New Sympathy Mass Card by Richard G. Cannuli, O.S.A.

Saint Monica Sympathy Card

This new sympathy Mass card features an icon of Saint Monica by Richard G. Cannuli, O.S.A., and the words of Saint Monica at the time of her death, “Only this I ask of you, remember me at the altar of the Lord.”

Sympathy Card (Deluxe Padded)

This sympathy card features Our Mother of Consolation, which has been the principal devotion to Mary within the Augustinian Order since the 17th Century. Its origin among the Augustinians is directly tied to the life of Saints Monica and Augustine.

The Blessings of a New Priest

It is a very joyous occasion when an Augustinian brother is ordained to the priesthood. It garners blessings for the newly-ordained priest from his brother friars. And the newly-ordained priest bestows his first blessings on members of his family and his friends, all of whom have anticipated this jubilant day. June 18, 2016 was such a day for Joseph A. Murray, O.S.A. Ordained to the priesthood, he shared the event, as he bestowed the blessings of a newly-ordained priest, bringing his journey to culmination after his long years of formation and study at the National Novitiate and the Theologate, earning a Master’s of Divinity, with a concentration in Pastoral Ministry, at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

The Year of Mercy in Action

Saint Thomas of Villanova Church is conducting a Mercy Ministry, a program that deals with addiction and its physical, psychological, and emotional causes and effects, both on victims and family members. The program seeks to encourage healing by educating and lending needed support, accompanying persons on their journey of recovery, providing the physical, emotional, psychological and very importantly, spiritual support needed for successful recovery. Another program that models mercy in action is the Adeodatus Prison Ministry, a program of the Augustinian Defenders of the Rights of the Poor (A.D.R.O.P) which aids those in prison and those reentering civilian life, helping them and their families with support in facing the obstacles they will encounter.

Fond Farewells

Sweet sorrow is on display as the Augustinians depart from a parish on Staten Island, New York, and from two parishes in Diocese of Venice, Florida. Our Lady of Good Counsel on Staten Island, where the Augustinians had served for 117 years, was established in 1899 and was home to the original Augustinian Academy. Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal on Pine Island and Saint Katharine Drexel in Cape Coral, both in Florida, had been served by the Augustinians, each since the 1990s. The Augustinians have labored in these parishes, shepherding the construction of new church buildings at times, as they were forming parish communities and laying the foundations of community, friendship and faith.
Dear Friends,

The Fall Season promises to bring an end to what is described by some as one of the hottest summers in memory. For many, that spells relief, but conscious of how diverse we humans often are, it is certain that for others it signals a change that is regrettable.

Variation in taste and point of view are just two of our many distinguishing differences—so many in fact, that we do well, at times, to point out with emphasis the many things that unite us. Unity is, after all, a Gospel value, and at the same time, a value greatly cherished and underscored by Saint Augustine, who wrote, in the opening sentence of the Rule, “The main purpose for your being come together is to live harmoniously in your house, intent upon God in unity of mind and heart.”

This spring offered us friars the opportunity to celebrate and strengthen the unity we strive for, during a week-long assembly or Chapter, that brought 104 of us together at Villanova for discussions, renewal, prayer and fellowship, culminating in the joyful priestly ordination of one of our brothers. Later in the summer, many of us from the three North American Provinces—provincial, student-friars and formators—gathered in Chicago for three days, the highlight of which was the installation of the new PRIOR PROVINCIAL, Michael F. Di Gregorio, O.S.A.

These are some of the events you will read about in the following pages of The Augustinian, together with others that, perhaps more indirectly, also demonstrate the unity we try to embody and proclaim in the works we do and the way we do them, in the people with whom we collaborate, and in those whose own example exemplifies Augustinian ideals.

I want to announce, particularly in this regard, the inauguration of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova’s Saint Augustine Medal, in recognition of individuals whose lives illustrate the Augustinian values of Truth, Unity and Charity. The recipients exhibit a strong desire to live life in the path of Saint Augustine in their personal, professional and spiritual lives and demonstrate a commitment of service and generosity to the Province.

The Saint Augustine Medal, presented by the Augustinian Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova, is bestowed upon an individual or a couple who exemplify the spirit and teachings of Saint Augustine, a deep commitment to the Order of Saint Augustine and the Augustinian values of Truth, Unity and Charity. The recipients exhibit a strong desire to live life in the path of Saint Augustine in their personal, professional and spiritual lives and demonstrate a commitment of service and generosity to the Province.

The Wrights have a long relationship with the Augustinians. Patty Reilly Wright is a graduate of Villanova University. Jay Wright is the William J. Finneran Endowed Head Coach of the Villanova men’s basketball team, where he has served for the past 15 years. Patty and Jay embrace the Augustinian mission and continue to have a positive influence on the athletes and students of Villanova University. They are deeply committed to the Augustinians and collaborate with the Province on many fronts, including their generous support of the Augustinian Fund, which provides funds for Augustinian ministries and programs of the Province.

Patty and Jay Wright are the perfect choice to receive the inaugural Saint Augustine Medal. They are committed to the Augustinian values of Truth, Unity and Charity. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to recognize them as worthy recipients of the first Saint Augustine Medal.”

