned with that of St. Mary in 2017, Fr. David was appointed its pastor as well. Thus, the two neighboring parishes, while remaining autonomous, were shepherded by the same pastor whose kind, gentle, and humble demeanor endeared him to the people he served so well in both parishes for many decades.

Fr. David's Funeral Mass was celebrated on Wednesday, July 3, 2024 at St. Mary of the Assumption Church by Prior Provincial, Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A. Fr. Michael H. Bielecki, O.S.A., was the homilist. Burial followed on July 5, 2024 in St. Peter Cemetery, Staten Island.

FR. JAMES J. MACDOUGALL, O.S.A.

Fr. Jim MacDougall, O.S.A., passed away on March 9 this year at St. Thomas Monastery, Villanova, where he had been a community member these past five years.

He was born on November 12, 1932, in New York City, one of three sons of Donald H. MacDougall and Catherine A. Loftus. Baptized in the Church of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, Bronx, he attended elementary school first at Good Shepherd Parish School, and then at St. Nicholas of Tolentine Parish School, and then continued also in the parish high school. He entered Augustinian Academy, Staten Island, N.Y. in September 1949, as a postulant for his final year and graduated in 1950. He was received into the Order as a novice on September 9, 1950, and following his year at Good Counsel Novitiate, New Hamburg, N.Y., he professed simple vows on September 10, 1951. He then attended Villanova from 1951 to 1955 where he obtained a B.A. in philosophy and went to Augustinian College, Washington, D.C., for his theological studies from 1955 to 1959. He professed solemn vows on September 10, 1954 and was ordained to the priesthood on June 6, 1959, by Bishop John McNamara at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D.C. In 1960, he received an M.A. in American history from Villanova University.

Fr. Jim was assigned to Msgr. Bonner High School, Drexel Hill, Pa., where he served from 1959 to 1969 as a teacher of history and religion. In 1969, he was transferred to Biscayne College, Miami, Fla., where he was a member of the Casa San Lorenzo community and served for many years as the prior. Here he ministered in many capacities: as teacher of history, religious studies, and American political science; as campus minister; as chair of the Social Sciences Division; and as prefect in the student dormitory. In 2005, he went to part time teaching and continued to help in campus ministry. He studied Spanish, and throughout his years at the school worked with both the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking students, staff, and faculty. When Casa San Lorenzo closed, Fr. Jim was assigned in 2015 to St. Nicholas of Tolentine Friary, Bronx. In July 2019, he joined Villanova's St. Thomas Monastery community.

Fr. Jim found blessing and joy in simple things in his later years, like traveling with his brother, doing the *New York Times* crossword puzzle, walking to the Goodwill store in the Bronx to browse through used books, or simply sitting in quiet prayer. His Funeral Mass was celebrated by Prior Provincial Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A., on Friday, March 15, 2024. Fr. Michael H. Bielecki, O.S.A., was the homilist. Burial took place in the Augustinian Plot of Calvary Cemetery, West Conshohocken, Pa.

FR. JAMES WENZEL, O.S.A.

Fr. Jim Wenzel, O.S.A., passed to eternal life at the age of 94 on April 24 of this year, the Feast of the Conversion of St. Augustine, at St. Thomas of Villanova Monastery, Villanova. Fr. Jim was born on April 1, 1930, in Wakefield, Mass., one of two sons and two daughters of William Wenzel and Gertrude McFadden. Following his elementary and high school education in Wakefield, he enrolled in the newly opened Merrimack College, North Andover, Mass. in 1948. Two years later, he was received into the Order as a novice in September 1950, and upon completing a year's formation at Good Counsel Novitiate, New Hamburg, N.Y., he professed simple vows on September 10, 1951. He then completed his college education at Villanova University. In 1953 he obtained a B.A. in philosophy and proceeded to Augustinian College, Washington, D.C., for theological studies. He professed solemn vows on September 10, 1954, and was ordained to the priesthood on May 26, 1956, at the Christ the Teacher Chapel of Merrimack College by Richard Cardinal Cushing, Archbishop of Boston.

