

IRISH AUGUSTINIAN NEWS

“HOLLY BOUGH” EDITION - 2009

Dear Brothers and Friends in Augustine,

The year to which we are bidding farewell has had its difficulties, and many are heading into Christmas with heavy hearts. The Economy is struggling, confidence in Church and State is at a low ebb and large tracts of land remain under water in the west. Rarely have the great Christmas gifts of joy, peace and hope been more sorely needed. Before accepting these gifts, however, we should first embrace the Advent spirit of Penance, Conversion and Renewal, as we acknowledge and apologise once again for the evils perpetrated by church people down through the years. All of us who form the Church in Ireland are feeling pain and shame at the moment, but we will ultimately be a more Christian Church following the purification that we are currently undergoing. The pedestal is gone for all time from under Church and clergy, and good riddance to it. Our prayer is that when real reconciliation and healing have taken place we will become again the more humble Church which we should always have been. Its amazing and wonderful how, even out of the most awful evil, good can result due to God's great love, mercy and goodness. A big challenge at this particular time is to try to distinguish between God and Church. (Younger folk may need help in making the distinction.) The Church, which is human, is weak and sinful and capable of committing and condoning the most dreadful sins. And God, who is always the same, is infinitely loving, caring and compassionate towards all, victim and perpetrator alike.

2009 also brought many blessings for which we are extremely grateful. Highlights for me include:

- The high level of attendance at the Provincial Chapter in Limerick in June and the positive manner in which the entire Chapter Year was celebrated.
- The Statements of Intent, deriving from the Chapter, requesting that attention be given to Interpersonal Relations within Community, On-going Formation, the pursuit of Vocations, continued engagement with young folk and the desire to portray the Order as positively as possible when the opportunity arises.
- The generosity displayed by so many in taking up post-chapter appointments.
- The fact that Colm and Turlough, our two students, continue to prosper in their respective communities.
- The continued restructuring of our finances to comply with the new Charity Law and to reflect a more authentically Augustinian way of proceeding.



I wish to thank the members of out-going and in-coming Provincial Councils for their sterling service throughout the year. On behalf of the Council, I offer sincere gratitude to all who have ministered on behalf of the Province during the past 12 months, friars and lay folk alike. May your Christmas, whether at home or abroad, be filled with joy, hope and peace.

Let us reflect again on the words spoken to us by St. Augustine in Sermon 196,3:

The one who regulates the movement of the stars is suckled at his mother's breasts. He is silent in his mother's womb but he is going to speak and create the gospel story for us when he reaches the right age. Look at the child lying in the manger. He made himself small but did not lose his divine identity. Choosing to become human, Jesus-God took on what he was not, but remained what he was. There you have it. On Christmas we see Christ as an infant. Let us grow up with him.

With fraternal greetings for Christmas and the New Year.

Gerry Horan OSA, Provincial.

CHRISTMAS

We listen to the story again:

An exotic visitor
Comes to a country girl
In a mountain town
And nine months afterwards
God's Wisdom is a footling child.

Shepherds arrive to the place,
Summoned by music;
And scholars from some distant part,
Tracking a light.

But why did not the sun, for awe,
Lose its footing in the sky?
Why did seas not charge across the astonished land?
Why did every horse in every paddock everywhere
Not break into delirious chase?
By what foul means were linnets stilled?

And how can we,
Loving so little,
Fettered by knowledge,
Believe in such excessive love?

Padraig J Daly OSA, Ballyboden.

(Already published in the Irish Times -what's good enough
for the Irish Times is good enough for IAN !)

Tour of the Splendours of Jordan

**Accompanied by Dr. Kieran O'Mahony, OSA
Monday 19 April – Thursday 29 April 2010**

I write to alert you to a trip to the other Holy Land, Jordan, next April. Enclosed are three documents: the programme, a booking form and a short guide to selected treasures. If you would like to chat about it, please give me a ring at 086 3390247. To get an idea of the tempting place to visit, click on: <http://www.tarsus.ie/Jordan/Welcome.html>.

