

# Augustinian Friends - Prayer Resource Guide

## MEMBERSHIP FEES NOW DUE

Thanks to all those FRIENDS who have already paid their annual subscription fee of \$25.00.

If you haven't had the chance to send yours yet, please fill out the form below and mail it with your cheque or money order to:

Augustinian Friends

C/- PO Box 679

Brookvale NSW 2100

NB: Please make cheques payable to Augustinian Friends

### Inside this issue:

Annual subscription Fee Application Form. 1

Nomination Form of candidates available to become the next National Leader for Augustinian Friends 2010 - 2013 2

Chaplain's Letter 3

"Augustine and the Bible" by Martine Du-laey, an excerpt from her chapter contained in the work on Saint Augustine edited by T van Bavel. Augustinian Press 2007, pp 108 -11. 4

NAME(S):

.....

POSTAL ADDRESS:

.....

.....

.....

We are eager for as many Friends as possible to receive

Amici & the Prayer Resource Guide by Email

so please indicate below your preference and, if necessary, your details.

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

.....

I wish to receive *AMICI* via E-MAIL.

Please find enclosed \$25.00 for my Membership

Please find enclosed donation of \$.....

Please cancel my membership.

### The Purpose of the Prayer Resource Guide

Each of us is on a journey to God like our patron Augustine.

The Friends prayer resource is offered to you as a support in your day to day prayer and will be sent to you 4 times a year.

It is centered on the Gospel readings and quotes from Augustine. Formation material is offered from different sources including a prayer orientated letter from our Chaplain.

“Augustinian Friends “  
**Nomination Form**  
 for the Election of a **National Leader**  
 set to take place at the Congress  
 being held in Brisbane July 2nd. - 4th,  
 2010

In accordance with Clauses (4.16—4.20 inclusive) of the Draft Constitution of Augustinian Friends a **National Leader** and a **Formation Coordinator** need to be elected at the time when the latest National Lay Congress is to be held.

- 
1. Only financial members are eligible to nominate self or a current member.
  2. A valid nomination requires your name, address and signature, together with the signature of the nominee.
  3. Profile and photo of member accepting nomination must be enclosed with Nomination Form.

---

I wish to nominate the following person for election to the National Committee of Augustinian Friends and have obtained the nominee’s approval to do so.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Insert name of person to be nominated)

NOMINATOR’ S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

I accept the nomination:

Signature of Nominee: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOMINATION FORM TOGETHER WITH PROFILE AND PHOTO OF CANDIDATE ACCEPTING NOMINATION MUST BE SENT TO :**

**Augustinian Friends**  
**C/- PO Box 679,**  
**Brookvale, NSW 2100**

CLOSING DATE FOR NOMINATION 21st May 2010

Note: Provincial Council approval of all nominated candidates will be sought by early June. Profile and photo of approved candidates will appear in June 2010 Amici together with Ballot paper.

**Installation of New Leaders will take place at the Congress Eucharist JULY 4th 2010.**



## From our Chaplain

March 25th. 2010

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this letter Lent will have run its course for another year and the joy of Easter will be upon us. We give a sigh of relief even if our pattern of life has hardly changed during the last six weeks because now we don't have to look at the penitential purple hanging in our churches that reminds us to take stock of our lives. No one wants to look too closely at the selfishness and harbored resentments that get stored away and are meant to be thrown out of the cupboard of our hearts in the same way that food is thrown out of the pantry in expectation of a better harvest.

It might surprise you to know that the literal meaning for 'Lent' comes from the Anglo-Saxon word for 'Spring' as it names a season of waiting for the new life that is ready to burst forth from the ground once Winter is over. It may be a stretch of the imagination to consider that this whole period leading up to Easter is also meant to be joyful because the 'Winter of our discontent' is almost over. God wants to heal us of our discontent by freeing us to become more loving in our relationships by being more peaceful in our own inner selves. As Augustine points out *"our righteousness in this life consists in the forgiveness of our sins rather than in the perfection of virtues"*. So Lent is not a time for us to struggle to become better; it is an opportunity to rejoice that we are living as loved and forgiven by our God as we are. The question is, what do we do with such a gift of God's Grace?

When I was a boy my brother and I would help our father on our irrigation farm each year just before the water allocation was released onto our property. Armed with shovels we would have to build up long rows or 'banks' that stretched in straight lines the width of the paddock each about ten metres apart and only a few inches high, so that the water would flow between them and have a chance to sink into the ground rather than flood all over the place. Of course now the technique used is laser grading which achieves the same thing. But in our days if the barriers were not built up, the water would flow out in abundance and be wasted.

