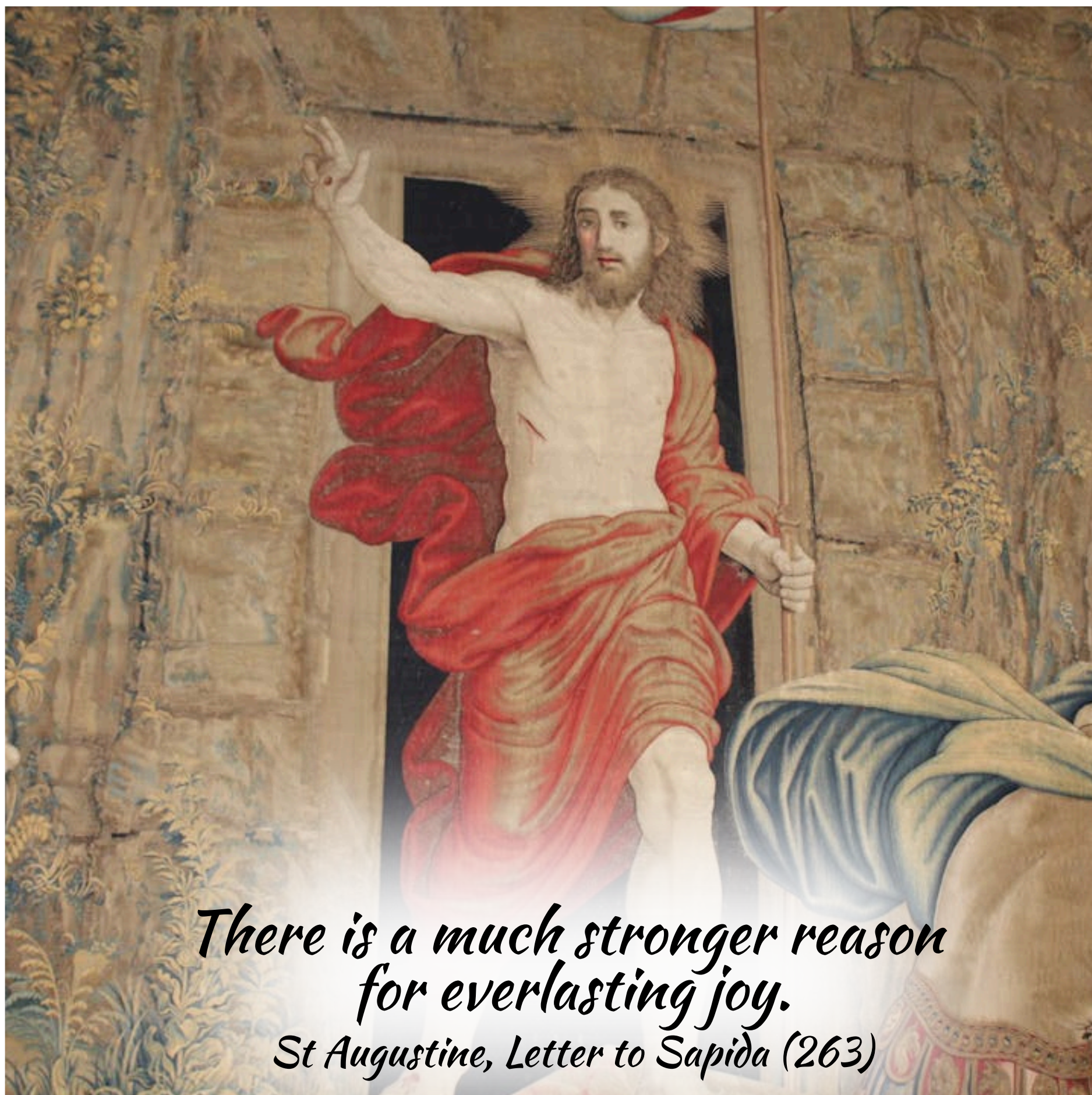




The Augustinian



NEWSLETTER OF THE AUGUSTINIAN PROVINCE OF
OUR MOTHER OF GOOD COUNSEL - AUSTRALASIA



EASTER 2025

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The Augustinian is a twice-yearly publication of the Order of St Augustine in the Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel, Australasia.

