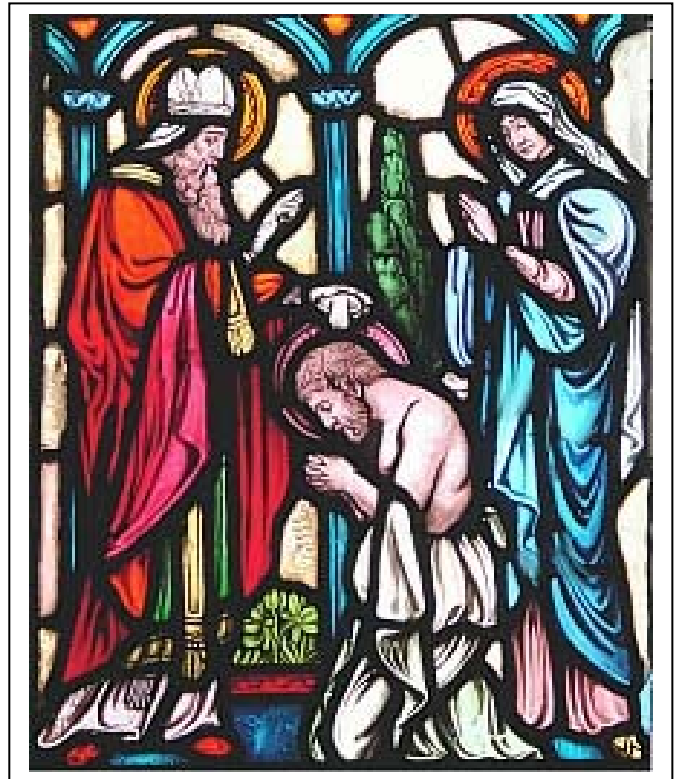


THE FEAST OF OUR
HOLY FATHER
ST. AUGUSTINE
OF HIPPO



August 2009



Dear Friends of the Augustinian Missions:

August 28th is a very special day for Augustinians throughout the world: it is the *Feast of our Holy Father St. Augustine*. It is a special day where Augustinians gather together at Mass, prayer, a meal or just time to be together.

Augustine was born on 13 November 354 AD in Tagaste, present day Algeria in North Africa, to a Christian mother, St Monica, and a pagan father Patricius. As a young man he lived a rather “wild” life. He was not a Christian in spite of his mother’s efforts and was even a part of a major heresy, the Manichaens. He was a great speaker and a professor of rhetoric. His accomplishments as a teacher were recognized as he began a teaching position in Italy in the cities of Rome and Milan. The Bishop of Milan was the great St. Ambrose, who Augustine heard preach in the Cathedral many times. He was moved to come into a relationship with Christ and was baptized by St. Ambrose in the Cathedral of Milan during the Easter Vigil of 25 April 387 AD.

Augustine returned to North Africa in 388 AD and gathered other men around him to found a monastic community in Tagaste. Eventually he wrote a Rule of Life used by both female and male communities. In 391 AD he was ordained a priest and was called to be a Bishop in 395 AD. He served at the Bishop of Hippo for almost 40 years. He died in the midst of his religious community on 28 August 430 AD.

Augustine often spoke of life as a journey. His spiritual journey progressed from a wild youth to baptism in Christ. As part of this personal spiritual journey, he undertook a physical journey leaving his homeland of North Africa and traveling to Italy, and then returning from where he came, North Africa.

The journey of Augustine continues to be replicated by our Augustinian missionaries even today. Like Augustine our missionaries wish to share their relationship with people in diverse geographical locations. Like Augustine they “go forth” to share their life and faith with others. The tradition of Augustine of some 1,500 years ago of sharing our gift of faith with other people continues today. This is only possible through the kindness of benefactors such as yourself. Thank you!

A few years ago I had the pleasure of celebrating the Feast of St. Augustine in our mission of Our Lady of Mercy, Kloof, South Africa. It was a tremendous experience to be standing on the same continent that St. Augustine stood to celebrate the Eucharist. As I looked out at the community gathered, I realized that present at that celebration were three examples of Augustinians: the Augustinian Friars, the Augustinian Sisters and the Augustinian Volunteers. As from the Fourth Century, “Augustine” was still present on that Continent!

A Blessed Feast of St. Augustine,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr Tony". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anthony P. Burrascano, O.S.A.
Director, Mission Office