Jordan - the other Holy Land - was half of biblical Israel and retains its significance for believers, Jewish and Christian. The country is full of treasures: ancient cities like Jerash, mosaics such as the Madaba Map, Petra, crusader castles, desert chateaux and so on. Early Christianity had its roots here too in the cities of the Decapolis, such as Pella. The people are friendly and the atmosphere is hospitable. Added to that, it is a country of great natural beauty: the eastern desert, the plains of Moab, the Dead Sea, Wadi Rum and the gulf of Aqaba. The biblical presentations will concentrate on the story of Abraham in the book of Genesis and in the writings of St Paul.

For further details on the tour, visit www.tarsus.ie.
Your sincerely, Kieran O'Mahony OSA, Orlagh.



I tried to send above photo before and failed. This was taken at the blessing of the new Friary School in New Karu, 12.09.2009 Ray Hickey OSA, Abuja, Nigeria. Well done Ray. Editor.

GALWAY (OSA) CHOIR LAUNCHES NEW CD

A discerning if raucous crowd turned up at the Galway City Museum on Tuesday night last for the launch of the new CD by the crowd from the loft, the Auggie Choir. Phyllis MacNamara was in flying form as she introduced the formal proceedings for the evening. The Mayor, Declan McDonnell, had some generous things to say about the choir and the Augustinian. He said he had warm memories of his time as an Altar Server at the Augustinian under the guidance of Father O'Sullivan in the 1950s. Galway Advertiser chairman, Ronnie O'Gorman performed the official launch with great aplomb. He took us on a 'Cooke's Tour' of the cultural accoutrements of various Galway Churches, highlighting the artistic contribution of the Auggie Choir to the Galway community.

NAIROBI CELEBRATIONS



Denis Mason, Hesbon Otieno, Peter Imatari and Tom Sexton all OSA's

While Ireland groans under the shame of the Murphy Report detailing the terrible scandals of clerical abuse in Dublin, here in Kenya we celebrated the raising of two of our young men to the priesthood on Saturday, November 28. In the absence of our cardinal the ceremony was conducted by our auxiliary, Bishop David Kamau. Our two men, Hesbon Otieno from the sugar area of Muhoroni, and Peter Imatari from Chakol near Busia on the border with Uganda, were well supported by family and friends from their home areas and from the areas where they have served as deacons. Hesbon has been actively engaged as a teacher in the parish of Baba Dogo and its school in Nairobi while Peter has been very much engaged in the Trocaire development projects at Ishiara. As usual, Baba Dogo parish took the occasion in its stride, its fifth such annual ceremony. Our Youth, who had claimed national prizes only last weekend, were in good voice and danced well throughout, along with the junior brigade of Flower Girls. Our parish choir, dedicated to St. Jude, were in excellent form and made for a thrilling liturgical ceremony. Just in case things might be slacking off a bit Peter's aunt, Igari, would jump up every now and again, ululating wildly and shaking her various bodily assets to rouse the crowd and raise the mood. Even the bishop appreciated this during his sermon. It was not quite what you might expect at an Irish ordination ceremony, but then this was not Ireland!



Newly ordained with Bishop David Kamau

Hello Fr Pat, I should like to say how much I enjoy receiving the IAN and to thank you most sincerely for sending it to me. I suspect that my name was slipped on to your mailing list from Fr Pat Codd's mailing list (PNL). For me a very happy "Slip."

Again many thanks Claire O'Reilly.

SERMON 190: ST AUGUSTINE SPEAKS ON CHRISTMAS DAY 395

"Let us proclaim the good news: He lies in a manger, but he holds the whole world in his hands; he sucks his mother's breasts but feeds the angels; he is swaddled in rags, but clothes us in immortality; he is suckled but also worshipped; he could find no room at the inn but makes a temple for himself in the hearts of believers. He did this that "weakness" might become "strong" that "strength" become "weak." We are overcome with wonder as we recognise his "lowliness" for us and our "loftiness" because of him. We therefore kindle love in ourselves and among us, to grasp his eternity." (Brought to my attention by Seamus Ahearne in his Rivermount Parish Bulletin).