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FROM THE PROVINCIAL

At times, what seems like a casual remark from someone else can strike us deeply. Recently, in a conversation focussed on the reality of present challenges, a listener reminded the rest of us that all was not doom and gloom and that we should not close our eyes to the good.

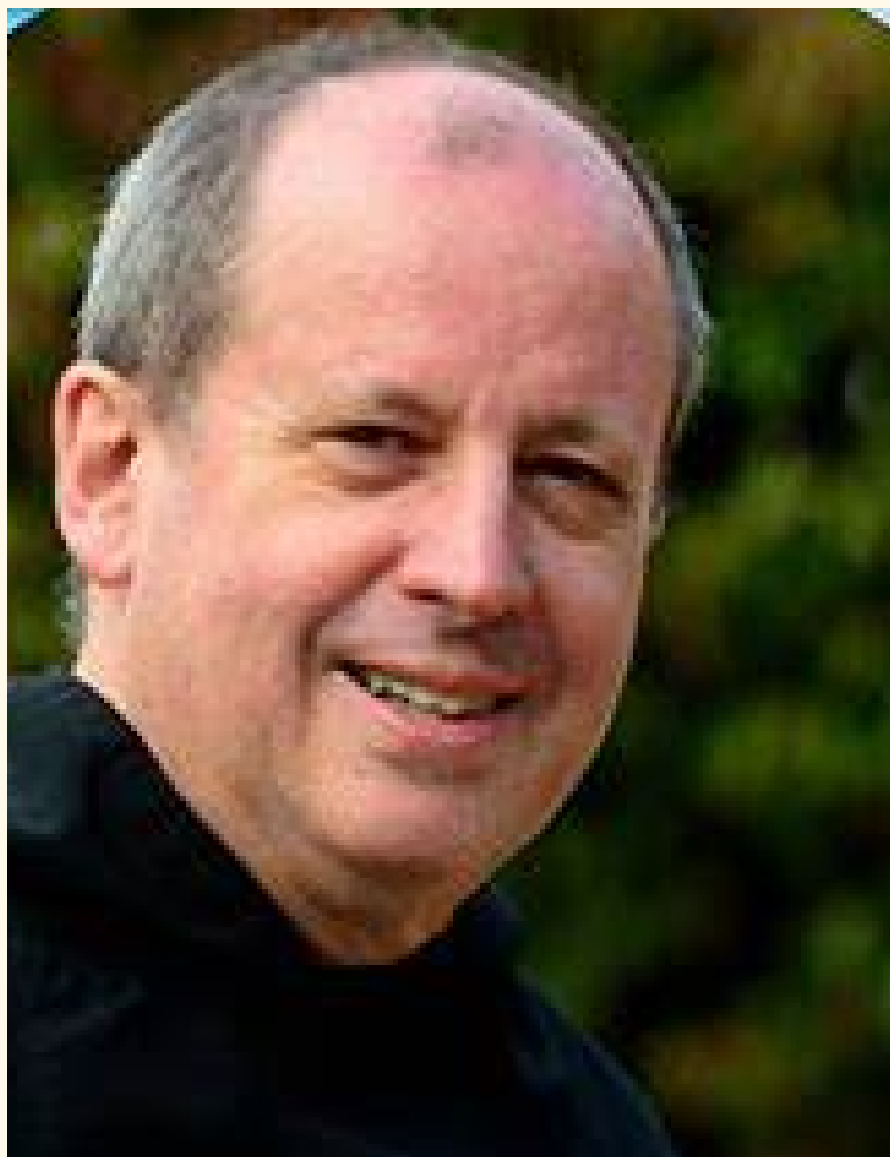
Whatever the merits of the intervention, I understood it is a timely reminder that we should never give up on our Easter faith, which is a precious gift.

Easter calls us as disciples of the Risen Christ to be bearers of life and light. For this to be real, God's grace needs to continually call our souls into the depth of the reality of the Resurrection so that we can share what we have experienced ourselves.

Whether it is the drama of our personal lives, the lives of our families and local communities or the global community, faith in Easter cannot be abandoned. Christ's light shines through and transforms all.

Holy Week is very real in many human situations of suffering that are immediate to us and are plain to see. However, it is Easter, not the Passion, that is the destination of the story.

