

PRESENZA AGOSTINIANA

Digital Edition

July / October 2025 - no 4

CONVENTION

The Sources
of our Spirituality

SPECIAL ISSUE



OAD SPIRITUALITY

Primary and Historical Sources

CONSTITUTIONS AND DIRECTORY

Regulatory Codes
for living our Spirituality

RITUAL

Liturgical Celebration
of our Spirituality

COMPLEMENTARY SOURCES

Living Expressions
of our Spirituality





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Confreres gathered in the Basilica of Santo Stefano Rotondo in Rome for the paraliturgy of renewal of vows

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EDITORIAL

Special Issue: Convention on the Sources of our Spirituality

Dear readers,

with great joy we present this special issue of *Presenza Agostiniana*, entirely dedicated to the Convention on the Sources of Our Spirituality, held in Rome from October 6 to 10, 2025.

This initiative, requested by the most recent General Chapter of 2023, arose from the need to rediscover and value the most authentic roots of our identity as Discalced Augustinians.

The General Curia, in dialogue with the Provinces, worked diligently to make possible a single trilingual conference (Italian, English, and Portuguese), so that brothers from every part of the world might share a common experience of formation, communion, and pilgrimage.

The members of the General Curia worked to make the Convention as well-organized and welcoming as possible:

- Fr. Diones Rafael Paganotto moderated and guided the conferences on October 6–7;
- Fr. Nei Márcio Simon, Prior General, guided the Jubilee moments in the Vatican on October 8–9;
- Fr. Dennis Ruiz prepared the paralyurgy for the renewal of vows at the Basilica of Santo Stefano Rotondo on October 8;
- Fr. Airtón Mainardi coordinated the concluding pilgrimage to Batignano, following in the footsteps of the Venerable Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci, on October 10.

The first days of the Convention unfolded along a rich path: moments of study,

rediscovering the traditional and complementary sources of our spirituality: Sacred Scripture, the writings of Saint Augustine, the *Constitutions*, the *Directory*, the *Ritual*, the journal *Presenza Agostiniana*, the *Liturgical Calendar*, the General Archive, the *Analecta Ordinis*, the website oadnet.org, and the *Ratio Generalis Institutionis*.

Participation in the Jubilee celebrations, in full ecclesial communion with consecrated life throughout the world — especially through the encounter with Pope Leo XIV — was deeply felt, since our charism must be lived within the Church of today, inserted in the contemporary world.

The pilgrimage in the footsteps of the Venerable Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci allowed us to “touch with our hands” the witness of those who came before us, rediscovering their dedication to living the Discalced Augustinian charism.

Each Province was able to send eight participants to the Convention, which also included religious sisters and consecrated women who share our spirituality. Participants came from Paraguay, Brazil, Cameroon, Congo, Italy, the Philippines, and Vietnam, making the experience both international and fraternal.

This rich diversity fostered precious moments of dialogue and sharing, especially during the group work sessions of the conferences, where languages, cultures, and journeys met within the one Discalced Augustinian identity.

This special issue offers readers the opportunity to read the full conferences and to retrace the moments lived together — as a fruitful memory and a source of renewed inspiration.

To draw continually from the living Source, which is Christ, according to the Discalced Augustinian charism, is what preserves our identity and keeps our mission ever fruitful in the Church.

We hope that these pages will help each confrere, community, and apostolic reality to draw joyfully from the Sources of our Spirituality, continuing to know our history and to accompany the formative journey in the present and in the future.

Happy reading.





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AUGUSTINIAN DISCALCED SPIRITUALITY

Primary and Historical Sources of our Spirituality



Abstract: the article offers a synthesis of Augustinian spirituality, structured in three parts: 1) the Primary Sources — the Gospel and the writings of Saint Augustine — as the foundation of our identity; 2) the Historical Sources, including the Index of the Works of the

Discalced Augustinians (published in 1982), together with confreres and gatherings that have marked our history and spirituality; 3) the Contemporary relevance of Augustinian identity, strengthened after the election of Leo XIV and as a living sign of the Augustinian charism in the Church.

1. Introductory Reflections: the Meaning of History

Some Augustinian quotations help to introduce the sense and importance of the theme of the Convention dedicated to the Sources of our Spirituality.