READERS' COMMENTS !

Pat, I thoroughly enjoyed reading each edition of the IAN. Looking at the photographs was a trip down memory lane. Judging by how well so many of my colleagues are looking - Thady Mc, Paul O'Connor and Tom Sexton, for example, - I can only conclude that they are keeping an old photograph in the attic!! Keep up the good work and I look forward to receiving future copies and, hopefully, meeting up at some golfing occasion or other.

One observation on the new Augustinian logo. Why did the designer omit Tolle Lege Tolle Lege? It was this voice which triggered Augustine's conversion. This was the moment when, to quote Matthew Arnold, "the spark from Heaven fell." This was his "ah moment," his moment of transformation when everything fell into place and everything changed. Tolle Lege is encouragement to continue learning; a motto for adult education and an example of being open to life changing experiences. Sometimes the cost of modernity exceeds its worth.

Kindest regards
Tony Jordan.

Greetings from Flavio and the dust.

Tomorrow is a turning point for me in the season's work. I'm heading to a place called La Guala (which is some kind of a fish) and after that I've no fears of the rain. All further commitments are in communities that have gravel roads of some kind. So while most of you are wishing that the rain may cease, I'll be joining the people asking for rain. (My prayers have been half-hearted so far with mud and chains in the back of my mind).

On Monday I hope to meet Ted in Convento where he has invited me to give a hand with his first confessions for the communion class. I think he said he had sixty communicants, so that will keep us busy for a while. Sister Margaret has been hospitalised for a week with an infection but is coming home tomorrow. Sister Eileen is in Chone to accompany her. It was only by accident that I found out.

Ciao. Paul O'Connor OSA, Ecuador.

P.S. Today 06.12.09, I opened up www.staugustinescork.ie clicked on the camera icon and found Fr Jimmy Maguire saying an evening Mass. Tell him he has a fine voice for T.V. Best wishes Paul O'C. 'That We Are Committed to giving the Augustinian Order a More Public Profile'

"That We Are Committed to Giving the Augustinian Order a More Public Profile"



David Lennon, Kitty Bennett,
Giles O'Halloran OSA, and Pat Moran OSA

Our second meeting was held on 1st December in John's Lane to bring together some suggestions as to how we might fulfil this 'Intention', being one of four 'Intentions' to have emerged from the Provincial Chapter in June of this year. Present were Giles O'Halloran O.S.A, Pat Moran, O.S.A, David Lennon and Kitty Bennett.

This was a lively meeting with many ideas and suggestions being discussed. The most obvious starting point in promoting a more public profile of the Augustinian Order seemed to be the upgrading of the Augustinian.ie website to include links to other Augustinian friaries and parish websites. A very valuable feature of the Augustinian website in Cork is the ability to tune-in and view the Masses and Novenas as they are taking place. They have had some feedback from elderly people confined to their homes who appreciate it. The cost of fitting web-cams in all Augustinian churches may be prohibitive but, nevertheless, a consideration.

It was felt that there is a need to appoint a Press Officer who would liaise with the media and be available to answer questions, as the Catholic Church in Ireland will continue to be very much a topic of interest in the light of the Murphy Report.

Another consideration was that we ought to highlight the missionary work of the Augustinians world-wide. A suggestion was made that Transition Year students could spend a couple of weeks visiting the missions, helping in schools or being involved in repair work to schools or churches. As we read in December's edition of IAN there is already an appeal from Fr. Declan Deasy in Cuba for funding to renovate his church. There is a huge generosity of spirit and adventure in our young people and involving them in mission work would broaden their view of the world while developing their self-esteem and confidence and truly living out the Gospel values.