Fr. Jim was assigned to St. Thomas Monastery and taught at Villanova University from 1957 to 1958. From 1958 to 1968 he served as associate pastor at St. Augustine Parish, Andover, Mass., and from 1968 to 1974 he was pastor of St. Augustine Parish, Lawrence, Mass. In 1974 he was named pastor of St. Nicholas of Tolentine Parish, Jamaica, N.Y., and from 1979 to 1986, he was pastor of St. Mary Immaculate Conception Parish, Lawrence, Mass. In that latter year, he became prior of Augustinian College at which time he completed in 1989 an M.A. in theology at the Washington Theological Union, and a D.Min. at the Catholic University of America. From 1995 to 1999, he served as retreat director at the Convento Sant'Agostino, San Gimignano, Italy. In 1999 he was assigned briefly to St. Katharine Drexel Parish, Cape Coral, Fla., as associate pastor and then until 2015 he was a member of St. Ambrose Friary, Andover, Mass., and ministered at Merrimack College as director of the Center for Augustinian Study and Legacy. He participated in the Pellegrinaggio program, which brought members of the Merrimack College community to visit Augustinian historical sites in Italy and in Europe. In August 2015, he was assigned to the formation team at the Augustinian Novitiate, Racine, Wis. In September 2018, he returned east and was assigned to Bellesini Friary, Ardmore, and then to St. Thomas Monastery the following year due to health issues.

He will be remembered for his encouragement and support for students in every level of Augustinian formation. His boundless energy involved many people in serving the Church in a variety of ministries.

A Funeral Mass was celebrated on April 30, 2024 at St. Thomas of Villanova Church, Villanova, by Prior Provincial Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A., with Fr. William F. Waters, O.S.A., as homilist. A second Mass was offered on Thursday, May 2, 2024 at Christ the Teacher Church at Merrimack College, also by the Prior Provincial and with Fr. Waters as homilist. Burial took place on May 3, at St. Mary's Cemetery, Lawrence, Mass.

You can read full biographies of deceased Augustinians online at augustinian.org/necrology

Fore!

The Augustinians' **GOLF OUTINGS** Raise Money for the Friars and their Ministries *by Sarah Reisert*

FRIENDS OF THE AUGUSTINIANS GOLF OUTING // Applebrook Golf Club

On May 28, over 160 people attended the second annual **Friends of the Augustinians Golf Outing at the Applebrook Golf Club**. There was ample sunshine for the golfers and lobsters aplenty for the dinner guests, and we raised \$375,000 to support the care of elderly and infirm friars and the education and training of future members of the Order.



CASCIA CLASSIC // Westover Golf Club

Under a bright sun on August 16, golfers gathered for the 22nd annual **Cascia Classic at the Westover Golf Club**. Since its inception in 2002, the Classic has raised over \$700,000 for a wide variety of ministries, including St. Rita's Orphanage in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the National Shrine of St. Rita of Cascia, scholarships for students at local Catholic schools, support for the friars' ministries abroad, and more.



Thank you to all who joined us for sportsmanship, camaraderie, and supporting the Augustinians!



A New Marker for the Augustinian Plot in Calvary Cemetery

Since 1980, Augustinian Friars have been buried in a hilltop plot in Calvary Cemetery in West Conshohocken, Pa.—but if someone were looking for the plot, it wasn't easy to find. Thanks to the efforts of Renee Cirino, M.S., the cemetery's assistant manager, the plot now has a beautiful new marker to guide visitors to these Augustinians' final resting place. Bearing the Augustinian flaming heart and the words "The Augustinians, Province of St. Thomas of Villanova—One Mind, One Heart on the Way to God," the marker was unveiled at a special ceremony on Monday, June 17. "We at Calvary Cemetery wanted to return the love that these Men of Heart give to the community every day," said Cirino during her remarks. "This is a special time to honor the Augustinians and remember times when we have been served by them."

Visit the Augustinian plot in section B of Calvary Cemetery, 235 Matsonford Road, Conshohocken, Pa.