“Saint Augustine inspires us to a life of service. I can think of no more deserving recipients of the inaugural Saint Augustine Medal than Jay and Patty Wright. Their love of family, support for students, and relentless desire to help people from all walks of life have had a profound effect on countless lives. The Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova is grateful for their active faith, continued generosity, and leadership within our community.”

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Please join us to honor our inaugural Saint Augustine Medal recipients!

Saint Augustine Medal Dinner

New York City
April 27, 2017

To register for the event, please visit www.augustinianfund.org/medal-dinner after December 1, 2016. Tickets will be available on a first come/first served basis.

Event sponsorships/gifts will benefit Augustinian Vocation and Formation programs.

For additional information, contact Madonna Sutter, Director of Advancement, at 610-520-0618 ext. 265 or e-mail madonna.sutter@augustinian.org
ON JUNE 18, 2016, the day after the closing of the Intermediate Provincial Chapter of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova, Joseph Aloysius Murray, O.S.A., was ordained to the priesthood by Most Reverend Louis De Simone, D.D., retired Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia and an Affiliate of the Order of Saint Augustine.

For the Augustinians, family and friends, this was a joyous day, a blessed day. A day that, for Joe Murray, was the culmination of years of discernment and formation—from his acceptance into the novitiate, to the intense study at the Catholic Theological Union, to pastoral work in parishes.

For the Augustinians of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova, the ordination of a priest or deacon and the solemn profession of a brother are days that have occurred only six times during the past ten years. These days are set in contrast to the 68 days during the past ten years when a funeral Mass has celebrated the birth to new life for a deceased friar.

The world is right on a day like this. For this day, through the Rite of Ordination, the Order, the Church and the world receives a priest, “With the power to offer sacrifice to God and to celebrate Masses for the living and the dead, in the name of the Lord.”

The blessing to bless and the first blessing

As the Bishop ordains, he anoints each hand with a cross and then anoints the entire palm of each hand of a newly ordained priest with Sacred Chrism blessed on Holy Thursday. He prays that “The Lord Jesus Christ, whom the Father anointed with the Holy Spirit, guard and preserve you, that you may sanctify the Christian people...”

On the day of a priest’s ordination, many people believe there is a special grace received when blessed by a newly-ordained priest. This is a practice thought to be an “Old World” custom. Nevertheless, the first hour after the sacred ordination is spent with family and friends lining up to receive the blessing from a newly ordained priest.

The Augustinian Formation Program

So what was the process for Joe Murray after he was accepted into the Order after his pre-novitiate year? The next few pages give insight to the novitiate year and the formation years and the pastoral year that prepares men for the Augustinian life as a brother or priest.
O unchanging God, let me know myself and let me know you. …

Saint Augustine, Soliloquies 2.1

The novitiate is the actual beginning of Augustinian religious life. It’s a time apart, a time “unplugged” from all that is busy and familiar, a journey unlike any other year of our life. It is a deepening journey for each novice in the mystery and awareness of God, so as to come to know one’s inner poverty and dependence upon God. It is a time of discovering God in community life, sharing and friendship. It is the concrete practice, as we say in the Rule, of living “one in mind and heart intention upon God.”

The novice journey involves much input and discussion about Augustinian life—our Rule and Constitutions, the spirituality and history of our Order, the discipline of our daily life in community, prayer and service. But the most important journey of this year is inward. It is the path of interior searching and Desiring, opening ourselves in humility with Augustine who prayed, “Loved, let me know myself and let me know you.” This is the journey of transformation: coming to know God in self-discovery, including our imperfection, failure and sin, and finding our true, deepest self in Christ and his compassion. It is this love-relationship with God and trust in the divine call in the midst of our redressness that forms our identity and undergirds our profession of vows as Augustinians. Rooted in the joy of the Gospel from our own experience, we strive to live a community of relationships—sharing the friendship and generosity of Christ in our community life, in service to the Church and outreach to the world. The novice year strives for an awakening of this intimacy with God that permits discernment toward the embracing of religious life as a free and joyful gift to the Church.

In order to help this awakening to happen, life here is geared toward a mixture of contemplative listening in silence and solitude, personal and communal prayer, spiritual reading, celebration of the Eucharist, and sharing of life in common. The weekday schedule begins at 7:30 AM with Morning Prayer and Eucharist followed by breakfast, one and a half hours of quiet time, daily class, lunch, afternoon manual work period followed by three hours of leisure time to relax and exercise. Community Evening Prayer is at 5:30 PM, followed by dinner; another two hours of quiet time and Night Prayer at 9:00 PM. There is a more relaxed schedule for the weekend.

Ten months out of the year the novices travel each Tuesday to the Chicago area for a day-long Intercommunity Novitiate Program. This encounter brings together novices and directors of 10-15 different religious communities, men and women. Presentations are given by speakers on various aspects of religious life. Topics include: prayer and discernment, the vows, ministerial ethics and formation tools for self-knowledge, e.g. Myers-Briggs, Enneagram. Morning workshops are given on topics such as Eucharist Systems, Sexuality and Celibacy, conflict management and addictions.

In addition, Augustinians come to Racine from many locations to offer teaching and reflection with the novices on our life. Topics include interiority, the Confessions of Saint Augustine, the history of Augustinian Spirituality, as well as history and saints of the Order.