It is the same way with Love - if we don't channel it in the right direction then it just gets wasted, it goes nowhere. Lent is the time of year when we decide on a particular discipline so that we can channel our love towards God in a conscious way rather than allowing it to evaporate without our even noticing it. But it need not be the only time of the year when such a salutary experience happens! One of the traditional ways we might choose to build up these 'banks' (so that love may be channeled) is by saying NO to some of the everyday comforts we take for granted. This practice of self-denial is not to make ourselves miserable just so we can begin to feel virtuous, but instead we become a happier individual because we have found a way to generate our love rather than have it lie dormant.

St. Augustine told his congregation that it was not enough to go without breakfast as a way of doing penance if we didn't use the food or the saved money for the giving of alms. When we care for the poor (whether to an individual or a group in immediate need) we are channeling our love in a particular way not only towards them but towards the very person of Christ suffering in them. *"When we give to the poor, it is Christ's hand which accepts"*. (Sermon 86,3) In this way we are meant to experience Christ still present in the world in the suffering and neediness of all of his humanity.

*"Here in this pilgrimage on earth, the hungry Christ is fed, the thirsty Christ is given to drink, the naked Christ is clothed, Christ is welcomed in the stranger, Christ is visited in the sick. When human persons are in want, it is Christ who is in want". (Sermon 236,6)*

May you experience the joy of recognising the Risen Christ during this Easter Season, not only in the 'breaking of the bread' but in the breaking of the usual way we have of viewing those in the world around us,

With much love,

# AUGUSTINE AND THE BIBLE

Which Bible did Augustine use? He knew little Greek, and did not spontaneously refer to the Greek Bible. He mostly used what is termed the *Vetus Latina*. This is the name used to denote old Latin translations from the Greek text, which were used in the Western world before - very slowly - what would be called the Vulgate took precedence. Only very gradually did Augustine start to make greater use of Jerome's translations from the Hebrew found in the Vulgate. The 'Old Latin' translations were of very variable quality, depending on the Books of the Bible concerned, and presented many erroneous readings which the user was not always able to spot - Augustine several times himself admits to having suggested incorrect interpretations on the basis of false translations (retr. 2,12,39). He speaks of 'the endless diversity of the Latin translators'. *'The text is so different in the various manuscripts that it is almost intolerable; the Latin version is so suspect that one is afraid of finding another interpretation in the Greek, so that one hesitates to quote from it or use it as the basis of any proof'* (ep. 71,6). Understandably, this problem was particularly serious in theological disputes.

How is this to be remedied? *'We must either acquire a knowledge of the language from which the Scriptures have been translated into Latin, or we must use the translations of those who keep close to the original, not because these are adequate, but because they enable us to discern the accuracy or errors of other translators who have chosen to follow the thought rather than the words'* (doct.chr.2,13,19). Augustine generally opts for the latter solution; he has a number of Latin translations and compares them. All his life he quotes sometimes one, sometimes another. When preaching away from Hippo, he used the translation favoured in the local church. When he has two very different translations, it is not uncommon for him to comment on both without favouring one or the other.

Yet Augustine does have preferences: of the Latin version he says, *'Itala is preferable to all the others, as it keeps more closely to the words at the same time clearly rendering the thought'* (doct. Chr. 2,15,22); what Augustine refers to as 'Itala' are probably the African *Vetus Latina* containing revisions made in Northern Italy, and sometimes very different from the texts used in the poor, faraway churches of Africa, where people could not afford to change the old books. Indeed, the Bishop of Hippo is somewhat indifferent to the translation so long as the fundamental meaning is not in jeopardy. Here it should be added that a knowledge of several different Latin translations may well have permanently clouded his memory, especially as he did not really start to read the Bible until he was over thirty; he admits himself that, although he knows such classics as Virgil's *Aeneis* by heart having learned them as a child, this did not apply to the Bible (Sermo Dolbeau 23,19)

At any event, the Bishop of Hippo never revised the Latin Bible himself, contrary to what was thought. He was not by nature a linguist as Jerome was. For him, what counted was not the words themselves; the words were merely signs referring to the *veritas*; Scripture was a means not an end.

Unlike Jerome, Augustine was not first and foremost an exegete. He was primarily a pastor. For him, the Bible was a treasure to be shared, which he always did generously. Scarcely has he understood a text than he burns with the desire to share his discovery with those around him. Even before becoming a priest, at Cassiciacum and at Thagaste, then in his monastery at Hippo, he was explaining passages of the Scriptures to the small communities with which he lived. We also know that at Hippo - in the week after Easter - he was present every day in a room adjoining the basilica to answer any questions the newly baptized might have. He devoted a great deal of time and energy to what would now be called 'spreading the word',

*Martine Dulaey: "Augustine and the Bible" (pp. 108 - 111)*  
From the volume Saint Augustine . Augustinian Press 2007.