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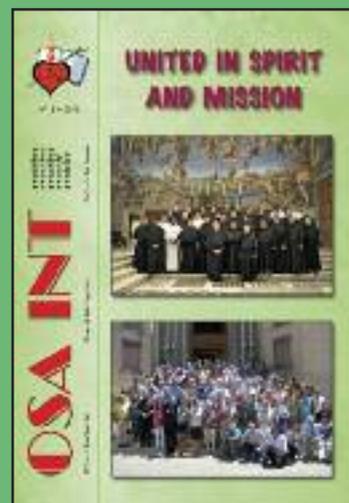
### Front cover:

1. Participants at the Congress of Vocation Promoters of the Order held last July 2-6, 2012 in the Augustinian Patristic Institute, Rome
2. Participants at the Congress on Lay Augustinians held last July 11-17, 2012 in the Augustinian Patristic Institute, Rome

### Back cover:

1. Some participants of the International Assembly of OSA Contemplative Nuns held last September 30 till October 5, 2012 in Guadarrama, Spain
2. Coffee-break for the participants of the OSA Spirituality Course held in Rome last Spring

OSA Interactive and [www.augustinians.net](http://www.augustinians.net) Information Network of the Order of Saint Augustine



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## Editorial

As the academic year 2011-2012 drew to a close in the city of Rome, the scene of students and professors ascending and descending the steps of the Patristic Institute was replaced by that of friars and laity who had come to participate in one of two International Congresses that were held in the Eternal City during the month of July. The first was that for Augustinian Vocation Promoters, bringing together 38 friars from many circumscriptions of the Order for five days of conferences, discussion, fellowship, prayer, and the exchange of hopes and challenges which they experience in the important ministry which has been entrusted to them by the Order. The second gathering was that for Augustinian laity. Close to 150 lay men and women, together with a small group of friars who collaborate with them in their various regions, gathered under the banner "To Be the Body of Christ in Today's World," in order to reflect on the challenge that is theirs to live and communicate the Augustinian charism precisely as committed lay men and women in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Despite what is sometimes a notable summer exodus from the city of Rome, Via Paolo VI and the Augustinianum were filled with energy, enthusiasm and activity during these days of fraternal sharing, reflection and prayer.

Many hundreds of miles away yet another group, bound also by Augustinian ties and values, gathered in Lima, Peru in the final days of July and the first days of August, around the theme of Augustinian education. Here approximately 200 friars and their lay colleagues from diverse educational centers of the Order considered the educational community, its mission, and its participants from a Gospel-Augustinian point of view.

The coming together of nearly 400 friars and laity in these various gatherings in which friendships are made and deepened, ideas expressed and exchanged, experiences lived and shared, cannot help but renew and strengthen the values we hold as brothers and sisters in Augustine. From each encounter participants returned home confirmed in the ideals they claim and the commitment to live and proclaim them anew.

FR. MICHAEL DI GREGORIO, OSA  
Coordinator of Communications

# THE DIPLOMA COURSE IN AUGUSTINIAN SPIRITUALITY

front page

The Diploma Course in Augustinian Spirituality was held in Rome for a second year; this time for English – speaking participants. The course is offered by the Institute of Augustinian Spirituality of the Order in collaboration with the "*Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum*" in accordance with the program of the General Chapter of 2007.

The objective of the course is to ensure that participants obtain a substantial academic, historic, cultural and spiritual formation in the thought of Saint Augustine, in the Augustinian Theological School and the tradition of the Order throughout its historical development. In addition to the personal spiritual enrichment of the participants, the course aims to assist friars and sisters to acquire a fuller understanding of Augustinian Spirituality in order that they be better equipped to work in the service of the Gospel based on the Augustinian charism.

Important was the participation of men and women religious of the Augustinian Family. Nineteen participants from different continents and different countries, young and older, persevered with joy until the end of the course. Africa was particularly well-represented. There were 13 friars, 4 Augustinian Missionary Sisters and two School Sisters of Notre Dame. The fraternal spirit among the friars and sisters was an additional and much appreciated component of the course. They participated very actively in the lectures held at the Curia and in the visits to sites of Augustinian, ecclesial and historic importance in Italy. To meet the requirements of the diploma, they sat for a final exam and presented their research on a thesis topic on various Augustinian themes.



The participants in Roccaporena during their retreat in Cascia

Fr. Robert Prevost, Prior General, celebrated the Holy Eucharist with the participants at the inauguration of the course at Saint Augustine's Church, Campo Marzio, Rome and at the conclusion at Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome, where all participants received a Certificate of Participation.

The Course calls our attention to the ecclesial nature of Augustinian Spirituality: that of a restless heart at the service of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and offering a pathway to the fullness of the “City of God”. *“The spirituality of the Order... proceeds from the following of Christ according to the teachings of the Gospel and the action of the Holy Spirit. Its principal point of reference is the teaching and example of Saint Augustine, complemented by the tradition of the Order. The principal document of our spirituality is the Rule, which must direct our lives and action. Augustinian spirituality, developed over time, and enriched by the example and teaching of our forebears, ought to be lived according to the circumstances of time, place, and culture and in harmony with our charism”* (OSA Constitutions n. 16).

Putting into practice what is written in the Constitutions, the Order offered such an opportunity to provide an instruction on appropriate responses in Augustinian spirituality for the social context of our religious lives. In fact, the design of the course was based on two components which were complementary:

- The spiritual area included activities such as a Spiritual Retreat and visits to historical places significant for the spiritual and cultural value they hold for the Augustinian Order.
- The academic area was composed of different lectures such as *Lectio Augustini*, Augustinian Spiritual Theology and its context, History and Tradition and the Present Day Reality of the Order, Augustinian School of Theology etc.

English speaking lecturers enhanced the Augustinian Spirituality Course with their professional teaching. Almost all the lectures were followed by sharing of experiences, discussions and workshops on topics within the field of presentation. By all means it was the richest part offered by the Course on Augustinian Spirituality. The friars were most appreciative of the fraternal and generous hospitality given by the community of St. Monica’s College.

The course was a very good opportunity to discern and assimilate the richness of the Augustinian Spirituality. Another opportunity will be given next year in Italian language for those who would like to have this experience.

FR. PETER PAUL CACHIA



The participants in pilgrimage to Ostia Antica with the guide, Fr. Brian Lowery, O.S.A.



A group picture after a Eucharistic celebration



Lunch-break during the pilgrimage to Ostia Antica

# MYSTERY AS AN ANTIDOTE TO SPECTACLE

*An excerpt from the address of the Prior General, Fr. Robert F. Prevost, O.S.A.,  
on the Synod of Bishops held in Rome last October 7-28, 2012*

At least in the contemporary western world, if not throughout the entire world, the human imagination concerning both religious faith and ethics is largely shaped by mass media, especially by television and cinema. Western mass media is extraordinarily effective in fostering within the general public enormous sympathy for beliefs and practices that are at odds with the Gospel. Religion is at best tolerated by mass media as “tame” and “quaint” when it does not actively oppose positions on ethical issues that the media have embraced as their own. However, when religious voices are raised in opposition to these positions, mass media can target religion, labeling it as ideological and insensitive in regard to the so-called vital needs of people in the contemporary world.