1.1 Some Augustinian Quotations

The first is taken from the *City of God*, where he emphasizes the need to maintain a constant and unified vision between

the beginning and the end of a work:



Whoever undertakes a work must keep both its beginning and its end in view; for in every movement of action, if one does not turn back to regard the beginning, one cannot rightly order the end. It is therefore necessary that the intention which moves forward be sustained by the memory that looks backward; for if one forgets having begun the work, one will not find the way to bring it to completion.

(De civ. Dei 7,7)

The second quotation is taken from the *Confessions*, where Saint Augustine, speaking about time, defines it as a distension of the soul: **the present of the past, the present of the present, and the present of the future.**

“One fact is now clear and evident: neither the future nor the past exists. It is inaccurate to say that there are three times — past, present, and future.

Perhaps it would be more correct to say that there are three times: the present of things past, the present of things present, and the present of things future.

These three kinds of time exist somehow in the soul, and I do not see them anywhere else: the present of things past is memory, the present of things present is direct sight, and the present of things future is expectation.

Allow me these expressions, and I see and acknowledge three times — indeed, there are three.

Still, let it be said that there are three times: past, present, and future — as the conventional, though inaccurate, usage allows; let it be said so, I do not object or reproach anyone, provided one understands what is meant: that the future is not yet, and the past no longer is. We rarely speak with precision; most often we speak imprecisely, yet we are understood in what we mean.

(Confess. 11,20,26)

1.2 The Theology of History

These quotations clearly show the breadth of Saint Augustine's horizons, as a theologian of history, and his characteristic way of addressing problems.

It was precisely within the theological perspective of the **history of salvation** that the Saint read, in the *Confessions*, his personal journey, and in the *City of God*, the universal one; and it was in the balance between memory of the past and expectation of the future, between analytical work and synthetic vision, that he dealt with the concrete themes of Christian life.

He was convinced that neither of the two elements should ever be excluded: neither the return to the origins nor the expectation of fulfillment; neither the analysis of particulars nor the overall vision; neither the use of reason nor the contribution of faith; neither the human dimension nor the spiritual one.

Beauty, in fact, arises from the convergence of all parts within the harmony



Fr. Gabriele Ferlisi during his lecture

of unity. On the contrary, any partial vision that does not converge toward the harmony of unity proves to be a reductive, and therefore incomplete and deficient, vision.

1.3 Life inserted into History

Also fitting here is that reflection found in the work *The Trinity*, where Augustine offers, in a comprehensive and synthetic way, the parameters for a truly wise conduct:



Contra rationem nemo sobrius, contra Scripturas nemo christianus, contra Ecclesiam nemo pacificus senserit.

Good sense will never go against reason; Christian understanding will never go against the Scriptures; and the sense of peace will never go against the Church.

(De Trin. 4,6,10)

No person and no institution can think of carrying out a life project without constantly measuring themselves against:

- 1) Reason, that is, in its broadest sense, against intelligence, wisdom, interiority, and good sense;
- 2) the Scriptures, that is, the Word of God, Revelation, and faith;
- 3) the Church, that is, authority, the Magisterium, and the total Christ.

1.4 Our Order within History

It is within this same Augustinian perspective that we are called to move regarding the history of the Order.

Indeed, a **history of the Order** without memory of its origins lacks a project, becomes detached from its roots, and possesses neither present nor future. Likewise, a history of the Order without a sense of future lacks a true project fruitful in vitality — it becomes lost and dries up in trivial improvisations empty of meaning.

History is truly history when it is a project, and a project is truly such when, in its entirety, it is a synthesis of yesterday,

today, and tomorrow; of memory of the sources, of the future of prophecy, and of the *kairos* of the present of salvation.

A project is genuine when it becomes a path of “**creative fidelity**,” in response to God’s initiative. It is true, in fact, that the journey begins with God, not with man; but man is called to let himself be involved so as to walk with God and to write, together with Him — with many hands, God’s, ours, and our brothers’ — his own history of love.

Yet for this collaboration, man needs to nourish himself at the sources of written and oral tradition, to be incarnated in the present, and to project himself toward the mature fruits of the Spirit.

1.5 An Important Clarification

It is worth adding an important clarification: we must be careful not to fall into the subtle chronological trap that attributes to the elderly a strong attachment to the past and to the young a special openness to the future. This is not always true.