Saying Goodbye and Thank You to A.D.R.O.P. Executive Director Lacie A. M. Fischley

For the past six years, the Augustinians have been blessed to have Lacie A. M. Fischley, M.A. lead the Augustinian Defenders of the Rights of the Poor (A.D.R.O.P.), a critical ministry within our Province. At the end of August, Lacie moved on to pursue another opportunity in Ohio. Throughout her time as executive director, Lacie has consistently led the expansion of A.D.R.O.P. services to help those in need. Her many accomplishments include expansion of the level of healthcare provided by the Unity Clinic, mobilizing vaccine clinics during the pandemic, expanding numerous education programs including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and creation of the Brewin' Peace Coffee Cart to help formerly incarcerated people gain a fair second chance.

Thank you, Lacie, for your dedication and service to the Augustinians and all of God's people. We could never count the number of lives that have been impacted by your leadership. Many blessings to you and your family during this time of transition.

Two New Augustinian Affiliates to the Order of St. Augustine

Our newest Augustinian Affiliates, Karen and Joe Carey, were affiliated at Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish in Bryn Mawr, Pa. on February 28. Affiliation is the highest honor that the Order can bestow on the laity, as affiliates formally become part of the Augustinian Order.

The Careys were chosen for affiliation because of their thirty years of dedication to Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish as employees, parishioners, and supporters of the Province. We offer the Careys our congratulations and a heartfelt welcome to the Augustinian family!



Fr. Raymond F. Dlugos, O.S.A., vice president of mission and ministry at Merrimack College, meets His Holiness Pope Francis during the trip. Photo courtesy of Vatican Media.

Merrimack Trustees Meet with His Holiness Pope Francis

A delegation from Merrimack College had the incredible opportunity to meet with Pope Francis on May 10. President Christopher E. Hopey, Ph.D., Vice President for Mission and Ministry Fr. Raymond F. Dlugos, O.S.A., and members of the Board of Trustees had their audience in the Vatican's Clementine Hall, followed by individual meetings with His Holiness, blessings, and photos.

In his remarks, Pope Francis spoke on the duality of Merrimack's mission to educate young people to face challenges together in order to grow in solidarity. "It is important, in every aspect of education, to reach all those places where education can generate solidarity, sharing, communion," the Pope said. "This this is your responsibility, and it is a great one."



Augustinians Depart Albany, N.Y.-Area Parishes

In 1858, two parishes in the Diocese of Albany, N.Y. were entrusted to the care of the Augustinian Friars: St. Mary of the Assumption in Waterford and St. Augustine in Troy. For over 160 years, the Augustinians cared for these parishes and their people, but due to staffing issues the Augustinians decided in September 2023 to withdraw from both parishes.

The last Augustinian-led Masses were held during the weekend of June 1-2, 2024. As part of the farewell, the people of St. Augustine's made two framed documents: one explaining the presence of the Augustinians at the parish for 166 years, and the other listing the names of all the Augustinian pastors. These were presented to Prior Provincial Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A., who had traveled to New York for the occasion, along with Frs. Liam O'Doherty, O.S.A., and Bill Donnelly, O.S.A., who served the community. The parishioners plan to hang these documents on the back wall of the church so those who visit can remember the church's Augustinian legacy.

L-R: Prior Provincial Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A., Fr. William J. Donnelly, O.S.A., and Fr. Liam T. O'Doherty, O.S.A., holding the commemorative documents made by St. Augustine's parishioners.

News *and* Notes

Friars Celebrate 40th Anniversary of Ordination

On Saturday, May 11, Frs. Jim Keating, John Lydon, and Jim McBurney, O.S.A., celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving marking their 40th anniversary of ordination. Joined by friends, family, and fellow friars, the three celebrated Mass at Corr Chapel on the campus of Villanova University, followed by a reception.

Frs. Keating, Lydon, and McBurney were ordained together at the home parish of Fr. Keating (St. Anastasia Parish in Newtown Square, Pa.) by Bishop John McNabb, O.S.A., the bishop of Chulucanas, Peru. Though they did not spend their formation years together and their lives in ministry took them to different parts of the globe, these two Masses forty years apart reflect a unique and enduring bond.



Friars left to right: Fr. John J. Lydon, O.S.A., Fr. James R. Keating, O.S.A., and Fr. James D. McBurney, O.S.A.