Three Augustinian members of the Synod: Fr. Robert Prevost (Prior General),  
Most Rev. José Ulloa Mendieta (Archbishop of Panama City),  
Most Rev. Michael Campbell (Bishop of Lancaster, England)

Moreover, overt opposition to Christianity by mass media is only part of the problem. The sympathy for anti-Christian lifestyle choices that mass media fosters is so brilliantly and artfully engrained in the viewing public, that when people hear the Christian message it often inevitably seems ideological and emotionally cruel by contrast to the ostensible humaneness of the anti-Christian perspective.

If the “new evangelization” is going to counter these mass media-produced distortions of religious and ethical reality successfully, pastors, preachers, teachers and catechists are going to have to become far more informed about the context of evangelizing

in a world dominated by mass media. Magisterial Church teaching can be helpful in this regard, yet there is a great need for further development in this area. Noteworthy for its perception of the mass media context for evangelization is the post-conciliar document *Aetatis novae* (1992). This document observed that modern media not only distorts reality by telling us what to think, it tells us what to think about.

The Fathers of the Church can provide eminent guidance for the Church in this aspect of the new evangelization, precisely because they were masters of the art of rhetoric. With their rhetorical formation, which, for many of them, constituted the best training available in the late ancient world, the Church Fathers offered a formidable response to those non-Christian and anti-Christian literary and rhetorical forces at work throughout the Roman Empire in shaping the religious and ethical imaginations of the day. They understood with enormous precision the techniques through which popular religious and ethical imaginations of their day were manipulated by the centers of secular power in that world.

It is not sufficient for the Church to own its own television media or to sponsor religious films. The secular media will always be stronger in this field, and while it is vital that the Church be actively engaged in and with the media, we cannot successfully compete with the secular media. In his *City of God*, Augustine teaches that mystery focuses the imagination on the darkness surrounding death, specifically on the darkness of Christ’s crucifixion which St. Augustine saw echoed in the deaths of the Christian martyrs. Spectacle, on the other hand, with its companion features - celebrity and heroism - offers people a false comfort by distracting the mind from its instinctive fear of death. Augustine saw this false comfort present in Roman theatre, sports events, secular festivals, and military honors.

Augustine’s argument has relevance for modern culture, where these same ancient features of spectacle are amplified by modern media into false forms of celebrity and heroism. Secularism as an anti-Christian force depends upon the grasp that the media have upon contemporary culture and, consequently, upon religious and ethical imagination. As a consequence, evangelization in the modern world must find the appropriate means for redirecting public attention away from spectacle and into mystery.

## Vocation Promoters of the Order Meet in Rome

The International College of Saint Monica and the Augustinian Patristic Institute, Rome, were the meeting point for 40 friars this summer who gathered to study and discuss the theme of Vocations and Vocation Promotion. The friars, who represented 23 circumscriptions of the Order, are responsible in their local areas for this particular ministry, so vital for the Church and for the Order. During welcoming remarks on Monday, July 2 at the opening of the workshop, Prior General Robert Prevost recalled the words of Pope Benedict addressed to a group of North American Bishops during their ad limina visit last year: *"The urgent need in our own time for credible and attractive witnesses to the redemptive and transformative power of the Gospel makes it essential to recapture a sense of the sublime dignity and beauty of the consecrated life, to pray for religious vocations and to promote them actively, while strengthening existing channels for communication and cooperation..."* (May 18, 2012).

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The workshop which covered five days of conferences, group discussions, and the exchange of pastoral experiences and best practices among participants, focused on the pro-

motion of a more evident and dynamic vocation culture in every circumscription, indeed in every local community. The five days of the program unfolded in a fraternal atmosphere of hospitality and open dialogue, confirming the importance of renewing Augustinian life in our various communities and circumscriptions as a fundamental component of vocation ministry. The need and desire to make Augustinian life more visible, to share the good news of brothers committed to live and minister together in unity, became the invitation and the challenge which the friars placed before themselves.

The workshop had been requested by the General Chapter of 2007 and was designed by the International Vocation Commission of the Order both to offer an opportunity for common reflection on this important ministry and to create a strong link among the vocation promoters of the Order's various circumscriptions in order to ensure a fruitful exchange of information concerning programs and initiatives presently in use.

*"We want people to see that we Augustinians are men of service, that we are brothers, friars, who live in charity, that we are happy and*



OSA Vocation Promoters crossing St. Peter's Square in Vatican City

that we live in the love of God," said one of the participants.

Among the friars who made presentations were Fr. Luis Marín OSA, who offered a reflection on the theology of vocation and on the specific characteristics of the Augustinian charism; Frs. Joseph Farrell OSA and Kevin DePrinzio OSA covered several sessions dealing with the person of the Vocation Promoter and the role of accompaniment of candidates exploring a religious vocation. Using the biblical image of Peter and John encountering a beggar at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, they led the participants in a meditative exploration and discussion of various elements of vocational ministry. Fr. Isaac Estevez OSA examined the question of a Vocation Culture from within and from without, drawing implications and suggesting plans of action in the concrete experience of living Augustinian life. In addition to the work content of the week, participants themselves shared - in the various languages represented - the responsibility for preparing morning and evening prayer each day as well as the celebration of Eucharist. Included was also the opportunity to visit the Sistine Chapel and, at the end of the week, to celebrate Eucharist together at the tomb of Saint Peter. The community of Sant'Agostino welcomed the participants for a meal on the rooftop of their friary, a section of the Order's former Generalate.

As participants prepared to return to their local communities there was a general feeling of optimism and enthusiasm to take up again the task which the Order had entrusted to them. One friar, who had also participated in the two previous Vocation Conferences of previous years, remarked, "What I like about this conference as opposed to the two previous ones, is that there was not an emphasis on methods or materials, but rather on the person of the vocation director and his relationship to inquirers and the friars in the province."



Vocation Promoters attending mass in the chapel of St. Monica International College



Some reading materials on religious vocations



Participants listening to lectures and reports



Participants sharing meals together

## CONGRESS OF AUGUSTINIAN EDUCATORS AND SCHOOLS

*Colegio San Agustín, LIMA, PERU 30 July – 3 August*

Under the compelling title: “*THE AUGUSTINIAN SCHOOL COMMUNITY: GATEWAY TO THE GOSPEL, PATHWAY OF THE KINGDOM*”, the Congress for Augustinian educators and schools was held in the city of Lima, Peru from the 30<sup>th</sup> of July to the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August. Clearly, the background for the congress was the New Evangelization which calls attention to the im-



The Prior General, Rev. Fr. Robert F. Prevost, O.S.A., addresses the participants of the Congress

portance of the ministry of Augustinians who serve as teachers in our schools, universities and other educational settings within contemporary culture.