In fact, there are elderly people according to age who are “young in another way,” open to the future, to hope, and to optimism; and there are young people according to age who are “old in another way,” lacking enthusiasm, without spiritual energy, extinguished.

2. The Primary Sources of our Spirituality

Given that **Christ** Himself is the permanent point of reference and the supreme and ever-new law, both on the personal and on the communal and ecclesial level, we can identify the Primary Sources of our Spirituality:

- a) in Sacred Scripture, whose heart is the Gospel;
- b) in the writings of Saint Augustine, whose core is the Rule.

2.1 The Gospel, Rule of All Christians

The Gospel is the fundamental rule of life for all Christians, religious, Institutes of consecrated life, Movements, Associations, and for the Church itself — this is clear to everyone. For this reason, we are all invited to read it, or rather, to ruminate upon it (Enarr. in Ps. 141,1) and to incarnate it in the daily reality of life. Thus prayed Saint Augustine:



Let Your Scriptures be my chaste delight; let me not be deceived in them, nor deceive others by them.

(Confess. 11,2,3)

2.2 The Works of Saint Augustine

The works of Saint Augustine are the primary source of our Augustinian spirituality. This statement may not seem equally evident, also because, lacking for many centuries a translation from Latin into modern languages, they remained inaccessible for a long time.

Today, however, with the Italian translation completed and others well underway, there is a growing conviction that his works must be considered the primary source of our spirituality.

a) Importance of the Rule

The *Rule*, which Saint Augustine instructs us to read once a week, when read in its context, appears more clearly — according to scholars — as a synthesis of Saint Augustine's thought and spirituality, as well as an invitation to return to the origins of the Augustinian project in order to verify our fidelity.



So that you may look into this little book as into a mirror and thus neglect nothing through forgetfulness, let it be read to you once each week. If you find yourselves fulfilling all that is written in it, give thanks to the Lord, the giver of every good. But if anyone perceives that he has failed in something, let him be sorry for what is past, take precautions for what

is to come, and pray that his debt may be forgiven and that he may not be led into temptation again.

(Reg. 8,2)

In any case, it is worth recalling that Augustine himself first gave the example of rereading his own works: at the end of his life, having read them all again, he critically noted the necessary corrections, which he collected in the two volumes of the *Retractions*.

b) The Opera Omnia

The *Opera Omnia* of Saint Augustine, in a bilingual Latin-Italian edition (**NBA - Nuova Biblioteca Agostiniana**) and published by Publishing Città Nuova, was the first complete collection published containing all of Saint Augustine's works. The publication comprises 69 volumes and is complete.

Nearly everything Augustine wrote is available in **English** in some form, but not all works have modern, accessible, scholarly translations yet — but the New City Press project is close to finishing a complete set in English.

The publication plan is divided into **five parts**:

1. Books: autobiographical works; philosophical-dogmatic; pastoral; exegetical; polemical.
2. Letters: a total of 270, to which are added 29 Supplementary Letters (recently discovered).
3. Sermons: divided into *Commentary on the Gospel of John and on the First Letter of John*; *Exposition on the Psalms*; *Sermons on the Old Testament*; *Sermons on the New Testament*; *Sermons on the Liturgical Seasons*; *Sermons on the Saints*; *Sermons on various topics*; *New Sermons* (recently discovered).

4. Attributed Works: writings whose authorship by Saint Augustine is not entirely certain.
5. Supplementary Volumes: 7 volumes containing, respectively: *The Life of Saint Augustine* written by Saint Possidius; the *Augustinian Bibliography*; the *Augustinian Iconography*; the *Scriptural Index*; the *Analytical Index*; and the *General Index*.

In addition to the printed edition, it is possible to access the works of Saint Augustine freely **online** at:

augustinus.it

Sant'Agostino

Augustinus Hipponensis



This website provides the Latin, Italian, and Spanish editions. A search engine allows users to navigate and locate individual texts easily.

There also exists, published jointly by the NBA and Publishing Città Nuova, a printed series entitled **Piccola Biblioteca Agostiniana**.

This series does not contain the complete works of Saint Augustine but gathers passages from his writings organized around specific themes. Two volumes of this collection (XVI/1 – XVI/2), which deal with the anti-Donatist works, were prepared — with introduction, translation, and notes — by our confrere Fr. Eugenio Cavallari.