In the context of the heritage of our charism, Augustine in his ministry would never have forgotten the power of that Easter Vigil in the year 387, when he was baptised together with his friend Alypius and son Adeodatus. In all that would follow, he would continually hold together the reality of our human experience and the certainty of Easter.



On behalf of my brothers in the Augustinian Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel, Australasia, I wish each of you and your families and friends a joyous and peaceful celebration of Easter. You are in the prayers of the members of the Order.

God Bless,
Fr Peter Jones, OSA
Prior Provincial



In deepening our Easter faith, Augustine yet again does not disappoint. Following the Apostle Paul, Augustine's writings are grounded in belief in the bodily resurrection of Christ and explore what that teaches us from a personal up to a universal level. For this brief reflection, let us focus on something personal.

In a beautiful letter to his friend and religious sister Sapida (Letter 263), Augustine gives hope grounded in our Easter faith. Sapida was mourning the death of her beloved brother, a deacon of the Church of Carthage, and she sent her brother's cloak as a gift to Augustine. Sapida had made the cloak by hand and giving it to Augustine was an affectionate gesture. In typical Augustine fashion, he expresses his affection for Sapida and her brother and affirms Sapida for her mourning; saying that even our Lord wept for Lazarus whom he knew he was going to raise him (John 11: 19-35). Yet Augustine then draws Sapida upward saying:

"At the right hand of God, Christ sits, who condescended for us to die, that we, though we were dead, might live, and to secure that no person should fear death as if it were destined to destroy them... Shall not he who sleeps also rise again from sleep?..."

There is therefore no reason for protracted sorrow, since there is a much stronger reason for everlasting joy."

Augustine encourages Sapida to let her grieving until now suffice and let hope and joy, based on Christ's resurrection, manifest itself. And with the brilliance of his rhetorical skill and deep care, Augustine closes the letter on the topic with which he starts, drawing more deeply into the Easter Mystery:

"For if the fact that I now wear (because he could not) the garment which you had woven for your brother yields some comfort to you, how much more full and satisfactory the comfort which you should find in considering that your brother...shall be clothed with incorruption and immortality."

How wonderful the great Augustine is, in the midst of pressing responsibilities, to affirm, draw upward and bring hope to Sapida.

To all of those who have lost loved ones, may Easter be a source of hope and joy.

Ed Maher

If you would like to get in touch with Ed, his email address is edmaher@hotmail.be



MY VOCATION STORY

My vocation story should first be explained through my family. I am the youngest of five sons. I was born into a religious family and was blessed because my parents taught me and my brothers the values of faith, love, and service from a young age. This strong foundation shaped not only my character but also my path in life.

My four older brothers each answered God's call to the priesthood, but in different ways. One became a Vincentian, another a diocesan priest, the third joined the Claretians, and the fourth became an Augustinian. Seeing them serve God and the Church deeply inspired me.

I first learned about the Order of Saint Augustine through my Augustinian brother. When members of the Order visited our house, I felt a strong sense of care in their presence. My connection to the Augustinians grew stronger when I had the opportunity to visit their community in Australia. There, I experienced their hospitality firsthand. The way they welcomed me, supported one another, and lived as a family in faith was truly inspiring. I felt a deep sense of belonging, as if I had found a home. This experience made me reflect more on my own vocation and the possibility that God was calling me to the same path.

These experiences set the fire of my desire to become an Augustinian. After graduating from university, I decided to enter in 2020. I began my formation journey with one year as an aspirant, followed by another year as a postulant, both in Vietnam. These years helped me grow in faith and understand the Augustinian way of life. After that, I joined the novitiate in Cebu, Philippines. This was a time of deeper reflection, prayer, and learning about the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Now, I am in my second year of simple profession and have started studying Theology, preparing myself for the next step in my journey toward the priesthood.

Becoming a priest is not always easy. There are challenges and sacrifices along the way. However, the constant support of my family, the inspiration from my Augustinian brothers, and, above all, God's grace, continue to strengthen me. I trust in His plan and look forward to serving Him and His people with a joyful heart.