Our novice residence is on the grounds of Saint Rita Parish in a suburban area of Racine. Living with me and the novices are two friars from the Midwest Province, Father Jerry Knies, O.S.A. (Prior) and Father Fred Taggart, O.S.A. (Treasurer and part-time parish assistant); as well as two friars from the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova, Father Rich O’Leary, O.S.A. (Pastor of Saint Rita Parish) and Father Jim Wenzel, O.S.A., a member of the Formation Team. I meet with each of the novices once or twice a month for the purpose of helping to nurture their vocation and encourage dialogue in discernment. They also have an opportunity to meet with the other friars in the community and have their own spiritual director outside the community.

Three years into my time here at the novitiate, I find that it has been a gift to accompany so many men who are awake and risking much to respond in their sense of God’s call to be an Augustinian. We walk with novices during a time of major transition from living in an interiorly secular world to a commitment in religious life. God is in our newer members—in their lives and stories, in their desiring, in their creativity, in their strengths and fragility. It is a privilege to help our men listen to their own souls and come to trust their own inner wisdom as they commit their lives deeper in Christ. They remind me of the importance of prayer, contemplative practice and surrender in my own life—to really live Augustinian life well and ribly. Please pray for our novices—that God has beautifully begun in them may be brought to fulfillment!
You have accompanied me on my path, O Truth, teaching me what to avoid and what to desire.”

Saint Augustine, Conf. 10, 16

After completion of the novitiate, newly-professed friars embark on a journey of the daily living of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience in common life with their brothers, nourished by the celebration of Word and Sacrament. It is the life of a Christian believer called to a deeper and fuller following of Christ in the community of the Church. That is to say, to grow in our faith in Jesus Christ as brothers, cultivate and deepen our love for others. Ordinarily after the first year of formation, the friar will be assigned to a community of friars moving towards solemn profession. That is to say, to grow in our faith in Jesus Christ as brothers, cultivate and deepen our relationship with God in prayer, enlarge our hearts for compassionate service in ministry and learn always to live the joy of the Gospel.

Our community of Saint Augustine Friary is located in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago, Illinois, across the street from the Catholic Theological Union. This year, the community will number 17 student friars and three friars who form the Formation Team. Five other student friars are in pastoral ministry in other communities. As at the novitiate, we are friars from the three North American Provinces. The importance of this area of formation is not only the ongoing preparation for Augustinian life and ministry, but it is also a time of discernment for one’s life commitment. Our life is a journey of the daily living of the Church. That is to say, to grow in our faith in Jesus Christ as brothers, cultivate and deepen our relationship with God in prayer, enlarge our hearts for compassionate service in ministry and learn always to live the joy of the Gospel.

We live each day around the axes of community prayer, common life, shared meals, common work and study. We begin with Morning Prayer and Eucharist at 7:00 AM and gather again at 5:30 PM for Evening Prayer. Normally, one or two evenings a week include formation sessions together to explore different dimensions of our day. Days of recollection, days off, group meetings to guide and organize our life of common prayer, common work and study. We begin with Morning Prayer and Eucharist at 7:00 AM and gather again at 5:30 PM for Evening Prayer. We live each day around the axes of community prayer, common life, shared meals, common work and study. We begin with Morning Prayer and Eucharist at 7:00 AM and gather again at 5:30 PM for Evening Prayer. We live each day around the axes of community prayer, common life, shared meals, common work and study. We begin with Morning Prayer and Eucharist at 7:00 AM and gather again at 5:30 PM for Evening Prayer.
"Our Mercy Ministry began when our business manager in the parish, Karen Farley, spoke to me about some of the issues that people in the area and in the parish were dealing with related to addiction, especially families in the parish whose children were suffering from addiction," said Father Narog. “This is an area I too had been thinking about because I hear about it so much in my ministry. I’m glad that we are moving forward with it. I’m glad that we are moving forward with it. We need to take it on head on and deal with the unwillingness to get help with addiction. I’m glad that we are moving forward with it. We need to take it on head on and deal with the unwillingness to get help with addiction.”

The outcome of the discussion between Karen and Father Joe, led into Mercy Ministry, a new parish ministry at Saint Thomas of Villanova Parish where clergy and the laity have teamed up to offer confidential spiritual and practical support to individuals and families dealing with addiction.

Here is the group’s mission statement:

“Mercy is a ministry committed to spiritual, as well as practical, support for families suffering from the effects of addiction. We will provide awareness about the disease of addiction, both chemical and process addiction, along with education. We will be available to preys with, listen to and support anyone who contacts us and will do so in a safe and confidential manner. We are not professionals. We are fellow Christians trying to live as ‘missionaries of mercy.’”

More than a general resource website, the ministry team takes calls on a completely confidential basis and will attend meetings with those who need counseling and support, if desired.

The newly formed group has had two major institutional and educational events, one last spring, with Father Bill Hultburg, OSFS, and one this fall. The evening’s speaker, Rev. William J. Hultburg, OSFS (Sts. Francis de Sales) was a recovering alcoholic for many years. He faced nightmares, anger and says he “came back a mess.” He says his pusher was a doctor who treated his post-traumatic stress with prescriptions for pills. He faced nightmares, anger and was so full of shame and guilt, telling himself he was a disgrace to the priesthood. Two years later he found himself in a union treatment center facilities parking lot wondering how did he ever get there.