Kitty Bennett, Dublin.

ST AUGUSTINE'S GALWAY

SCRIPTURE FOR ADVENT: We completed our 'Scripture for Advent' course on Wednesday night last. It had consisted of just three sessions, each lasting 90 minutes. Over 20 people attended each night, including the Rector and some parishioners from St. Nicholas. 'How the gospels were formed' was our general theme. On the final night we diluted our scriptural learning with some nice wine and mince pies! St. Paul would have approved, I hope.

ROME LAY CONGRESS 2012

Fr. Luciano De Michieli OSA, Assistant General and newly appointed President of International Commission for the Laity called a meeting in Rome from 20 - 22nd November. I was invited as one of the lay representatives elected at the Lay Congress (LAR, 2006) to join with the Commission and other representatives (Spanish, Italian, American, Maltese, Dutch, Australian and Slovakian) to discuss themes, expectations etc., with regard to the Congress of 2012 and also to share information about initiatives in each country. There is a growing wish among lay people who regard themselves as part of the Augustinian Family for improved communications within the Augustinian world in order to foster a sense of belonging and identity in an increasingly secular world. The Laity Commission want to support this wish within the Constitutions of the Order. Fr. Alejandro Moral was also present to tell us about some of the initiatives of the Secretariat of Justice and Peace and to ask for possible cooperation. He said that the Secretariat would like to know of any initiatives undertaken under the banner of Justice and Peace and asked that Fr. Jack Deegan be kept informed of such at jedeegan@comcast.net

There was no final decision reached about the theme of the Congress or indeed where it should be held although the Argentinean representative wrote to urge us to consider Argentina as a venue and the Spanish people present were also keen to be hosts. However, after sampling Giolitti's ice-cream, among the other beauties of Rome, I think St. Monica's was still favoured as a venue.



Photo taken in St Monica's Rome

I presented a report on the One World Week With Augustine (OWWWA) which was the idea of Kate Everett, an Augustinian Youth Worker from Drogheda. This initiative took place all over the Augustinian world in 2008. Some of those present had taken part in OWWWA in their own countries and it was thought that it would be great if it could be organized again. This will have to be investigated further.

If you have any ideas about the Congress 2012 you can certainly contact me at b5toal@eircom.net or Fr. Luciano De Michieli at ldemichieli@osacuria.org

Bernadette Toal
Ballyboden Parish/Orlagh Retreat Centre.

ECUADOR

Having just completed my 900 baptism this year we had the evening wedding. A most Christian pair who brought along an ex-catechist, ex Queen of Flavio, as the **Dama de Amor**. Her little flower girl niece tried to steal the show from her.



The first rains have fallen.
Even though they are light they
will be a God-send.
All the best,
Paul O'Connor OSA, Ecuador.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Greetings from Cork. On behalf of staff, David Moran, Peter Galus, John O'Connor and myself, a big thanks for the many contributions I received over the last few days. At this busy time of year all your efforts are deeply appreciated and made this edition possible. I had a tremendous response, and I am sorry I could not accommodate all your contributions, but I do hope to use them in the January edition. Thanks to Ray Hickey, Tom Sexton, Paul O'Connor and Bernadette Toal for photographs.

Finally, please remember in your prayers Mary Hurley who died suddenly in Dungarvan. Mary, as many of our readers will know, worked as cook in St Augustine's Priory for many years, and was also a great supporter of our Foreign Missions. She attended the 10.00am Mass in the Friary Church on the morning of 7th and died later that day. RIP. Remember Sr Carmel, Mercy Sister, Dungarvan who was killed in a car crash on 15.12.2009. RIP.

Wishing you all an abundance of peace and joy.

Pat Moran OSA, Editor, St Augustine's Priory,
Washington St, Cork.
Tel. 021 427 04 10.
087 235 25 82.
Fax. 021 427 53 81
E-mail: sacw@iol.ie

Web: www.staugustinescork.ie