These ministries entrusted to us by the Church are within the settings of today’s ‘public squares’ and have become more and more valued and important. In fact, they have become more necessary in a world where “cheap ideologies”, with their lack of existential commitment and values, abound.

The number of participants was remarkable, more than 200 people. The speakers and the topics offered new points of view on the Augustinian values of interiority and community, the search for truth and the Gospel. We had the fortune to have with us the Prior General of the Order, Fr. Robert Prevost, who participated in all the events of the congress. He opened the congress with an excellent presentation, much appreciated by all the participants, on the subject “The Gospel, the Kingdom and the Augustinian School”.



A Eucharistic celebration presided over by the Prior General, Fr. Robert F. Prevost, O.S.A.

The Most Reverend Daniel Turley, our dear Augustinian bishop of Chulucanas joined us, as well. He had the kind generosity of spirit to find space in his schedule during spiritual exercises to come by and speak to us about interiority and the pedagogy of the Interior Teacher, a method always valid for our young people and making clearer for them the presence of Jesus, the Interior Teacher. Also with us was Fr. Francisco Galende who gave a talk on “Community in Search of Truth”.

Another presenter was Fr. John Sotak who spoke on “Community as a Place of Growth and the Development of Hearts and Souls” which helped us to value the importance of our lives. After this base was laid, it was time to consider Justice and Peace. Two friars, Frs. Emeka Obiezu, the Order’s representative of the NGO at the United Nations, and Alejandro Moral, Assistant General of the Order, mapped out what the Order is doing as “A Community at the Service of a New World-wide Fraternity”.

An important number of workshops and activities for the participants filled out the program. The congress concluded with a greeting from Fr. Rommel Par, president of the commission which organized the congress, an expression of gratitude from the Prior General to everyone, especially to the Province of Peru, and a Eucharist presided by the Prior Provincial, Fr. Alex Lam, himself a vocation from Colegio San Agustín where the gathering was held.

As we close this article, we would like to thank all those who so actively participated in the congress, the members of the Commission of Educators and Schools of the Order, the speakers and Fr. Elías Neira, principal of Colegio San Agustín, along with his team who during the five days saw that everything moved forward perfectly.

Fr. Alejandro Moral, OSA  
*Member of the Commission of the Order  
 for Educators and Schools.*



1. Participants listen to a lecture
2. Participants at work
3. Participants in session
4. Participants on the go, with the Prior General, Fr. Robert Prevost, O.S.A.

# LAY AUGUSTINIAN CONGRESS IN ROME

(11 – 17 July 2012)

Under the banner “TO BE THE BODY OF CHRIST IN TODAY’S WORLD”, the third international congress of lay Augustinians was held in Rome. Almost 150 participants reflected on what it is to be Augustinian: “How can we be, live and commu-

some were elected during these meetings, and the rest will be elected at regional gatherings.

The visit to Cascia as a day of penitential prayer and the Mass celebrated at the Church of Saint Augustine in Rome, at which the Prior General Fr. Robert Prevost presided, were two important spiritual moments for the whole group.

We express our gratitude to all the members responsible for the organization of the congress who over a long period of time dedicated their efforts to making this important event possible. We are most grateful, also, for the participation of our youth. The presence and the witness of our younger lay Augustinians provided a valuable occasion for reflection. They brought a joyful and upbeat spirit to each day’s activities.

FR. ALEJANDRO MORAL ANTÓN, OSA



The offertory at the closing mass in the Basilica Sant’Agostino with the Prior General, Fr. Robert F. Prevost, O.S.A., presider

nicate in our world today that we are ‘the Body of Christ’? The keynote speakers at the conference, Bishop Giovanni Scanavino (OSA) and Dr. Joseph T. Kelley, oriented their talks on a strong scriptural base drawing richly from the texts of our Father, Saint Augustine. Additionally, there were panel presentations on the experience of lay Augustinians in a family setting, laity in today’s world, and Augustinian youth. All three helped us to come to know better the reality of lay Augustinians composed both of Augustinian Lay Fraternities of the Order of which they are a part, and other groups of laity intimately united and close to the Order but without a juridical commitment.

The experience of communion between both realities superseded the differences and we were able to experience a true sense of unity among all participants. This is to be the road to follow into the future. Surely, there are challenges that we all must face, if we want to be the Body of Christ in today’s world.

An important aspect of the gathering was the methodology proposed by the various regional groups for the election of the coordinators who will continue to work with the friars of the Order. Some have already been elected,



Participants listen to a lecture in the Auditorium of the Augustinianum

Participants present the flag of their respective countries



## Visit of Cardinal Prospero Grech O.S.A. to Korea

For the last 2 years the Delegation of Korea, numbering just 11 solemnly professed Koreans, has been working on a building project for a retreat apostolate in the Diocese of Uijongbu, north of Seoul. To celebrate the completion of the first stage of this project they invited Cardinal Prospero Grech to join them and he graciously accepted.

On Saturday, September 8, a new church and priory were consecrated by the Bishop of Uijongbu, Bishop Peter Lee, with Cardinal Grech, the papal nuncio, Bishop Osvaldo Padilla, the Australian provincial, Fr. Tony Banks and Fr. Armando Dayao representing the Cebu province, in attendance. The Delegation superior, Fr. Jacobo Seo, welcomed the visitors and some 500 Augustinian supporters.

The church seats 120 people and the priory, which will now also serve as the novitiate house, has 10 rooms for the friars, novices and private retreatants. The foundations of the retreat house proper have also been laid. It will have 14 twin bedrooms and will be able to take up to 30 retreatants. The completion of this building will form stage 2 of the building project, the goal set for 2013.

Earlier on the same day Cardinal Grech had baptized Augustine Park Jong-Geun (78), a major benefactor of the Order in Korea. It was he who donated the land on which the new buildings stand and he contributed in large part to the building of the church. This was Cardinal Grech's first baptism of an adult. In Korea the majority of baptisms are of adults. Ten percent of Korea is now Catholic with a larger percentage still being Protestant. Buddhism is the other main religion.

On Sunday morning Cardinal Grech took part in a typical Korean 11 am Sunday parish Mass and was impressed by the dignity of the service and by



The new church consecrated on September 8, 2012

the great singing by choir and congregation.

On Monday, the 10<sup>th</sup> September, in Incheon Catholic cathedral, Cardinal Grech ordained to the priesthood, Matteo Cho Woo-Hyeong O.S.A. This was also the cardinal's first ordination. The bishop of Incheon, Boniface Choi, was also in attendance and the cathedral was packed.