The evening’s speaker, Rev. William J. Hultburg, OSFS (Sts. Francis de Sales), an 85-year-old Roman Catholic priest, was introduced as “The Spiritual leader of Caron (an addiction treatment center in Wernersville, Pa.) for more than three decades, who has profoundly changed thousands of lives with his remarkable ability to reignite the passion for life that so many people lose to their addiction.”

Father focuses on the spiritual side of the disease, “This disease goes right to your soul. It disconnects you from every relationship you have…from yourself, your family, the universe and your God. The only relationship you have in the later stages of the disease is your relationship with the drugs.”

Families say, “Can’t you see what you’re doing?” Father Bill responds, “An untreated addict is not capable of an intimate lasting relationship or ability to love or be loved.”

Father Bill is a recovering alcoholic for 45 years in the field of addiction, 33 years at Caron. He said on his father’s side of the family his father, grandfather, five uncles and four half brothers were all alcoholics and he’s the only one in recovery. His mother died when he was very young and his father remarried, so he doesn’t know the history on his mother’s side. Physically abused by his step mother as a toddler, he was made a ward of the state and removed from his family at the age of three. He was moved from foster home to foster home until Catholic Welfare placed him with an Irish Catholic family.

He went to a high school run by the Salesian priests, entered the Order, the Order was drafted into the Navy and did a post-Korean War tour of duty in Japan. Upon his return he re-entered the Salesian Order, was ordained and became a high school teacher and Sports coach.

Later, it was his students who urged him to help them cope with the Vietnam War that led him to become a Marine Chaplain assigned to the platoon of U.S. Marines featured in the movie Full Metal Jacket. He witnessed war and death, began drinking and says he “came back a mess.” He says his pusher was a doctor who treated his post-traumatic stress with prescriptions for pills. He faced nightmares, anger and says he “came back a mess.” He says his pusher was a doctor who treated his post-traumatic stress with prescriptions for pills. He faced nightmares, anger and was so full of shame and guilt, telling himself he was a disgrace to the priesthood. Two years later he found himself in a union treatment center facilities parking lot wondering how did he ever get there.

Father Bill often uses the phrase “and then something happened” to note significant events that changed his thoughts and one of the biggest “something happened” moments was when he befriended a tragically addicted young man named Michael while they were both in treatment at Caron. The bond between the priest and the boy was their disease and their shame.

Michael left Caron prematurely and called Father from a bar. Shortly after that, Michael’s self-inflicted death changed the way Father Bill looked at himself— and the theology of addiction, because he realized Michael was innocent. He was in heaven because it was the disease that killed him, not his sin. It was in this moment that Father prayed to God that if he was given the help to overcome his addiction, he would spend the rest of his life as a priest helping others to overcome their addiction.

Father Bill was able to overcome his addiction and he has been in recovery since 1975. It is through his recovery and his 33 years as Director of Pastoral Care at Caron that he has learned so much about the disease and its impact on families. This is a family disease. Those who live with us get sick, so does the disease.”

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A SUBURBAN TALE OF HORROR AND SALVATION

There is an epidemic of opioid abuse going on in our country, including in the suburbs. In a recent issue of Voices From Prison and the Edge, which is published quarterly by Adeodatus, we have the privilege of hearing from “Ray,” one of the men who attends our weekly spiritual support group meetings. Ray, a suburban guy, has been drug-free for nine months.

I grew up in the suburbs and became a heroin addict. My parents had alcohol addiction problems. They were divorced when I was four. I was a part of my mother and brother. We all ended up with my grandparents. My mother was evicted so we stayed with the grandparents. They were good wholesome people. I had a few years. I told my dad every other weekend and my mom whenever she would come around. That wasn’t very often.

I went to a soccer game. She’d be drunk and fighting with my dad. At puberty I started smoking cigarettes at soccer games. She would come around. That wasn’t very often.

We had a good childhood. We would see the grandparents. They were good wholesome grandparents. My mother was evicted so we stayed with my dad every other weekend and my mom whenever she would come around. That wasn’t very often.

I drove directly from school to my mom’s place in South Philadelphia. I had started smoking cigarettes and drinking with the wrong crowd. It was the usual thing. It was the route I took. I was attracted to trouble.

I dropped out of high school in my senior year and found a place to live. My mom would give me money. She never knew I was on heroin. Finally I moved out. I couldn’t handle it. I was thirty-eight. I told my mom to give me a bag of heroin. She ended up dying from that. She was thirty-nine.

This is the first part of Ray’s story, the horror part. He attends our Adeodatus’ weekly support group meetings on Thursdays at Saint Rita’s Shrine in South Philadelphia (Broad and Ellsworth St, 7:30-9:00 PM). The second part of his story, the salvation part, tells of his incredible and gritty journey out of the gutter of his addiction into a path of sobriety—one day at a time—with the help of Jesus Christ and his fellow community members at the rehab center, The Open Door, in South Philadelphia.

It is a joy to see the light of God spark in the eyes of these men and women who come to our weekly meetings. They tell us we bless them by our presence around the Gospel, hands held in solidarity, blessed by these laypeople too as we stand in the eyes of these men and women who come to our weekly meetings. They tell us we bless them by our presence around the Gospel, hands held in solidarity, blessed by these laypeople too as we stand around the Gospel, hands held in solidarity, praying the Our Father at the end of our meeting each week. Come and join us when you can. You will be blessed too.