3. The Historical Sources of our Spirituality

Bibliographical Index of the Discalced Augustinians (1982), by Fr. Flaviano Luciani

To the Primary Sources must be added the more Specific Sources of our Spirituality. In this regard, we are greatly assisted by the work carried out in 1982 by our confrere Fr. Flaviano Luciani, published as a special issue of the journal *Presenza Agostiniana* – vol. 52 (1982, no. 4).

To this day, this volume remains the most comprehensive bibliographical collection of sources and studies on Discalced Augustinian spirituality.

3.1 Structure of the Issue

After indicating the bibliography consulted, Fr. Flaviano organized his work by subject into 11 sections:

1. Spirituality: General Sources
2. Spirituality: Studies
3. History
4. Philosophy and Theology
5. Sacred Scripture
6. Mariology

Flaviano Luciani, OAD

Indice bibliografico degli Agostiniani Scalzi

Numero speciale di
Presenza Agostiniana

4

Luglio-Agosto 1982



7. Oratory
8. Hagiography
9. Missions
10. Literature
11. Sciences

Regarding the Spirituality: General Sources, he subdivided them into:

- *Constitutions*
- *Ceremonial*
- Bulls – Acts
- Instructions
- Study Schemes for the Revision of the Constitutions
- Chronicles – Memoirs
- Missions
- Registers of Vestitions and Professions
- Registers of Deceased Religious
- Journals
- Booklets
- Postulation

In the Index of Authors, at the end of the volume, he listed 233 names, arranged alphabetically by first name, not by surname. For each author, he provided — whenever available — the place and date of birth and death. Likewise, for each work, he indicated the date and

place of publication known to him.

As for the manuscripts, he noted, as far as possible, the location where they are kept or where they should be found. Indeed, it is quite probable that many manuscripts are — or should be — preserved in State, Municipal, or Diocesan Archives, and at times also in Archives of former aristocratic families and in public libraries.

Not to mention that many manuscripts may have been lost forever, for during the periods of suppression, when the Religious left their communities, many took documents and manuscripts with them, which consequently became dispersed and perhaps even destroyed.

3.2 Importance of the Issue

Beyond these technical details — which are of great importance for framing the theme of this presentation, namely, the objective uniqueness of our sources and the studies concerning them — there are also other valuable reflections that Fr. Flaviano outlined in the *Preface* of the same work:



English Language Group

In their four centuries of history, the Discalced Augustinians have been devoted more to the pastoral and sacramental apostolate (Word of God, spiritual direction, confessions, and assistance to the poor and the sick) than to the apostolate of the pen.

It is right for us to ask: **Why this choice?** The answer lies in the decision of our first confreres to resist the unrestrained pursuit of academic degrees, which had been one of the causes of disciplinary decline and religious laxity within the Augustinian Order.

For this very reason, our Fathers decided **to remove** from the first *Constitutions*, drafted in 1598, the Fourth and Fifth Parts, which dealt with academic studies and the governance of nuns, and to replace them with two new Chapters: one on Studies and one on the Office of the Preacher.

Nevertheless, as shown by the *Bibliographical Index*, there was no lack of those who made writing a precious instrument of their apostolate. It would be worthwhile here to pause and reflect on some of these sources or studies; however, that would require time we do not have.

4. *Bibliographical Index to Be Updated: the Value of Augustinian Identity*

4.1 *In the Wake of Events*

Today, the *Bibliographical Index*, in view of the rapid succession of so many events within and beyond the Order, needs to be updated.

One need only think, for instance, of:

- the abundant material produced on the occasion of the 16th Centenary of the Conversion of Augustine and the 4th Centenary of our Reform;
- the momentum given to studies and deepening of doctrine and spir-

ituality by the monu-

mental editorial and

cultural project of the translation of the works of Saint Augustine, which made direct reading possible;

- the interest generated by the ongoing revision of the *Constitutions*, *Directory*, and *Ratio Generalis Institutionis*;
- the *Augustinian Missal* and the *Proper of the Liturgy of the Hours*, prepared together with the other Augustinian Families;
- the publication of the new *Code of Canon Law* (1983);
- the deepening of Consecrated Life, promoted by the Synod of Bishops on Consecrated Life (1994) and by Saint John Paul II's post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* (1996);
- the spiritual fervor generated by the decades-long, ongoing celebration of Augustinian Spiritual Exercises and Augustinian Formation Courses;
- the steady formation and information service provided by the bimonthly journal *Presenza Agostiniana* with its special issues;
- the series *Notebooks of Augustinian Spirituality*, prepared by the Secretariat for Formation and Spirituality;
- the opening of new horizons brought about by the expansion of the Order in Brazil, the Philippines, and subsequently in Paraguay, Indonesia, Vietnam, Camerun and India;
- to the vibrant exchanges and encounters that took place during the unification of the four Italian Provinces into a single one, the Province Madre del Buon Consiglio, and the creation of the Province