Cardinal Grech rightly considers himself a missionary, at least indirectly, as so many of his students over the years came from missionary countries. Korea was no exception and during his 10 day stay he was met and feted by several of his former students who are now bishops, seminary rectors and professors in their own right. One of these was Bishop Lazzaro You, Bishop of Daejeon, who organized for Cardinal Grech a visit to two martyr shrines in his diocese. The Catholic church in Korea is just 230 years old but the first 100 years saw five major persecutions of Christians. Apart from the official 103 canonized martyrs there were many unknown martyrs who were summarily killed and buried in mass graves. It was one of these sites that the Cardinal visited. The other was the birth place of the first Korean priest, Kim Dae-Gon, who was martyred at the age of 24 years. The remaining time spent by the Cardinal was in giving a spiritual talk at the Incheon Catholic seminary to over 100 seminarians, visiting the 2 other Augustinian houses and taking in the cultural sites of Seoul and its surroundings. Highlights were also visits to two famous Buddhist temples.



His Eminence Prospero Cardinal Grech, O.S.A., with the bishop of Incheon, Most Rev. Boniface Choi, the Prior Provincial of Australia, Rev. Fr. Tony Banks, O.S.A., with some members of the Order and the Korean clergy

# INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF AUGUSTINIANS OF CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

(Guadarrama, 30 September - 5 October, 2012)

Under the MOTTO “**Contemplate your face in silence, celebrate your love in communion**”, the first days of the Augustinian Nuns of Contemplative Life were held in Guadarrama (at the Fray Luis de León residence, of the Province of Castile, in Madrid), from 30 September to 5 October.

The gathering was convoked by the Prior General, Robert F. Prevost, and the three Federation Presidents, M. Rita Piccione from the Italian Federation, M. Maria Inés Dias and M. Natividad Salvador, from the Federations of Spain.

In the first week of October a hundred or so Augustinian Sisters of Contemplative Life met, coming from different countries: Spain, Italy, Philippines, Romania, Kenya, United States, Canada, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Panama and Bolivia, in representation of all the Monasteries of the Order.

Prior to this, the communities had dialogued and reflected on certain points, as a preliminary task for the work of these days. The areas reflected upon were the inner voice, prayer, *lectio divina*, fraternal life, formation, communion and ecclesiality in the certainty that a return to our roots would be a source of renewal and authenticity, rekindling joy in our own identity.

The principal aims of this meeting were to become acquainted with the different paths for living out the Augustinian contemplative vocation, and to share a lived experience with a view to closer ties of friendship and fraternity among monasteries and federations. The meeting provided an

opportunity for our mutual enrichment deriving from cultural diversity and the universality of the Order. Indeed, this would serve to fortify communion between the Augustinian Sisters and Brothers as a sign of unity at the service of the Gospel.

On 30 September the Prior General opened the assembly with a celebration of the Eucharist, in-



1. A Eucharistic celebration during the assembly
2. The participants of the first international assembly of OSA Contemplative Nuns together with the Prior General, Rev. Fr. Robert F. Prevost, O.S.A.
3. Participants take some photographs for posterity
4. Participants in session



sisting in his homily on UNION and COMMUNION in the diversity of cultures, communities and ways of thinking and feeling.

In the course of the week we dedicated one day to practising contemplation together. We also reflected on the spirituality of Saint Augustine and on some of the most important virtues, such as humility and charity, so necessary for living life in common. On other days we shared various points of view on the theme of apostolic and contemplative life in the community. Another of the central themes of this assembly was: What does it mean to belong to the Order of Saint Augustine? The Prior General stressed in his homily for the mass of thanksgiving on the last day, 5 October, that

there are elements in common in our lives (as women and men religious) which unite us, over and above differences and changes, and these constitute the gift of UNITY. We receive this unity as a grace which we need to reinforce and cultivate, so that we ourselves may become a sign of communion in the single body of Christ, so meaningful in the life of the first Christian community, as described in the Acts of the Apostles.

The last day is general assembly, with the conclusions and proposals, went deeper into the title of the congress: **“Contemplate your face in silence, celebrate your love in communion”**. Silence, prayer, the inner voice, together with communion in charity (in

Deum), in community life represent important goals opening us up to the future, with challenges which need to be renewed and loved by each community and by each sister in a concrete way.

This assembly, the first ever in the Order at this level, has thrown invaluable light on the present situation of our communities and monasteries, but this is not enough. Now let us start off on a new path, respecting and maintaining what is permanent, but open to the light and guidance of the Spirit, which will help us to read the signs of the times and to live out our charism with a renewed commitment.

P. ALEJANDRO MORAL ANTÓN, OSA



## Growing in Communion: Revitalizing Community Life

The 8<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the Province of Cebu was celebrated April 16-21, 2012 at the Santo Niño Spirituality Center in Tolotolo, Consolacion, Cebu with the theme: Growing in Communion: Revitalizing Community Life. For twenty-eight years, since its solemn inauguration on January 15, 1984, the Province has worked toward realizing its vision of being “a community of brothers and friends, living harmoniously with one mind and heart intent upon God and sharing goods in common for the service of the people of God” despite the many challenges it has encountered. It has continued its commitment to incarnate the Augustinian way of life in its various areas of apostolate, growing in communion as it responds to the needs of the Church and the Order. Anticipating new challenges ahead, it prepares itself with relevant programs for the next four years (2012-2016).

### Pre-Chapter Day of Recollection

A day of recollection was attended by all the members of the Province present in the Philippines together with the Prior General, Fr. Robert F. Prevost, OSA on April 16, in order to offer all members a proper disposition for the Chapter and for the new term. The day started with the enthronement of the images of Sto. Niño de Cebu, Our Mother of Good Counsel and St. Augustine. Thus a fitting mood for prayer and reflection was established.

The morning session was facilitated by Fr. Cornelio Alpuerto, SVD, former Provincial of the SVD Cen-

tral Province in the Philippines. He invited the friars to reflect on discipleship as a call and a challenge that brings about deeper relationship with the Lord. His message was that any encounter with the Lord in religious life in particular or life in general is an invigorating, life-changing and life-giving experience. This experience is necessary for any growth in communion to happen. Thus, growing in communion is growing in discipleship or vice-versa. Fr. Alpuerto also led the friars in a reflection on the nature of the Holy Trinity which is a prototype of love, sharing, self-giving and self-emptying. It is also a model for solidarity, cooperation and fellowship which are essential values in revitalizing community life.

Fr. Prevost was the resource person in the afternoon session. He opened his talk by relating the theme of the Chapter to the specific verse from the Acts of the Apostles, “the community of brothers has one mind and heart”. He noted that the most powerful act of the Holy Spirit was the creation of the first Christian community. This means that common life is fundamental in Christian life. Quoting the former Prior General, Fr. Theodore Tack, OSA, Fr. Prevost emphasized that, based on our Augustinian tradition “community is our primary apostolate”. He also encouraged the brothers to reflect on the prophetic nature of community life: that it should bear signs of fraternity, solidarity, respect for others, and must be rooted in charity. This means that to be prophetic, brothers must be men of God, that is, rooted in Him and constantly



formed by His word. This was the challenge he gave to the brothers as the Chapter was about to officially open.