Adeodatus is named after Augustine’s son. He died young and forgotten like so many others. Pope Francis has said, “However many mistakes and sins there may be in our life... It is there, in the wounds of Jesus, that we encounter the boundless love of His heart.”

—Pope Francis

THE LAST DAY... The Journey of a Layman to the Augustinians

BY GEORGE MUNYAN

It was my last day as an educator.

Thirty-nine years of joy were ending in a few minutes. What could ever replace the intense happiness of thousands of kids? I had seen heaven and now I was leaving it for the foreign lands of retirement, absolutely positive that nothing in the future could equal the happiness of the past.

Then he came into my office. His name was Juan, and he had the mean look of the streets in his eyes. Anger and violence were his shields from too much sorrow. Rescued by an aunt from the toxic city and placed in an affluent suburb, his father was unknown, and his mother had died from a heroin overdose. Intelligent but illiterate, he was十七 and officially flunking 9th grade, facing four uncertain additional years pursuing a high school diploma.

Somehow I had found an alternate program which allowed him to work, learn and graduate in just a few years. I told Juan the good news and gave him a little Spanish bronze statue of the crucified Jesus. He looked into my eyes and all the ugliness washed out in tears of remorse. He said, “I will never forget you.” He left and I soon followed, both of us wandering into a new world.

I drove directly from school to my church, Saint Augustine, and for the first time I met Father Paul Morrissey, O.S.A. He was calming and patient. Eventually we discussed my new ministry to the imprisoned. Like Saint Paul, struck on the road to Damascus, I experienced an epiphany of new purpose. The fire, the passion and granularity of this priest enveloped me. Through him the Lord showed me that talents given were not extinguished but, rather, refined and redirected.

A world of young prisoners awaited me, and the Augustinians had set the stage for this next act of the George Munyan play. Talents of administration, communication and compassion turned to a new sun. There would be many more Juans! Again, life was not ending, but only changing and always directed to the same goal...loving God through the children he entrusted to me. I joined the Augustinian journey as a layman with a new purpose.
Six years ago, in its 111th year as an Augustinian parish, I began my term as pastor at Our Lady of Good Counsel (OLGC). Rich in history, OLGC has always had a reputation of openness and hospitality to immigrants, while at the same time faithfully serving more established populations. From the very beginning immigrants from Europe, especially from Ireland and Italy were welcomed by the friars, the People of God, and later the Sisters of Charity of Halifax, and, of course, by the Catholics already living there. In more recent years, many Catholics from Latin America, as well as Sri Lanka, India, Africa, Haiti and many other nations have become part of the community. The parish is just about 50-50 English- and Spanish-speaking.

Ministering to such a diverse and multifaceted parish community can be very challenging. From the beginning, I was deeply impressed with the devotion, the human family, and the work, on the part of so many of the parishioners and staff, including the very dynamic parish school community. Through the hard work of the principal, faculty and parents, OLGC School has a reputation among the very highest on Staten Island.

It was a sad day when early in April we announced that in consultation with the Archdiocese of New York, the Augustinian Friars had made the very difficult decision to withdraw from Staten Island and turn over the pastoral care and administration of OLGC to the Archdiocese. I tell everyone how proud I am of the parishioners at OLGC. As I informed them of this news, I realized the importance of the support and prayers of the OLGC parishioners. As I wrote the letter, I found myself discussing the things I cannot write out here, but said he wanted to bring the case up again before his Provincial and asked if they would consider the matter. Fedigan begged for an audience on his return from Rome, which would serve to ready the boys school. Charles J. McFadden, O.S.A., was sent to open the Augustinian Academy, a private boys school for grades six through twelve. On September 10, 1899, Nicholas J. Murphy, O.S.A., was appointed first pastor. The Augustinians took possession of the property on May 30, 1899. On June 1, Brother Thomas Wright, O.S.A., arrived and became pastor, among the many Augustinians who have left the OLGC community. The sisters wanted $25,000 for the building, but Fedigan did not think the building was suited for a parish. He called Archbishop Corrigan and asked if they had to take the building to get the Mission. Archbishop Corrigan said, “Yes, that was the intention of offering it to us...we had to take it or nothing.” In the end, Father Fedigan paid $70,000 for the Mission. Then, the condition they could get the property in May 1899.

The Augustinian Academy building on Grymes Hill. The Augustinian Academy closed in 1969. The Our Lady of Good Counsel parish school is still going strong.

By Liam O’Doherty, O.S.A.

PASTOR OF OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL FROM 2010 UNTIL 2016

HISTORY OF OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL PARISH, STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK

On October 14, 1898, when John J. Fedigan, O.S.A., met with New York’s Archbishop, Monsignor Corrigan on his way to Bar Harbor, Maine, Father Fedigan asked His Grace “What about the Mission we expected for and which have waited so long?” Monsignor Corrigan said, “That has been settled...I offered an Italian Mission and it was declined by Monsignor Martinelli, and that ends the matter.” Fedigan begged for an audience on his return from Bar Harbor to settle the matter one way or another. Monsignor Corrigan agreed.