Pham Quang Cao, OSA

THE CONGRESS OF THE ORDER OF ST AUGUSTINE



Attending the International Congress, titled "Sub Regula Augustini: The Reception of the Figure and Doctrine of St. Augustine on Religious Life throughout History," was a transformative experience that allowed me to deeply engage with the rich history and dynamic growth of the Order. It was not just a scholarly event but an immersion into the story of the Augustinian tradition – its beginning, reception, and development over centuries. Indeed, the congress allowed me to reflect on the profound ways the Order's story has shaped and continues to shape both the religious world and broader society.

Almost 100 people from the world's five continents attended. There were OSA, OCD, OAR, congregations of religious sisters, and laypeople present. In his opening remark, the Prior General, Most Reverent Father Alejandro Moral Antón O.S.A., reminded us that, as the followers of St. Augustine, we should not live our lives as ones who already know God but rather as searchers who constantly seek God in our daily life. In that way, we are called to read the signs of the times so that we can serve God and His people effectively.

The story of its beginning is not merely about a collection of rules or Canons Regular but about a spirit of community life rooted in charity, humility, and a shared commitment to the common good.

Moreover, the speakers at the congress presented not only the theological foundations of the Augustinian charism, but also the human struggles and experiences that shaped its identity throughout history. Over its history, the Order has not existed without challenges; at times, even, there seemed to be no future. Remaining true to the Augustinian charism and adapting to new contexts, however, were key to its reception and development. Over the centuries, the Augustinians have become an integral part of the broader story of Christian evangelisation, shaping the pastoral and missionary outreach of the Church.

Reflecting on my experience at the congress, I am left with a deep sense of gratitude for being part of this rich story. The Order of St. Augustine's history is not something distant or abstract but is a living, breathing reality that continues to shape the lives of its members, the Church, and the world. And in that ongoing story, each of us has a role to make it known to others and enrich the story of St. Augustine and the Order by our Augustinian way of life.

Fr Pham Quang Tuyen, OSA



TIME AND SPACE CONVERSATIONS: STRENGTHENING BONDS IN THE VILLANOVA COLLEGE COMMUNITY

At Villanova College, we proudly uphold the Augustinian values of humility, restless search for truth, community, interiority and ongoing conversion. These principles were vividly brought to life once again through our annual "Time and Space" event, an initiative that debuted last year and is proudly sponsored by our Parents & Friends Association. This event provides Year 7 boys and their mother or significant mother-figure the opportunity to reflect on the joys and challenges of adolescence, while strengthening their bonds through heartfelt conversations.

Held on February 6th at the College in Goold Hall and various classrooms, the Year 7 Mother/Mother-Figure and Son event was a thoughtfully structured program, facilitated by Rachel Dunstan of Time and Space. For over two hours, participants engaged in a series of guided conversations, culminating in a one-on-one dialogue between mothers and sons. The beauty of this program lies in its simplicity and power—it is not a lecture, but rather an interactive, deeply personal experience that fosters genuine connection. The presence of older students and parents as facilitators enriched the experience, helping guide these conversations and ensuring that all families, felt welcome and supported.

The highlight of the evening was witnessing the profound impact these conversations had on both mothers and sons. The vulnerability, understanding, and newfound appreciation that emerged between family members was truly moving. As students continue their journey at Villanova College, such moments of reflection and connection become essential touchstones, reinforcing the strong, Augustinian faith-filled community we aim to cultivate.

A Transformative Experience

The feedback from the evening highlights the event's profound significance. Mothers, mentors, and facilitators shared sentiments such as:

"A beautiful time to communicate with my child, sharing and discovering more about him."

"I was blown away by the vulnerability of the boys. They were so open and insightful."

"It was an incredibly special evening, allowing us to discuss things we wouldn't normally talk about."

The students also shared their reflections:

"It was a great time to spend with my special person, and it made us feel closer."

"I'll always come back to this and never forget it —this has changed my whole mindset."

"It was a good way to open up to my mum and see what's important to her."

This initiative aligns seamlessly with our mission at Villanova College—where education is the formation of the whole person within a faith community. As we look forward to our inaugural Year 8 Father/Father-Figure and Son event, we hope to continue fostering meaningful connections that will support our students in their journey of growth and self-discovery in our Augustinian community.

Through events like Time and Space, we embrace the wisdom of St. Augustine, who taught that true understanding comes from looking inward and sharing our hearts with those around us. May these moments of connection and reflection continue to strengthen the Villanova College family in faith, love, and unity.