### Opening Mass

The opening mass was presided by Fr. Prevost at the Minor Basilica of Sto. Niño. In his homily, he stressed that communion is where brothers understand their common identity as persons called to live together and to be rooted in God. He encouraged the friars to continue believing in the importance of communion as they begin their journey for the next four years. The installation and confirmation of the new Prior Provincial and Counselors were done within the celebration. Fr. Eusebio B. Berdon, OSA was re-elected Prior Provincial and the four counsellors are: Fr. Andrew P. Batayola, OSA, Fr. Jonas Mejares, OSA, Fr. Frederick C. Commendador, OSA and Fr. Victor Gonzaga, OSA.

In its desire to continue sharing the Order's spiritual benefits, seventeen lay collaborators from four communities of the Province were affiliated to the Order on the same occasion. The Prior Provincial delivered his inaugural address before the final blessing. He enjoined the brothers to look forward with hope and to have a sense of optimism as the Province enters into a new term; a period with many challenges but an opportunity to revitalize community life.

### Chapter Proper

The Chapter proper started with forty five official members led by Fr. Prevost who was also Chapter president. Fr. Rommel Par, OSA, Assistant General, was also in attendance. In his opening address, Fr. Prevost highlighted some important points for reflection: the contemplative dimension of our Augustinian way of life, the need for caring for each other's vocation and the Order's expectation that the Province contribute to evangelization in Asia. After the election of the officials of the Chapter and other preliminary procedures, the Prior Provincial delivered the State of the Province address. Thereafter, the election of the Provincial Secretary and Provincial Treasurer followed. Fr. Dante O. Juloc, OSA was elected Secretary while Fr. Rodolfo Bugna was re-elected Treasurer. The Chapter continued with the presentation of the reports of the fifteen communities and various institutions in the Province.

The Chapter members, with their renewed fervor for the Augustinian way

Left: The members of the Province with the Prior General after the opening mass of the Provincial Chapter in the Basilica del Santo Niño in Cebu

Right: The participants of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter held last April 2012 in Cebu



The members of the Provincial Council with the Prior General, Rev. Fr. Robert F. Prevost, O.S.A.

of life, actively involved themselves in the planning of the programs for the next four years. Each one expressed his insights on the proposals being presented with conviction and good intention. One of the highlights of the Chapter, which expresses the aim of the Province to extend its ministries and affirms its missionary zeal, is the creation of three new communities or areas of apostolate. These communities are: the University of San Agustin-Sambag Extension Campus in Iloilo City, the Sta. Ana Sub-Parish in Burgos, Siargao Island, Surigao del Norte and a mission parish in the Diocese of Bayombong in the town of Saguday, Quirino. Furthermore, the Province has reaffirmed its support of the needs of the Order by expressing its desire to help other provinces.

### Looking Forward

The 8<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Provincial Chapter, with all its plans and programs for the new term as well as the renewed faith and conviction of the members, has given the Province direction that leads toward the realization of its vision. This Chapter has also given the friars much reason to look forward to a bright future and to celebrate the Province's unwavering commitment to common life and service to the people of God.

FR. DANTE O. JULOC, OSA  
*Provincial Secretary - Prv. CAE*



# Conquering Vast Distances in Asia Pacific

Contact and co-ordination throughout the vast Asia Pacific is maintained both by the Order of St. Augustine in particular and by the broader Augustinian family of numerous religious orders and congregations in general. For the latter purpose, the Augustinian Asia Pacific Conference (APAC) was begun in Rome on 13<sup>th</sup> September 1977 during an Augustinian General Chapter, and then other male and female Augustinian congregations were progressively drawn into it, such that APAC now embraces over twenty religious congregations that have an estimated 2,500 professed members in Asia Pacific. These professed minister in the Philippines, India, Indonesia, Australia, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Taiwan, China and New Zealand.

Every year there are a number of APAC events organised by some of the five APAC sub-committees (Commissions). These events are most frequently held in the Philippines because of its convenient location within the Asia Pacific, but occasionally APAC events have also been held in India. Usually taking five days, these events have each centred on one of the following topics: Augustinian spirituality, social justice and ecological awareness, the formation of re-

ligious and the support of formators, and Augustinian vocations. Larger events have included a bi-annual gathering for novices for fourteen days (with novices from as many as six male and female religious congregations participating), and an all-night annual Augustinian vocations jamboree in Cebu that has sometimes attracted as many as 2,700 participants. As well, an issue of the *APAC Bulletin* has been produced every six months for over a dozen years.

There has been an APAC Convention every three years since 1980, and from this event over a decade ago grew the practice of the seven Asia Pacific leaders of the Order of St Augustine also meeting by themselves for an additional period either immediately before or after the APAC Convention. This informal gathering led Fr. Patrick Fahey O.S.A. to formalize this gathering successfully, while he was the Australian Provincial, under the title of the Order of St. Augustine in the Asia Pacific (OSAAP). Henceforth OSAAP usually met annually, rather than only every three years.

OSAAP noted the renewal program adopted by OALA in Latin America, and had Fr. Art Purcaro O.S.A. (Peru) advise on a similar renewal program



Delegates of the 2012 APAC Convention, held on 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> February 2012 at Villa Consuelo Retreat House in the Del Rey Ville subdivision, Camarin Novaliches, Caloocan City, (not far from Manila), Philippines.  
 Back row (left to right): Fr. Tetsuya Hirano O.S.A. (Japan), Fr. Willy Arana O.S.A. (Vicariate of the Orient), Fr. Bernard Holzer a.a. (Philippines), Sr. Imelda Mora ASOLC (Philippines), Fr. Tony Banks O.S.A. (Australia), Fr. Dave Austin O.S.A. (Australia), Bro. Salesio Lee O.S.A. (Korea), Fr. Hiroyuki Shibata O.S.A. (Japan).  
 Front row (left to right): Fr. Victor Gonzaga O.S.A. (Cebu), Sr. Ma. Luz Mijares ASOLC (Philippines), Fr. Anson Joseph O.S.A. (India), Fr. Conrad Ngadur O.S.A. (Papua, Indonesia), Fr. Andrew Batayola O.S.A. (Cebu), Fr. Bernard Baru O.S.A. (Papua, Indonesia), Fr. Eusebio Berdon O.S.A. (Cebu), Sr. Ignatia Tuti from Augustinian Sisters of Divine Mercy (Indonesia), Fr. Suh In-Seok Jacobo O.S.A. (Korea), Sr. Felisitas Noli from Augustinian Sisters of Divine Mercy (Indonesia), Ms. Bernadina Abuan (APAC Secretary Emeritus), and Sr. Joccy Widwid ASOLC (Philippines).

adapted for the Order of St. Augustine throughout the Asia Pacific region; this program then commenced two years ago. The renewal program faces great external challenges: the seven participating Augustinian jurisdictions are located over a third of the world, based on two different continents and scattered around two different oceans; travel between these nations requires expensive international airline journeys of up to ten hours in duration and is complicated by visa regulations, and these jurisdictions involve a total of six different native languages – English, Tagalog, Malayalam (in Kerala, India), Indonesian, Japanese and Korean. Guest speakers from overseas usually have to communicate to their audience via a translator.