National Shrine of St. Rita of Cascia Honors Patron on Her Feast Day

Devotees to St. Rita, Patron Saint of the Impossible, flocked to her national shrine on May 22 to celebrate her feast day. Visitors were greeted by volunteers selling red roses to be blessed at Mass, which could be offered at one of the statues of St. Rita inside the Shrine or brought home to share the blessings with others. The altarpiece and altar were adorned with more red roses, honoring the legend of

St. Rita's dying request: that a rose from her garden be brought to her in the depth of winter, which the Lord provided.

The day's seven Masses (in English, Spanish, and American Sign Language) featured special celebrants: Prior Provincial Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A.; Fr. Rob's counterpart in the Midwest Province, Fr. Anthony B. Pizzo, O.S.A.; even Cardinal Christophe Pierre, the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States. The 10:00 AM Mass, which remembered in a special way the youth and young adults of the Church, was celebrated by the Most Reverend Nelon Pérez, D.D., Archbishop of Philadelphia. He says, "It was incredible to see so many people gather, especially student representatives from private Catholic and Archdiocesan schools! What a true testament to the devotion so many have to this beloved saint!"



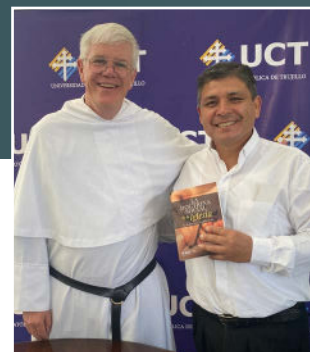
Photo courtesy of Norwood-Fontbonne Academy.

Mary Catherine O'Reilly-Gindhart Simpson Joins Province Staff

The Province is pleased to welcome Mary Catherine O'Reilly-Gindhart Simpson to our Advancement & Communications team as associate director of advancement and communications. Mary Catherine earned her undergraduate degree and first master's degree from Villanova University, and holds her advanced master's and S.T.B. from KU Leuven in Leuven, Belgium. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in theology and religious studies at the University of Glasgow. She has served as an adjunct professor at Villanova University, Cabrini College, and St. Joseph's University in the theology department for the past 11 years. Mary Catherine and her husband, Frank X. Simpson III, live in Philadelphia and are members of St. Paul's/St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi Parish in Philadelphia, an Augustinian parish. Be sure to say hello to Mary Catherine at the next Province event!



Fr. John J. Lydon, O.S.A., Holds Book Tour in Peru



While in Peru to teach a weeklong class at the international novitiate in Lima, Fr. John J. Lydon, O.S.A., had the opportunity to promote and discuss his latest book published by the University Press of the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru. *La Doctrina Social de la Iglesia: Su historia y enseñanzas* (*The Social Doctrine of the Church: Its history and teachings*) is an examination of Catholic social teaching over the last 130 plus years, giving the historical contexts and guiding principles of each of the documents that make up modern Catholic social thought. Presentations occurred in both Lima and Trujillo, with special guest Edinson Farfan, O.S.A., the Augustinian bishop of Chiclayo, Peru. Felicidades, Padre Juan!

Photo above: Fr. John J. Lydon, O.S.A., with Fr. Ramiro Castillo, O.S.A., the superior of the Augustinians in Peru.

Augustinian Formators Travel the Globe

Since November 2023, the Institute of Augustinian Spirituality and the International Commission for Formation and Vocation Promotion hosted a series of face-to-face workshops around the globe as a part of a nine-month online formation program. Participants addressed the vocation of the formator, his apostolic service, Augustinian anthropology, the spiritual and psychological experience from the Augustinian call, and many other units on theology, emotional life, canon law, and more.

The inaugural workshop was held at the Province office last November. In January, the Province of Nigeria hosted a five-day formation course for formators of African circumscriptions of the Order in Abuja. In May, the program reconvened at the University of San Agustín in Iloilo, Philippines. Congratulations to Augustinians around the world who completed the course!

Photo below: Fr. Gary N. McCloskey, O.S.A. (sixth from right), and Vicar General Joseph L. Farrell, O.S.A. (fourth from right), with formators in Nigeria.