On my return, I did have an audience with him (Monsignor Corrigan) in which I presented the case from start...and yielding somewhat, he told me things I cannot write out here, but said he would bring the case up again before his Provincial and he did at the monthly meeting on the first Wednesday, in Dec., ‘98.”

It was decided at that meeting to offer the Augustinians the Staten Island property Villa de Sales, owned by the Visitacion Sisters, with a newly built school, convent and Chapel. The land was donated to the sisters by Mme. Mallmann, a devout Catholic. The July 29, 1998 edition of The Evening Times, a Washington, D.C. paper, ran an article entitled “CHURCH PROPERTY IN DISPUTE.” The article stated: “Mme. Constance Mallmann of New Brighton, Staten Island, gave her handsome house to found a house for the Roman Catholic Order of the Visitacion, her intent to enter the Order. When part of it was complete the sisters took up residence...as the building progressed there were several aspects of the work as it was being conducted which were not to accord with Mme. Mallmann’s ideas.” After appeals to the builder, the architect and the Archbishop, a breach was declared.

Fedigan visited the property in mid-December. The sisters wanted $25,000 for the building, but Fedigan did not think the building was suited for a parish. He called Archbishop Corrigan and asked if they had to take the building to get the Mission. Archbishop Corrigan said, “Yes, that was the intention of offering it to us...we had to take it or nothing.” In the end, Fedigan paid $70,000 for the Mission. Then, the condition they could get the property in May 1899.

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In 1997, the Augustinian Friars of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova assumed pastoral leadership of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish on Pine Island, Florida. With the installation of Father Thomas Pohsto, O.S.A., as pastor, a nineteen-year era of Augustinian leadership began. During the Augustinian period, the parish grew both in membership and parishioner involvement. In 2004, the beautiful new church was dedicated and in 2015 the new entrance, Marian Garden and storage area were added to the church. In 2012 the Parish Life Center was completely renovated, including a state-of-the-art DVD projection system for both entertainment and educational purposes. In the spring of 2016, the difficult decision was made by the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova to withdraw from pastoral leadership of the parish and return the parish to the Bishop of the Diocese of Venice in Florida. Much prayerful reflection went into the making of this decision. As was to be expected, the announcement was received with both shock and sorrow by all involved. A simultaneous withdrawal from a second Augustinian parish in the Diocese of Venice, Saint Katharine Drexel, served only to compound the disappointment. In large part, the decision to withdraw was prompted by a shrinking number of Augustinian Friars available to serve in these parishes and the advancing age of the Friars who were serving in them.

The parish of Saint Katharine Drexel in Cape Coral, Florida, celebrated its 25th Anniversary on September 1, 2015. The Augustinians began to serve the parish community in 1993, three years after it was established. At that time there were about 300 families in the parish and they met at a public school auditorium for the celebration of Mass and for religious education classes. The parish office was on the second floor of an animal hospital. Now the parish has over 2000 families and four buildings, a church, a parish hall, an office building and an education center. The Augustinian spirit became stronger over the years due to the many Augustinians that served with me there. Fathers Thomas Pohsto, O.S.A., John Sheridan, O.S.A., Anthony Gennaro, O.S.A., Stan Smith, O.S.A., Tom Mccartney, O.S.A., and Prior Provincial Michael Di Gregorio, O.S.A. Others like Tony Borrascoso, O.S.A., and Kevin Dwyer, O.S.A., came frequently to ask the people to support our Augustinian foreign missions. There were other Augustinians who just came to enjoy the Florida sunshine and meet the people of the parish.

More than 500 children attend Saint Katharine Drexel’s Religious Education program from kindergarten through high school. In the summer, the parish holds a Vacation Bible School where, a month before it begins, volunteers transform the parish hall with drawings and props that express the theme of the year’s Vacation Bible School. On June 1, 2016, the Augustinians withdrew their ministry from the parish and the Bishop of the diocese of Venice was able to send two priests of the diocese to continue to serve the people there. A feature of the Vacation Bible School is a prayer room or little chapel. This year, especially because the Augustinians were not present. Members of the parish really care about each other and always welcome new members. The Augustinian Seculars, who were established in 1999, also help to foster that spirit of Augustine by meeting biweekly to pray, to study the works of Augustine, and to share that spirit with the rest of the community, by their service in different aspects of parish life. The Augustinian Seculars continue today and will certainly keep the spirit of Augustine and the community life very present in the parish.
Provincial Mid-Chapter

Friars of the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova held their Mid-Chapter at Villanova University. The Mid-Chapter opened Sunday, June 12, with an opportunity for friars to socialize and share a meal, followed by Evening Prayer. During the Mid-Chapter there was a Mass and dinner honoring these friars celebrating anniversaries of their first professions or ordinations. Each day there were morning and afternoon sessions devoted to the business of the Province. Mass was celebrated daily. The Mid-Chapter drew to a close on Friday, June 17, after Mass.

The Ordination of Joseph A. Murray, O.S.A.