OSAAP involves the Augustinian Provinces of Australia and Cebu, the Vicariate of the Augustinian Martyrs of Japan, the Vicariate of the Orient, and the Delegations of Korea, India and Papua (Indonesia). As of late February 2012 the newly-elected president of OSAAP is Fr. Tony Banks O.S.A. (Australia), who succeeded Fr. Eusebio Berdon O.S.A. (Cebu) in that office. In that same week, Fr. Banks was succeeded as



Fr. Tony Banks O.S.A. (Provincial, Australia), the newly-elected President of OSAAP and the President Emeritus of APAC

APAC President by Fr. Bernard Holzer A.A., who thereby became the first Assumptionist to lead APAC, and only the fourth person not a member of the Order of St. Augustine to become one of the fourteen successive presidents in the thirty-five year history of APAC.

MICHAEL ENDICOTT O.S.A.

### **PROVINCE OF NIGERIA:** (2012-2016)

- |                   |                              |                       |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Prior Provincial: | - Fr. John ABUBAKAR          |                       |
| Counsellors:      | - Fr. Raymond HICKEY         | - Fr. Modestus ONUOHA |
|                   | - Fr. Augustine GARBA        | - Fr. Joel OKOJIE     |
| Econome:          | - Fr. Peter MEDUGU           |                       |
| Secretary:        | - Fr. Anthony Ikechukwu KANU |                       |

### **PROVINCE OF ITALY:** (2012-2016)

- |                   |                             |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Prior Provincial: | - Fr. Luciano DE MICHELI    |                       |
| Counsellors:      | - Fr. Bernardino PINCIAROLI | - Fr. Giuseppe PAGANO |
|                   | - Fr. Gabriele PEDICINO     | - Fr. Pasquale CORMIO |
| Econome:          | - Fr. Domenico GIACOMOBELLO |                       |
| Secretary:        | - Fr. Francesco GIULIANI    |                       |

### **PROVINCE OF POLAND:** (2012-2016)

- |                     |                               |                        |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Provincial Superior | - Fr. Wieslaw DAWIDOWSKI      |                        |
| Counsellors:        | - Fr. Piotr Szymon JANKOWSKI  | - Fr. Przemyslaw PLATA |
| Econome:            | - Br. Jan Michal LEGOCKI      |                        |
| Secretary:          | - Fr. Lukasz Benjamin KUCZALA |                        |

# A New Beginning of Augustinian Presence in Havana, Cuba

*Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies at the Felix Varela Center*

During the recent visit of Our Holy Father, Benedict XVI, the cameras of the world were focused on Cuba. From the 26<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> of last March, for a brief moment, people of all continents were witnesses of what goes on in this island country and could see what the Catholic Church of Cuba is doing concretely in its mission of evangelization. After a long period of persecution and of life in the catacombs, the memorable event of Blessed John Paul II's historic visit on 1998 represented a rebirth of the Church of Cuba to a new life. From that moment on, she has been recovering her rightful place in Cuban society which she held for a number of centuries and which was then denied her by the communist revolution of 1959.

John Paul II made that pastoral visit so that Cuba "might open itself to the world and the world to Cuba". Thirteen years have now passed since then and Benedict XVI came to strengthen the Catholics of Cuba and all those who live in Cuba in their faith and to proclaim that: "truth is a yearning in the human heart and the search for its fulfillment always presupposes an exercise of authentic freedom ... Faith and reason are necessary and complementary in the search for truth ... It is certainly not irrationality, but rather a desire for truth that promotes Christian faith ..." (*Homily of our Holy Father in the Plaza José Martí of the Revolution, Havana, 28 March 2012*). Coherent with his thinking and expressed in an unequivocal manner in his most recent book, *Jesus of Nazareth, from the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection*, the pope, in a loud and clear voice without fear asserted: "The right to religious liberty, as much in its individual expression as in its communitarian dimension, manifests the unity of the human person who is citizen and believer at the same time". Speaking of the mission that the Church of Cuba must accomplish, Benedict XVI at the end of his homily, with his legendary serenity and with a voice that while not reaching far, penetrates deeply the mind and the heart, exclaimed: "It is hoped that the moment might soon arrive here, also, in which the Church might bring to the field of knowledge the benefits of the mission which the Lord has entrusted to it and which can never be overlooked."

As I tell you about the **Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies at the Felix Varela Cultural Center** and the commitment of our Augustinian community of Ha-

vana, I have chosen not to give a historical overview of the Institute's beginnings, nor of our Augustinian collaboration with the Cardinal Archbishop of Havana, Jaime Lucas Ortega Alamino. Rather, I prefer to focus on this current historical moment and the great adventure which our Holy Father, Benedict XVI, by his presence among us and through his homily on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2012, has chosen not only to bless but has also proposed as one of the most urgent and important tasks of the Cuban Church.

It's clear that the Institute and our collaboration did not begin as a spontaneous creation *ex nihilo*, but rather as the mature fruit of a long process of growth. The Archdiocese of Havana and its San Carlos and San Ambrosio seminary are intimately tied to the formation of the Cuban nation. The seminary was first a school established by the Jesuits at that seminary in the 18<sup>th</sup> century at which a number of Cuban priests also studied. It was there that the famous Felix Varela taught. He was declared Venerable last March and was known for teaching Cubans to think as Cubans. The seminary building, however, was no longer in proper condition to function as a school of formation of seminarians. Consequently, some years ago, Cardinal Jaime decided to construct a new seminary building outside the city of Havana where seminarians could be formed in an environment appropriate for our times. Immediately afterward, a question was raised: What will we do with the old seminary (today known as the *first* San Carlos and San Ambrosio seminary)?