Mrs Eleni Greenaway
Dean of Mission and Identity,
Villanova College



VILLANOVA COLLEGE BREAKS NEW GROUND

College leaders have broken new ground on a state-of-the-art hall and STEM precinct at Villanova College, Coorparoo, on Thursday, April 3.

It will be the most significant capital project in the college's history.

Priests from the Augustinian Order around Australasia province joined college principal Paul Begg and students leaders to mark the occasion, blessing and turning the sod on the project.

"The Great Hall & STEM Precinct is a significant step forward for Villanova College, not just in terms of facilities, but in how we continue to grow as a learning community," Mr Begg said.

"Grounded in the Augustinian tradition, this project reflects our shared commitment to providing a space where students can gather, explore, collaborate, and belong.

"This project will stand as a legacy of faith, learning, and unity for decades to come."

The hall and precinct will deliver cutting-edge STEM facilities, a purpose-built learning centre, and a versatile indoor space for sport, performance, and community events.

The new precinct will feature:

- Great Hall with a double basketball court
- International-level multi-purpose hall, with a seating capacity of 2,132 seats during full College assembly.
- Eight STEM labs with prep rooms
- Strength & performance gym
- Outdoor study spaces & rooftop terrace
- Kiosk, commercial kitchen & function spaces



Among the many community guests who gathered for the occasion were several members of the Augustinian Order, including: Australasia provincial Fr Peter Jones, former chaplain Fr Peter Wieneke, chaplain Fr Saldie Resolado, Villanova prior Fr John Sullivan, St James parish priest Fr Francis Belcina, assistant priest Fr Anson Kalathiparambil, and provincial council members Fr Brian Buckley, Fr Michael Belonio and Fr Percival Severe.

Article written by Joe Higgins and published in The Catholic Leader.

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SPIRITUALITY AT ST AUGUSTINE'S COLLEGE

St Augustine's College Brookvale has begun the 2025 school year with a particular focus on humility. This mission theme or focus was highlighted and emphasised on Ash Wednesday, when our newly appointed Head of Liturgy and Retreats, Amelia Granturco, arranged beautiful and meaningful experiences to mark the beginning of Lent. Fr Senan Ward OSA and Fr Tan Hoang OSA presided over these special services.

Amelia brings a wealth of experience in the liturgy and music space and recently received a special blessing from Broken Bay Bishop Anthony Randazzo to empower and strengthen her journey in Catholic Education. In addition to Amelia's blessing, Bishop Anthony Randazzo blessed and presented certificates to long-serving staff members of St Augustine's College. We congratulated and acknowledged Franca Hardwick, Ilona Welch, David Anglicas, and Faith Ling for 25 years of service, and Ron Asser for 35 years of service.

Our first Youth Mass at St Kieran's Parish, Manly Vale, was a wonderful example of how parish and school life can grow together. There was a pleasing number of boys from St Augustine's College and girls from Stella Maris College, Manly, who participated in music and reading ministries. After the Sunday evening Mass, the girls and boys stayed for a sausage sizzle and socialized in the Parish Hall.



Faith Ling and Franca Hardwick receiving their awards from Bishop Anthony.



FAREWELL KAY - AND THANK YOU!

These words are taken from Fr Peter Jones, Prior Provincial's speech at Kay's farewell on Friday, 28 February.

This is an occasion of happiness as we share in Kay's well earned rest, happiness and health in the years ahead - but also acknowledging the natural sadness of letting go both for Kay and the Province.

Kay - began work with us in February 1995 - 30 years ago - an extraordinary period of service. Initially working in the simple facilities of 35 Federal Parade (site of present Brimson Centre at Saint Augustine's College) before moving to the newly acquired 44 Alfred Road in 2002.

Kay has served the Province with 5 Provincials for whom each, even with the diversity of approach, Kay was equal in terms of commitment and friendship. We acknowledge prayerfully Laurie Mooney, who employed Kay, and Pat Fahey. We are so glad that Tony Banks and Dave Austin are with us this evening.

However, it was the whole Province that Kay served. Not only the Province but also those associated with Order. It did not take long for Kay to become known by the whole Province and laity associated with the Province. All came to appreciate her friendly disposition and readiness to help.