Santa Rita di Cássia and the Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino;

- to the dedicated work of the Postulation, with the official recognition of the heroic virtues of the Venerable Fra Santo of Saint Dominic and the Venerable Paola Renata Carboni, whose Cause had been entrusted to our Postulation by the Diocese of Fermo;
- to the impetus given to the Causes of the Servant of God Fra Luigi Maria Chmel of the Most Holy Crucifix, on the centenary of his birth (2013), and of the Venerable Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci, on the fourth centenary of his death (2021);
- to the commitment and sense of responsibility demonstrated through the creation of the Institute of Philosophy Saint Thomas of Villanova (IFIST) in Ourinhos, Brazil, and the Saint Monica Institute of Theology (SMIT) in Cebu City, Philippines, which recently received ecclesiastical recognition of affiliation to the University of Santo Tomas (UST) in Manila;
- to the transcription and publication of the first *Constitutions* of the Order (1598 and 1620), the *Chronicles* of Fr. Epifanio, and the *Epistolary* of our Missionaries;
- to the recent historical works of Fr. Dorian Ceteroni and Fr. Eugenio Cavallari;
- to the two iconographic volumes: Saint Augustine: *The Saint in Painting from the 14th to the 18th Century* and *Virorum Illustrum Exegesis Summaria* by Fr. Aegidius Himlstejn, and Fr. Henricus de Groos;
- to the Convention on our Charism,

concluded with the private audience and message of Pope Francis to the Order, and to the publication over these years of numerous resources for meditation and Augustinian formation, as well as many academic theses by professed friars on Augustinian themes;

- to the service rendered by the International College Fra Luigi Chmel in Rome, among others.

All these events have aroused great — though never sufficient — interest and have given rise to deeper studies. Collecting these contributions in an orderly manner and continuing to generate new ones is the urgent task that now lies upon us.

Especially now, because of the first historical event of the elevation of an Augustinian to the papal throne, Pope Leo XIV.



Leo PP. XIV

Photo: Vatican Media



Portoghese Language Group

4.2 Importance of the Historical Event of the Augustinian Pope

This event indeed stands as a strong call to hasten our commitment to better know and promote:

- a) the Written Sources and Studies of deepening on our spirituality;*
- b) the Living Sources, that is, the persons, the Religious who have most authentically and credibly embodied and transmitted the vitality of the Augustinian charism of our Reform;*
- c) and the Collegial Sources, in which our Augustinian community life has been expressed.*

a) The Written Sources and Studies

It takes time, patience, and a strong desire for research to delve into the reading of the works listed in Fr. Flaviano's *Bibliographical Index*. Among these works, I recommend:

- The *Chronicles* (Fr. Epifanio of Saint Jerome);
- The *Historical Lustres* (Fr. Giambartolomeo Panceri);

- The *Lazarettos* (Fr. Antero Micone);
- The *Letters of the Missionaries* (Msgr. Ilario Costa and others);
- *The Ladder of the Fifteen Degrees* (Ven. Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci);
- *Take Off Your Sandals... The Spirituality of the Discalced Augustinians; I Came to Bring Fire upon the Earth; Outlines of Missionary Spirituality of the Discalced Augustinians; A Burning Bush: The Venerable Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci, Discalced Augustinian* (Fr. Ignazio Barbagallo).

b) The Living Sources: the Religious

The Religious are the true wealth and the constant source of inspiration in understanding and embodying our charism. It is true that we have no **Blessed** among the Discalced Augustinians — and this, naturally, must challenge and provoke all of us, both the General Postulation and the Religious — yet this does not take away the fact that

we have had a long line of remarkable Religious, true men of God, devoted sons of the Church, zealous pastors, heroic missionaries, joyfully serving the Most High in spirit of humility.