Little by little an idea emerged to transform the building and this historical ecclesiastical institution into the Felix Varela Cultural Center. In a recent interview by the online magazine *Progreso Semanal*, entitled: *Towards a dialectic of dialogue and reconciliation* (*Por una dialéctica del diálogo y la reconciliación*), the rector of this center and of the Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies, Fr. Yosvany Carvajal Sureda, commented on the purpose of both initiatives in these terms: "In this new Cultural Center we want to continue to promote dialogue, which has been fruitful up until now, with the world of culture and its various manifestations. ... Another role of vital importance that the center will have is the formation of Catholic laity, through an Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies which will function within the same Center and which is

ted inseparably to the Center's pastoral mission. Through this institute, we want to form a committed laity within society who from an eminently Christian-Catholic way of thinking can serve as bridges to the intellectual sectors of society within the country. I believe that all of this is possible thanks to the remarkable capacity this building has to attract many people because of its historical and cultural significance." (*in Espacial Laical, online edition, June, n° 183*).

This affirmation of the mission of the Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies which forms part of the wider purpose of the Félix Varela Cultural Center is clear and expresses without ambiguity the cultural, pastoral and evangelizing mission to which our Augustinian Order now wants to commit itself. In one sense, the members of our Augustinian community in Havana, in a new religious and political – cultural situation, will be able to continue the evangelizing

work inspired by the Augustinian charism which our brothers from the Province of St. Thomas of Villanova (USA) had carried forth from 1953 – 1960 at the University of St. Thomas of Villanova of Havana. The circumstances have changed, but it is this same spirit that we are now called to instill in the Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies and the Felix Varela Cultural Center through our presence and our collaboration. Together with St. Augustine and our charism we search for the truth which will make Cuban men and women free, true citizens and reformers of their own country; and for those who are Christian, the truth that will allow them to be authentic and committed disciples of the Lord. This is the mission which Cardinal Jaime, our Archbishop, entrusts to us Augustinians. May this trust be translated now into a firm commitment on our part!

FR. LUCIAN BORG, OSA

## The Augustinian legacy lives on!

# Groundbreaking for a Premier School

The groundbreaking ceremony for a new Colegio San Agustin (CSA) campus in Baranggay Tungkong Mangga, San Jose del Monte, Bulacan took place on August 27, 2012. The traditional ceremony of the laying of the cornerstone symbolizes the formal construction of the school's construction.

Monsignor Andres S. Valera, H.P., Vicar General of Malolos, blessed the grounds and the time capsule set to be opened in 25 years. The Augustinians were led by Fr. Peter Casino OSA, of the Vicariate of the Orient, CSA-Makati Rector Fr. Horacio R. Rodriguez, OSA, Vice-Rector Fr. Julian C. Mazana, OSA and Sister Cecilia Ibana, OSA of the Augustinian Sisters of Our Lady of Consolation. Congressman Arturo Robes and his wife Florida Perez-Robes, representatives of Mayor Reynald San Pedro, joined in the ceremonies.

The 20-hectare Colegio San Agustin-San Jose del Monte (CSA-SJDM) will offer world-class education, catering to different learners, regardless of race, color and creed. Maintaining CSA-Makati's culture of excellence, the new cam-

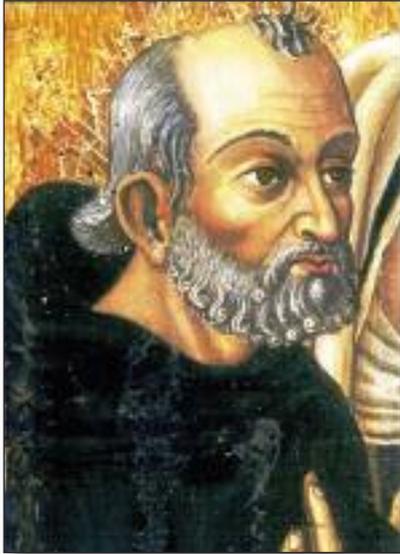
pus will have the following offerings: regular curriculum (K to 12 program), Home Study Program, special education, multicultural education, and specialized sports and arts program.

CSA-SJDM will open in June 2014.



Left to right: Vice-Rector Fr. Julian C. Mazana, OSA, Pro-Vicar of the Vicariate of the Orient Fr. Peter Casino, OSA, Mrs. Irene Marcos Araneña, Mr. Gregorio Araneña III, Rector Fr. Horacio R. Rodriguez, OSA, Board of Trustees Chairperson Ms. Margarita Cojuangco, members of the Board Antonio Cumagun and Eduardo Lopez, Barangay Captain Bernardo Medina, ASOLC Vicar General Sr. Cecilia Ibana, OSA and Architect Ireneo Jasareno.

## BLESSED SIMON RETURNS TO FLORENCE



From the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> of April, 2012, the city of Florence, Italy, was host to one of its celebrated adopted citizens, known in fact, as “the Apostle of Florence,” Blessed Simon Fidati of Cascia. The occasion was a two week series of conferences, liturgies, and celebrations, and the setting was our Basilica of Santo Spirito. The relics of Blessed Simon and of the Eucharistic Miracle which is associated with him, were brought from Cascia where they are ordinarily venerated in the crypt of the Basilica of Saint Rita, to the city where Simon was a frequent visitor and popular preacher.

The relics and the Eucharistic Miracle arrived on the afternoon of Saturday, April 14, as light rain fell, and were solemnly received in the piazza outside the Basilica. Shortly thereafter, the Archbishop of Florence, Cardinal Giuseppe Betori, celebrated the Eucharist. In the course of his homily, he noted, *“We are happy - and are grateful to the Augustinian community of this basilica - to welcome this evening amongst us the body of a Blessed who has given great witness by his life and who has made a strong appeal to the Gospel in our city, Blessed Simon of Cascia. We know how the example of his life and the strength of his preaching made a great appeal for the conversion of 13<sup>th</sup> Century Florence, a society filled with many vices, issuing a call to return to the Gospel and showing how there could emerge from it a deep harmony between personal life and the construction of an ordered civil life. May his presence reawaken in us that missionary impulse which guided his missionary work in Florence and which has its roots in the words which we have heard Jesus direct to his disciples in the Gospel: ‘As the Father has sent me, so I send you’ (Jn 20, 21). This is the mission of believers, the proclamation of reconciliation and peace.”*

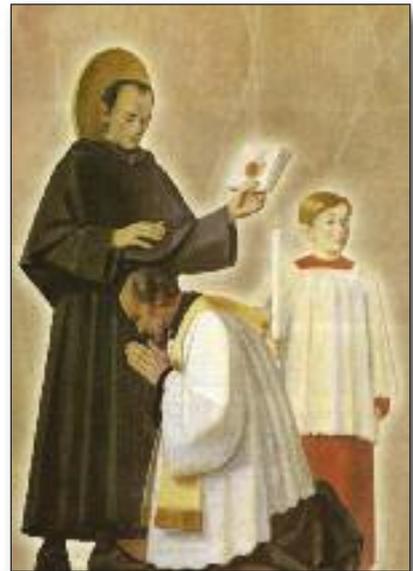
Conferences were offered throughout the period of celebration by several friars and experts. Fr. Willigis Eckermann OSA spoke on the topic, “Blessed Simon as Promoter of Faith through the Proclamation of the Gospel.” On a day especially devoted to priests and prayer for vocations, Bishop Giovanni Scanavino OSA addressed the topic “Blessed Simon: Priesthood and Eucharist.” Fr. Remo Piccolomini OSA, on the day dedicated to consecrated life, used as his theme, “I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” (Gal 2, 19b-20a). On the same day, Professor Francesco Santi addressed the topic, “Cloister and Hermitage: Simon Fidati of Cascia and the new forms of religious life at the beginning of the XIV Century.” Several of these conferences can be found in Italian on the Basilica’s web page:

<http://www.basilicasantospirito.it/category/pubblicazioni-e-contributi/>

Simon was born in Cascia toward the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, a member of the distinguished Fidati family. Initially, he dedicated his energies to the study of the natural sciences, but with a change of heart decided to embrace religious life and to pursue the science of holiness. He entered the Augustinian Order at about the age of 20, and following his formation and studies, became an outstanding preacher and a mas-

ter of the spiritual life in Italy. His book, *The Works of Our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ*, gained a wide readership during the Middle Ages, and his letters reveal his gift as an expert spiritual director. Combined with his acute insights and persuasive style as a preacher, was his love of simplicity and humility in religious life. He refused all honors and titles offered to him, and preferred nothing more than to live a life of contemplation in solitude. Equally persuaded of the importance of obedience, however, he continued to use his gifts in the direct service of others. He founded two monasteries of nuns: that of Saint Elizabeth for former women of ill repute who were converted in great numbers by Simon's preaching, and that of Saint Gaggio. Simon died in Florence on February 2, 1348, a victim of the pestilence which was devastating Europe at the time. Gregory XVI confirmed his cult in 1833. His feast day is observed on February 16.

The Eucharistic Miracle dates to an event that occurred during one of Simon's preaching assignments in Siena. There a priest who was called to administer communion to an infirm person did not place the sacrament in a pyx but hurriedly placed it between the pages of his breviary which mysteriously became stained with blood. When the priest went to confess his lack of reverence to Simon, the latter asked for the two stained pages and brought them, one to the friary of Perugia and the other to his own friary in Cascia. The first disappeared during the time of the Napoleonic suppressions, the second has remained as an object of devotion in Cascia and is carried each year in procession during the Feast of Corpus Christi.



## FLASH

### NEW ASSISTANT GENERAL

Fr. Marfín MICALLEF (Prv. MEL)



### NEW ECONOME GENERAL

Fr. Matthias HECHT (Prv. GER)

### NEW POSTULATOR GENERAL

Fr. Josef SCIBERRAS (Prv. MEL)



## THE FIRST GATHERING OF CONTEMPLATIVE AUGUSTINIANS IN THE PHILIPPINES

The gathering of contemplative Augustinians in the Philippines was held for the first time in the Augustinian Monastery of our Mother of Good Counsel, Bulacan, Philippines from January 31 to February 4, 2012. It was a gathering attended by all the Prioress/Delegate Superiors of the five Augustinian Contemplative Monasteries in the Philippines, plus a Delegate Superior of the Augustinian Monastery of the Holy Trinity in Puerto Bello, Merida, Leyte, Philippines.

The theme was “WALKING AND GROWING TOGETHER, a Memory to Celebrate, a Future to Build Together.” The purpose of such a gathering is “to start a series of annual meetings in order to deepen reciprocal knowledge, consolidate communion, and to focus on the most important aspects for an Augustinian Contemplative presence, clear in its identity”. So, the nuns met to come to know each other better, and to deepen important aspects of their charism in order to be and to give a transparent witness of what they live and believe as Augustinians.

The activity started with a Eucharistic celebration presided over by Fr. Eusebio Berdon, OSA, Prior Provincial of the Province of Cebu. Then, morning and afternoon conferences were held each day with different topics and different invited speakers:

First day: (morning) – Msgr. Bart Santos, a biblical scholar and the Vicar of Religious of the Diocese of Malolos, Bulacan, gave a short introduction on the passage (Acts 4: 32ff.) about the first Christian community in Jerusalem; (afternoon) – Fr. Carlo Bittante, FDCC, gave a talk on Creative Fidelity to one’s Charism and Permanent Formation.

Second day: (morning) – Fr. Lauro Larlar, OAR, gave a talk on the Introduction to the *Ratio Forma-*

*tionis*; (afternoon) – Fr. Andrew Batayola, OSA, gave a talk on the Spirituality of Love in St. Augustine and St. John.

Third day: (morning) – Fr. Eusebio Berdon, OSA, gave a talk on the Augustinian Contemplative Nuns in the Documents of the Order; (afternoon) – The afternoon of the last day was spent in sharing



The participants of the first gathering of Contemplative Augustinians in the Philippines with the Prior Provincial of Cebu, Fr. Eusebio B. Berdon, O.S.A.

and reporting on the nuns’ humble beginnings and development of their respective foundations, and the future prospective of each monastery. Also, the nuns planned for the next gathering to be held sometime in January 2013, the topics to consider, expenses, and the venue of the next gathering.

Fraternal sharing of experiences throughout this first gathering of Augustinian nuns ever held in the Philippines was fully participated by all those who were present. As the nuns returned home, they brought with them, in their hearts, the good tidings to be shared in their respective communities. Looking forward then for the next gathering in January 2013 to be held in the Augustinian Monastery of Santo Niño de Cebu, Mohon, Talisay City.

SR. MA. ELIZABETH MONTUYA, OSA  
*Mother Prioress, Augustinian Monastery of Sto. Niño*

PUBLICATIONS: (in Italian)

## **The Heart of Fr. Marco Tells a Story: 26 years in Apurimac in the Peruvian Andes**

editions Apurimac onlus, Rome 2011, 158 pp. with illustrations.

by Marco Morasca, OSA

The author of this volume, the Augustinian friar, Fr. Marco Morasca, was a missionary for 26 years. From 1977 to 2003, he labored in Apurimac, a region in the Peruvian Andes to the south of Cuzco, one of the most isolated corners of the American continent. Everything there seems to be ancestral, from the mountains to the animals to the population itself. Fr. Marco exerted all his energy, fulfilled his dreams and lived out the most creative years of his life among the people of that land. He would still be there, today, if he did not have to pay the cost of living at the altitudes of the Apurimac region, a territory that rises from 2,800 to 5,500 meters above sea level. Over the years it took its toll, confirming that he is not a native of that land. In 2003, his poor health forced him to return to Italy. However, his heart remained there, in the land of the condor and of the llama. What can we say about his writings? Perhaps, that they are his 'heart's song' to the land and to the people he had to leave; that they are at one time, a memoir, nostalgia, gratitude, a testimony, songs of hope ... a flood of memories and emotions that come back, but perhaps outside of time and outside of space.

Extract from the Foreword by Pietro Bellini.