It is wonderful to have Kay's family with us this evening - and we prayerfully remember Ron who quickly became a good friend to many of us. The joys and sadnesses of the OSAs and of the Stenner family were mutually shared in so many ways over the years. In all of this we carried each other. In various ways, according to respective areas of expertise, other members of the family helped us - Ron with construction advice at the initial renovations of 44 Alfred in 2002, Jonathan then Brendan in IT, Ethan as he grew became a great support in the office and eventually in IT. Carter when Kay would collect him from school brought joy and energy to the seriousness of the Province office.

KAY...

IN HER OWN WORDS!

Initially, Kay expected that the job was at St Augustine's College with lots of holidays, but after interviews with Fr Laurie Mooney and meeting the Provincial Council...

"I thought, I like this mob!"

Early hopes...

'I would like to bring to the job helping you so that you can help others.'

An early challenge...

'No one knew what I was supposed to do because no one had ever done it before!'

An early highlight...

'Working out of the house on Federal Parade with one filing cabinet!'

A unique journey...

'Having 5 Provincials, all different, all amazing really, but so different... so I felt as though I'd put a different hat on for each one... remaining who I am... I could come to work and just be myself!'

Kay's parting wish for the Augustinians...

'I wish that you could bear some more fruit because this Order is amazing... what St Augustine says in his life applies now and the humility of it all... We're all on the same level and trying to do the right thing... trying to teach people, to pass on to people a bit of spirituality and that's what the Augustinians have and it's still not known enough.... It's a great Order!'

Kay's final words...

'Thank you for having me!'



I mentioned the Provincials - there were also a range of Provincial Secretaries, Bursars and Counsellors as well as Editors of the PNL, The Augustinian and National Chaplains of Friends of the Augustinians. They came and went - the constant was Kay.

When Kay began it was a staff of one. Changing needs has led to the wonderful team we have today. It is a happy team and all the staff would acknowledge the centrality of Kay.

Kay has consistently liaised well with our ministries and lay associations and affiliates. Several representatives of these are here this evening. Kay developed friendships among our business suppliers.

After several years of Kay's relationship with us, herself and Ron were affiliated to the Order.

Kay has been the very human public face of the Province administration. More than what she has done, which is considerable, it is her presence among us that I would most like to acknowledge, celebrate and give thanks.

Kay, we wish you well - and your friendship with the Augustinians will continue as you embark on this new stage of life's journey.

Fr Peter Jones OSA
Prior Provincial



Friends has sought to bring together those who desire to learn about Augustinian spirituality and more importantly explore ways to live as authentic Christians in a secular society. *Friends of St Augustine - an appreciation, pg. 134.*

Ideas from within the Australian Augustinian family of 1999 and, more particularly, a yearning from young lay people, all contributed to the formation of a lay movement which seeks to celebrate a genuine affection for, and love of the Augustinian ideals of friendship and seeking God together.

The Australian Provincial at the time, Fr Pat Fahey OSA, wrote, "We welcome the establishment of Friends as a means of spreading the reign of God through the medium of Augustinian spirituality."

Groups were soon formed at Manly Vale and St Clair in NSW, at Echuca, Kyabram and South Yarra in Victoria, along with Coorparoo and Mareeba in Queensland, and later on there were friends in Newcastle and Western Australia. Memories include those happy times when groups were visited by Paul Maloney OSA and Laurie Mooney OSA. So many Augustinians, especially Parish priests, have always given strong support and encouragement to each local group of the movement.

Twenty-five years on, with an Augustinian presence in fewer parishes, interest in and an eagerness to explore Augustinian spirituality has continued to be appreciated and nurtured at North Harbour, St Clair, Coorparoo, South Yarra and Mareeba, with faith-filled people from Cairns & the Gold Coast taking up an invitation offered to them by Fr Saldie Resolado OSA to be part of Friends and the Augustinian family.

Amici (FOSA Newsletter) prepared by our National Leaders, and the Prayer Resource prepared by our National Chaplain, continue to be sent to a wider community of friends, with copies mailed to 90 and emailed to 140 addresses. In their role as National Chaplains, both Paul Maloney OSA and Dave Austin OSA have offered generous, spiritual nourishment for FOSA members/readers.