Novices Makes First Profession of Vows

On Saturday, August 3, Nick Anderson and Javier Medina made their first profession of vows at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Ojai, Calif. Professing these vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience marks the culmination of a candidate's novitiate (a year-long period of prayer and discernment in which the novice is introduced to the Augustinian way of life) and the beginning of a journey toward becoming a solemnly professed Augustinian priest or brother. First vows are renewed annually for at least three years, after which a friar is invited to solemn profession.

While Br. Javier is a member of the California Province, Br. Nick is a member of the Province of St. Thomas of Villanova, and upon completion of his studies and his solemn profession of vows will return to the east coast to serve in our parishes, schools, and ministries. Please keep Brs. Nick and Javier in your prayers as they embark on the next step of their journey.

Novitiate Class Reunion

Members of the 1965-1966 novitiate class, below, gathered for a reunion at the Inn at Villanova, Pa. in June. While renewing friendships formed in New Hamburg, N.Y. (then the site of the novitiate) and beyond, they also made a donation to support the work of the Province. Bless you all!



A New Way to Order Mass Cards

by Sarah Reisert

We are happy to announce that the Province has established a more efficient process to order and receive Augustinian Mass cards!

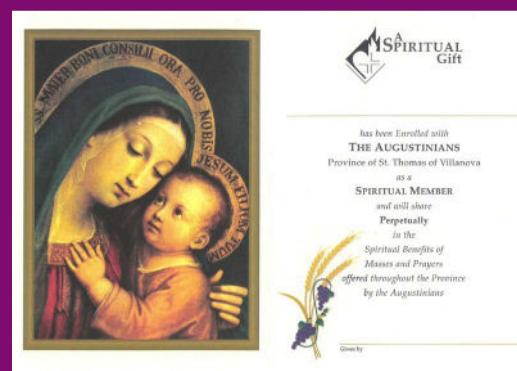
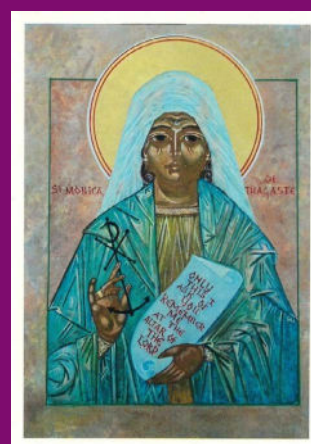
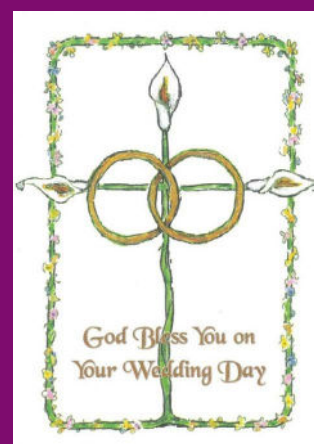
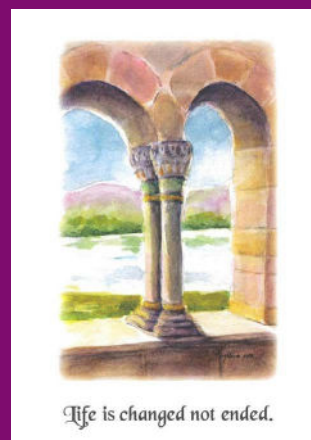
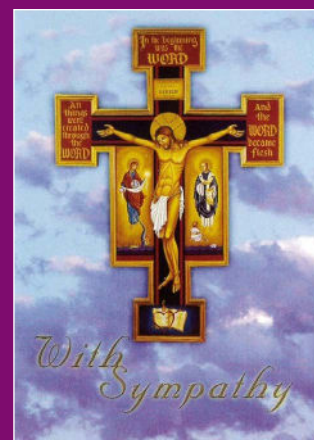
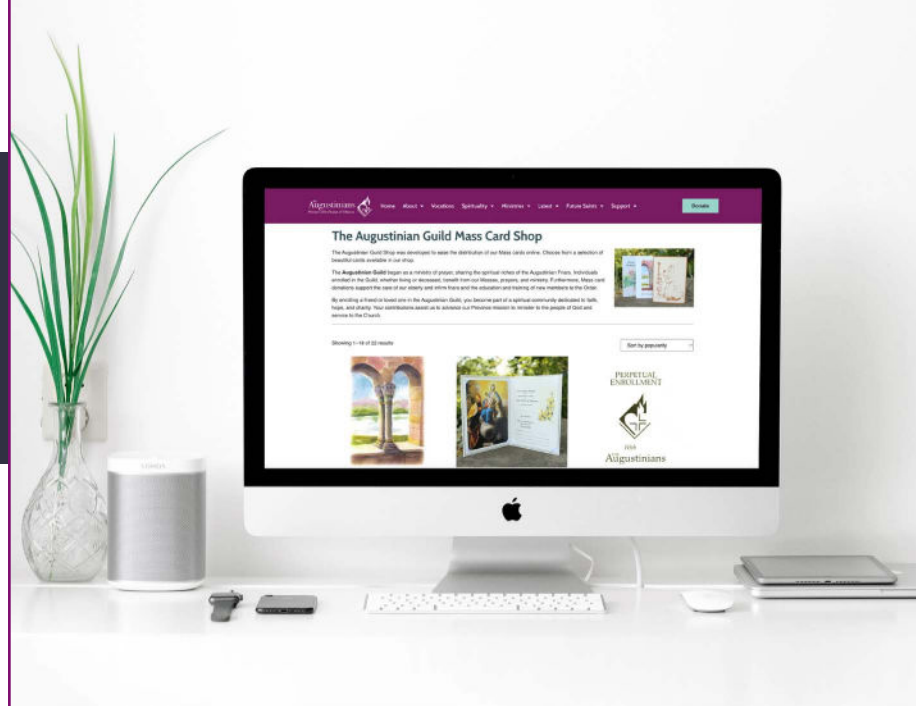
Before, ordering Mass cards was a multi-step process. Now you can order your cards, make a suggested offering, and share the card's intention all in one place, at the same time! Visit our online store at **Augustinian.org/shop** and check out our wide selection of options. Not only can you view the inside and outside of every card we offer, the new process means you should receive your Mass cards sooner! (If you would like to pick up your cards at the Provincial Office—located at 214 Ashwood Road in Villanova—rather than having them mailed to you, you can select in-person pickup at checkout.)