Many friars attending the Intermediate Mid-Chapter and professed men in formation stayed to attend the Ordination to the priesthood of Joseph A. Murray, O.S.A., held on Saturday, June 18, 2016, the day after the Mid-Chapter closed. For more pictures of the day go to our photo gallery at www.augustinian.org/photo-galleries/

Novices at Racine, Wisconsin

Novice Atsushi Kuwahara, O.S.A., Makes First Profession in Vicariate of Japan

A novice from the Vicariate of Japan, Atsushi Kuwahara, who made his novitiate in Racine, Wisconsin, made his first profession on Thursday, August 11, 2016, in Japan. Superior of the Vicariate, Hiroyuki Thomas Shibata, O.S.A., received his vows at a liturgy at Saint Augustine Kasai Church in Tokyo. Atsushi rejoined his class in Chicago in August.

Interprovincial First Profession of Novices in Chicago

Ten novices from three provinces in the United States professed first vows on Sunday, July 31, 2016, at Saint Rita Shrine Chapel in Chicago. Vicar General of the Order in Rome, Joseph Farrell, O.S.A., was the principal celebrant. Priors Provincial from each of the provinces were concelebrants and also received the vows of each novice from their provinces: California, Chicago and Villanova. The novices will move on to the theologate in Chicago to begin their studies at Catholic Theological Union.
Tony Burrascano, O.S.A., Named Executive Director of A.D.R.O.P.

In July 2016, Father Tony Burrascano, O.S.A., was named the Executive Director of the Augustinian Defenders of the Rights of the Poor (A.D.R.O.P.), an Augustinian ministry which serves the needy in Philadelphia. Father Tony, as well as having served as a parish priest, has previously served the Province of Saint Thomas of Villanova as Director of the Missions, Province Treasurer and a member of the Formation Team. Father Tony will report to the Province’s Director of Justice and Peace, Father Jack Dregan, O.S.A.

ADVANCED DIRECTOR OF FORMATION TEAM
JOSEPH A. MURRAY, O.S.A.

Father Jack Deegan, O.S.A.

GROUP ATTENDS 2016 AUGUSTINIAN YOUTH ENCOUNTER (AYE) IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

In late July, a group of young women and men, along with several friars, traveled to Europe to attend the Augustinian Youth Encounter (AYE), which was held at the Augustinian Monastery of Saint Dobrotiva in Zajecone, Czech Republic. The group went to Krakow in Poland, where they toured the Jewish Ghetto and Auschwitz. They went on to Wadowice, birthplace of John Paul II. Next they toured Vienna and the Augustinian church there, and learned of the history of the Augustinian presence there since 1327. The group traveled on to Zajecone, to attend the AYE, which took place July 19-25.

JOHN FUTOSHI MATSUO, O.S.A., ORDAINED DEACON IN VICARIATE OF JAPAN

John Futoshi Matsu, O.S.A., was ordained to the Diaconate on Saturday, July 23, 2016, at St. Augustine Kanai Church in Tokyo, during a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Peter Okada, consecrated with Regional Superior Hiroshi Thomas Shibata, O.S.A., (left). Brother Futoshi, a member of our Vicariate in Japan, has been in formation in Australia.

NEW E-MAIL? PLEASE SEND YOUR NAME, YOUR OLD EMAIL ADDRESS AND UPDATED INFORMATION TO COMMUNICATIONS@AUGUSTINIAN.ORG
The Augustinians have long served in South Philadelphia; their roots are deep in the area. As with many dioceses, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia faces the challenges brought by diminishing and/or shifting populations. Already serving at two parishes in the area, Saint Nicholas of Tolentine and Saint Rita of Cascia, the Augustinians were eager to maintain their presence, fulfilling their mission as religious and friars, serving the Church and the people of God. Located between these two Augustinian parishes is Annunciation B.V.M., served by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Knowing that the Archdiocese has been and continues to examine parish structures in the city, the Augustinians considered the parish structure in South Philadelphia and wondered, “Can we bring something new to this reality?” The Augustinians saw an opportunity to address the changing needs in the Archdiocese while maintaining their presence in the area. After much discussion and soul-searching with representatives from each of the parishes and the then pastors of the parishes, they arrived at a proposal presented and accepted by the Archdiocese; which aids the Archdiocese with its own resources and allows the Augustinians to continue their service and establish a new centralized religious community.

The three parishes of Annunciation B.V.M., Saint Nicholas of Tolentine and Saint Rita of Cascia, in South Philadelphia, have initiated a process whereby Annunciation B.V.M., parish and Saint Rita of Cascia parish are merged. The newly formed Annunciation parish and Saint Nicholas of Tolentine parish are partnered, where the pastoral and administrative responsibilities are combined, while the parishes remain as independent parishes under the administration of the Augustinians. The National Shrine of Saint Rita of Cascia continues to operate as just that—a Shrine Church.

The rector of the Shrine, Joseph Genito, O.S.A., will no longer have the administrative responsibilities of a pastor, leaving him free to devote his energies to the Shrine and developing appropriate programs. The existing parish building will be used to run programs until the Gacis Center is completed and ready for occupancy. Masses, the celebration of feasts and devotions will continue at the Shrine Church as usual and Saint Rita of Cascia Shrine, which lies within the geographic area, will also be a worship site for the newly-formed parish of Annunciation B.V.M.