So far, every third year a National Congress has provided friends and others with the opportunity of coming together from across Australia, in friendship and by way of learning ever more about the spirituality of Augustine. Gatherings have been in Echuca 2001, Manly Vale in 2004, South Yarra in 2007, Brisbane in 2010 and 2013. Then the idea of a Travelling Congress emerged in 2016 and 2019, proving useful to a wider audience. Sydney leadership then arranged the 2023 Congress in Brisbane. Who knows what might happen in 2026? Watch this space!

Every six years, international gatherings for Augustinian laity have brought together *Friends* from around the world and have been times of great excitement and nourishment for those able to attend.

Since 2016, Maureen Atkins, as Formation Coordinator and following advice from local leaders, has prepared Formation material for each local group. A wonderful contribution!

The specially commissioned jug and bowl (see previous page), a symbol of service, has been seen as a fitting way of indicating the kind of leadership which best suits FOSA.

Current National Co-Leaders Judith Duncan and Mary McCormick, very aware of this responsibility, are eager to welcome anyone interested in and curious about the spirituality generated by Augustine of Hippo.



Become an Augustinian Friend!

MEMBERSHIP/ENQUIRIES: JUDITH DUNCAN (JUDITHPDUNCAN@OUTLOOK.COM)
OR MARY MCCORMICK (MARY_MCCORMICK@BIGPOND.COM)

AUGUSTINIAN FORMATION ASSOCIATION



On 11 February 2025, the Augustinian Formation Association (AFA) in Sydney held its Annual General Meeting, where a new committee was elected for 2025. I am happy and honoured to be re-elected as President for another year and I would like to thank Anna Heath and Honorine Jarkey who will again hold their positions as Treasurer and Secretary respectively. The remaining members of the 2025 AFA Committee are Carmen Miners, Liz Lovell, Stella Baihn, Kaye Coates, Michael Halloway, Trudi McFadden, Caroline Tessandier, Yvonne Rein, Jenny Mirabito, Ann Hayes, Fatima Reyes, and Sol Roxas, and we welcome a new member, Eileen Le Phan. We look forward to another wonderful year with Fr Michael Sullivan OSA as our spiritual leader and friend supporting our Augustinian seminarians.

Unfortunately, due to bad weather the annual Sue Colwell Fun Walk & Talk fundraiser did not go ahead on Sunday, 30 March. AFA would like to thank everyone who donated monies and gave sponsorship monies for walkers during the 2 weeks before the scheduled walk. Donations are still welcomed by direct deposit. The details of AFA's account are:

Name: Augustinian Formation Association

BSB No: 032190 Account No: 105386

Ref: (Surname) Fun Walk.

Also, yearly membership fees of \$30 are now due and can also be deposited into AFA's account (a copy of the Annual Family Membership form is inserted in this edition of The Augustinian). AFA's next fundraising event will be the Christmas in July Dinner on Saturday, 19 July at the Parish Centre at Manly Vale, which will be a popular and fun night. All are welcome to attend, and further details will be forthcoming.