Whether you're remembering a loved one who has passed, celebrating a marriage or the birth of a child, or just want to keep a friend in your prayers and the prayers of the Augustinians, the Augustinian Guild offers Mass cards for every occasion.

www.augustinian.org/shop

Questions?

Contact Maria Manna at maria.manna@augustinian.org or (610) 527-3330, ext. 240.



Tolle Lege Day
One Mind, One Heart.

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Mary Catherine O'Reilly-Gindhart Simpson, Associate Director, will be in touch with 2024 Ambassadors after January 1, 2025, to confirm interest in serving again.



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*Cover: Prior Provincial Fr. Robert P. Hagan, O.S.A.,
visits the sarcophagus of Fr. Bill Atkinson, O.S.A.,
in St. Thomas of Villanova Church, Villanova, Pa.*

CELEBRATE A PROFILE IN AUGUSTINIAN LEADERSHIP

You are cordially invited to join the Augustinian Friars for a
GALA COCKTAIL RECEPTION

Guest of honor:

KEITH JONES

Villanova Alumnus and

Award-Winning News Anchor, Host, and Reporter for NBC10 News

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2024

(St. Augustine's birthday!)

6:00-8:30 PM

Inn at Villanova

601 County Line Road, Wayne, Pennsylvania



Join us in a special toast to celebrate
the Province's 150th anniversary.

To reserve your ticket/sponsorship, visit:
AUGUSTINIAN.ORG/KEITH-JONES

Questions, contact Madonna Sutter at
madonna.sutter@augustinian.org or (267) 272-3048.

Event proceeds will support the Augustinian Fund.

THE Augustinian Fund 
One gift, immeasurable blessings