Each church will remain open, the National Shrine of Saint Rita of Cascia will remain an independent entity. The partnered parishes of Annunciation B.V.M., and Saint Nicholas of Tolentine, with each parish independent of the other, share one pastor, Augustinian Friar, Father Nicholas Martorano, O.S.A. Administration of the partnered parishes will operate from Annunciation B.V.M. parish offices. Along with the administrative operations located at Annunciation B.V.M., it’s rectory, following renovations, will be used as the friary for the new centralized religious community. From there, friars will continue to serve at the Shrine of Saint Rita of Cascia, at the parish of Saint Nicholas of Tolentine, and in Annunciation B.V.M.

John Thomas Denny was born on October 19, 1957, in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. He was one of seven sons and one daughter of Joseph G. Denny and Mary K. Schlecht. John was baptized at Saint Lawrence Church, Upper Darby, Pa., on November 3, 1957, and attended Saint Lawrence Parish School from 1963 to 1971. He then entered Monsignor Bonner High School, Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania, and graduated in 1975. From 1975 to 1979, he attended Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, where he received a BA in History. He entered the Order at Good Counsel Novitiate, Lawrence, Massachusetts, in August, 1980, but withdrew the following March. He then worked for a year in a real estate office and from 1981 to 1982, taught at Monsignor Bonner High School. He re-entered the Order, and began a second novitiate, on August 15, 1985. He professed simple vows on August 2, 1986, and moved to Augustine College, Washington, D.C. There he pursued theological studies at the Washington Theological Union, and received an MA in Ecclesiastical History. He professed solemn vows on May 20, 1989, and was ordained to the priesthood on August 18, 1990 at Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, by Bishop Howard Hubbard, bishop of Albany, New York.

Father Jack was first assigned to Saint Joseph Friary, Drexel Hill, and to Monsignor Bonner High School, where he served as a teacher (1990-1995), as chaplain (1996-1999), as principal (1999-2013), and as school president (1999-2001). In 2001 he was appointed the Province’s Vocation Director, and a member of Fray Luis de Leon Friary on the campus of Villanova University. From 2002 to 2007 he was Adjunct Professor of Theology at the University, and chaplain of the University Law School. In 2004 he was assigned to the Nazareth Hall community in Rosemont, and in 2007 he was appointed pastor of Saint Margaret of Scotland Parish, Maggie Valley, North Carolina. When the Province withdrew from ministry in Maggie Valley in 2011, Father Jack was assigned as pastor of Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish, Bryn Mawr. In August, 2014, he was appointed priest of the community as well. For some time he suffered with ailments of the back and leg. Due to progressive weakness he moved to the infirmary wing of the Villanova Monastery on March 24, 2016. Shortly after, it was discovered that he was suffering from cancer. He underwent a series of treatments, and on June 13th was admitted to Bryn Mawr Hospital for additional tests.

He died there peacefully in the early morning hours of June 29, 2016 accompanied by several friars and family members. Father Jack was a keen gardener and planted flower beds around the friaries where he was assigned. While at Monsignor Bonner High School, he assigned students in detention to care for the school at these sites. He was also a devoted student of American Presidential history and enjoyed visiting various significant presidential sites. He was possessed of a good sense of humor, an infectious laugh, and deep appreciation of, and dedication to, his vocation as an Augustinian and a priest.
A special milestone anniversary provides a time not only to celebrate how far we’ve come, but to look back and remember all those who are responsible for getting us to this point. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Augustinian Fund and the establishment of the Augustinian Advancement Council.

In those initial years when programs, infrastructure and procedures were being put into place, members of the Advancement Council rolled up their sleeves and did whatever needed to be done. These men and women provided their time, talent and resources to organize events, solicit gifts, improve communications and to launch many other initiatives that have brought us where we are today. I wish to express the Province’s sincere appreciation to the men and women listed here who have paved the way for the Fund’s future success.

The Augustinian Fund has raised nearly $14,000,000 over the past ten years which provides much-needed support to the care of the elderly and infirm friars, those studying to become Augustinian priests and brothers, as well as our foreign missions, Augustinian Volunteer programs and the Province’s Justice & Peace Initiatives, including the Augustinian Defenders of the Rights of the Poor (A.D.R.O.P.).

As we celebrate this tenth anniversary throughout the year, I ask you to reflect on our theme for this year’s Augustinian Fund campaign—Let your abundance…supply their need. Many of us are blessed to have more than we need to live a good life and yet we often think it’s not enough. This made me think about my own life and how fortunate I am. I’m not wealthy by any means, at least not in dollars and cents, but wealth isn’t always measured by how much money we have. I believe it’s measured by how we live our life, the kindness we show to others and by the love that surrounds us.

How much do we really need? What can we offer to those in greater need?

Let your abundance…supply their need.
OUR PROVINCE CALENDAR

Save the date!

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2016

Augustinian Fund
10th Anniversary Celebration
Cocktail Reception

Overbrook Golf Club, Villanova, PA
6:00 – 8:30 PM
Register online at:
WWW.AUGUSTINIANFUND.ORG/ANNIVERSARY

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2016

#Giving Tuesday

WWW.AUGUSTINIANFUND.ORG/GIVINGTUESDAY/

JANUARY 2017

Infiniti Coaches Challenge:
Voting Begins

WWW.AUGUSTINIANFUND.ORG/INFINITI-COACHES-CHALLENGE

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2017

Saint Augustine Medal Dinner

New York City
Recipients: Patty and Jay Wright
Register online after December 1, 2016:
WWW.AUGUSTINIANFUND.ORG/MEDAL-DINNER