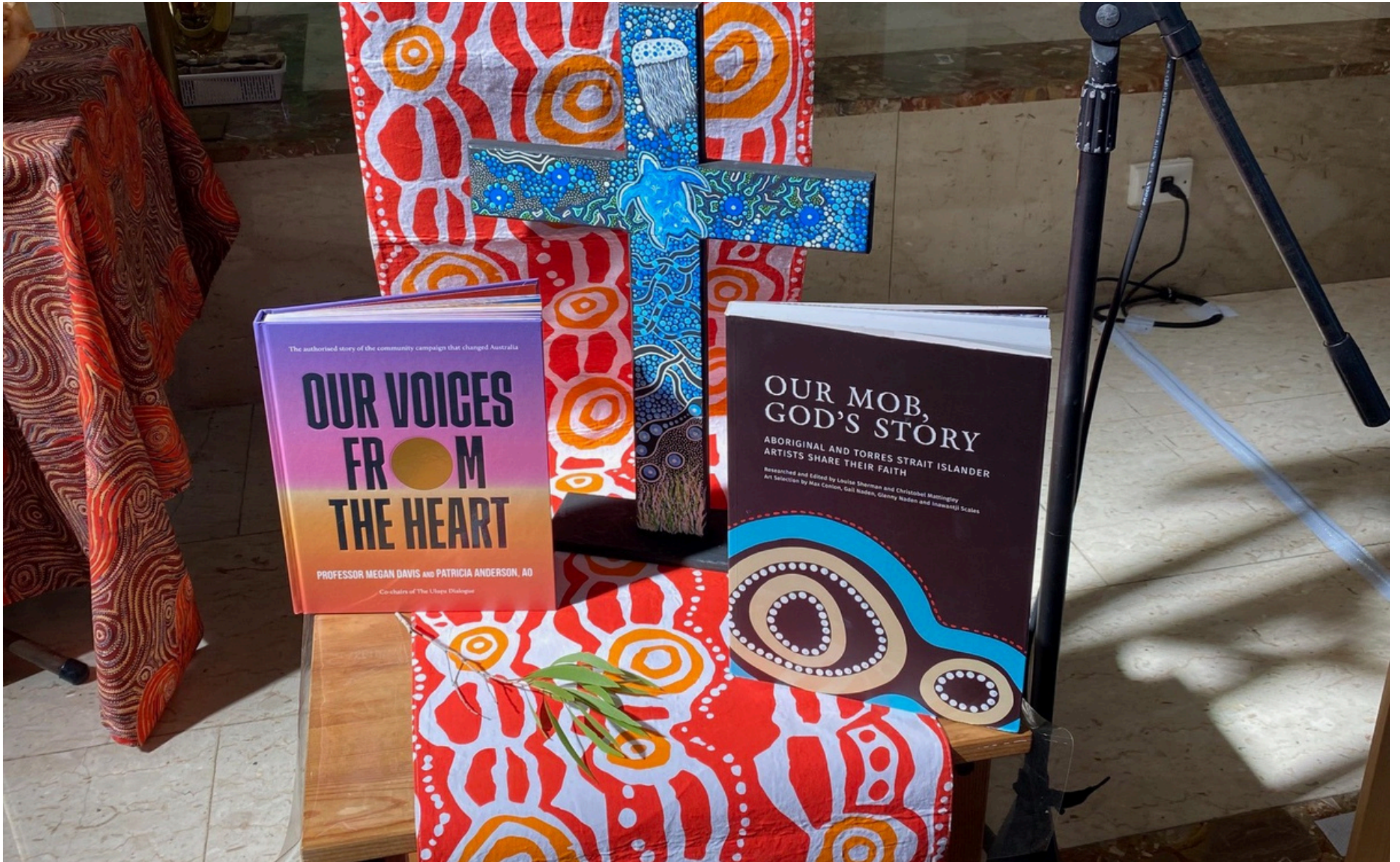
On behalf of all the AFA committee members I would like to wish all AFA members and friends a very Happy Easter filled with joy & peace.

God Bless

Adriana Bowyer (AFA President)

Pictured: Some of the AFA committee members with Fr Michael Sullivan, Fr Tu and his parents. Fr Tu celebrated a special Thanksgiving Mass for the AFA committee members at the Chapel at Brookvale before he left for Vietnam

ST JAMES' TAKES STEP TOWARDS RECONCILIATION



On the weekend of 8-9 February, the Parish of St James' Coorparoo implemented its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). A RAP is a formal commitment to reconciliation that shows how an organisation will strengthen relationships, foster respect, and nurture opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

With the implementation of its RAP, St James's Parish is among the first ten parishes in Brisbane to move towards formal reconciliation. The Archbishop of Brisbane, Mark Coleridge, described reconciliation as the concrete expression of listening, learning and loving. "It is [not] even enough just to love unless the love becomes action", he said. "So, we commit ourselves to that action; the action which takes concrete shape in the reconciliation plan."

The launch took place during all Sunday Masses, with a special Mass held on Sunday, 9 February at 9:00AM. This Mass was preceded by a smoking ceremony, which was used as a cultural blessing for the launch of the Parish RAP, on behalf of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living within the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

The Mass also included a Blessing through Water, which is an ancient ritual connecting the spirit of Aboriginal peoples today with those of their ancestors, and the Presentation of the Gifts drew on physical and spiritual connections to Mother Earth, the waters and the environment. Important Aboriginal cultural symbols, artwork, and a didgeridoo were prominent features of the ceremony.