These confreres were **simple, essential, and “authentic” men**, without duplicity, reserved, and far from the spotlight; men distinguished by the goodness of their lives, their moral authority, their faithfulness to daily duty, and the heroism of humility; men who bore witness with their lives to the values they proclaimed.

With two evocative images, Saint Augustine described such persons as arrows of God’s love and fire that consumes the deep torpor of human misery:

“You had pierced our heart with the arrows of Your love; Your words were embedded deep within our innermost being, and the examples of Your servants—whom You had made from dark to radiant, from dead to living—were gathered within the bosom of our meditation, to keep us from bending downward.

So inflamed were we that all the contrary blasts of deceitful tongues would have only fanned the flame, not extinguished it.

(Confess. 9,2,3)

In our memory, as in a film, pass the names of Religious whom we ourselves have known: Fra Eugenio Bono, Fra Federico Ciardi, Fr. Angelo Carù...

c) The Collegial Sources: the Chapters

In the canonical traditions, our Augustinian community life has found and continues to find expression. I refer here in a particular way to the celebration of our Chapters — Conventual, Provincial, and General — for they are powerful moments of planning, evaluation, and renewal of our Augustinian life; they are places of fidelity and discernment, where we safeguard the “creative fidelity” of our unique Augustinian charism.

Indeed, all of us — and especially those who have participated in Chapters as Vocals — agree in recognizing their great importance.

The Chapters are like a thermometer measuring the degree of assimilation of the charism:

- a place of discernment of God’s will in the present moment of history;
- a testing ground of our ability to converge, to dialogue, and to write together — with many hands, ours and God’s — our history;
- a means of verifying the quality of our human and spiritual dimension;
- a powerful experience of encounter and confrontation between our human misery and God’s mercy, our limitations and narrowness, and the demands of openness to the catholicity — or, as we say today, the synodality of the Church;
- a school of humility and charity;
- a place of forgiveness and fraternal communion.

Therefore, an attentive and continuous reading of the *Acts of the Chapters* — especially the *Programmatic Document* of each — together with the foundational documents of the *Constitutions* and the *Directory*, stands as a permanent source of renewal and authenticity of our charism.



4.3 Conclusion: the Value of Augustinian Identity

Pope Leo XIV, already in his first greeting from the loggia of Saint Peter's Basilica, introduced himself as "a son of Augustine, an Augustinian." He kept in his papal coat of arms the Augustinian emblem of the flaming heart pierced by the arrow of the Word of God, and he confided to his Augustinian confreres — as the Prior General, Fr. Alejandro Morala, writes in his *Letter to the Order*:

Suddenly my life changed completely and I had to give up many things, but I will not give up being an Augustinian.

This is a profound and demanding statement, expressing the deep and genuine Augustinian identity of the Pope; an Augustinian spirit that, even if he had said nothing, clearly shines through in his way of being and presenting himself; an Augustinian identity not improvised, but interiorized over the years through study, prayer, and a life of communion; an Augustinian identity that unites culture, humanity, and spirituality, and that chooses a sapiential approach to the many themes of theological reflection and to the challenges of human existence, the Church, and contemporary society.

This Augustinian spirit of Leo XIV is proving to be a true added value to his Petrine ministry. And we must be confident that this same Augustinian spirit will also be an added value to the vitality — present and future — of our Order of Discalced Augustinians.

It will lead us to live our spiritual life, our pastoral activity, and our community life, as well as the celebration of our Chapters — Local, Provincial, and General — in a more authentically Augustinian manner; it will encourage us to be people with two "s's": serious and serene; motivated and responsible persons.

Today, indeed, superficiality and mediocrity are no longer justifiable, for they trivialize both life and ministry. The rediscovery of a true Augustinian identity will bring us once more to an encounter with Augustine, with our Tradition, with our confreres, so that, through them, we may be guided to encounter Christ, the Church, and the world that must be re-evangelized.

In summary, this Convention is meant to be a warm invitation to return to the sources of our spirituality, urging us to take a bold step forward toward a future enriched and made fruitful by authentic Augustinian identity.





Saint Augustine among the flagellants,
Pinturicchio (1500),
National Gallery of Umbria in Perugia



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CONSTITUTIONS AND DIRECTORY

Normative Codes for living our Spirituality



Abstract: *the article explores the history and characteristics of two fundamental Sources of our Spirituality: the Constitutions and the Directory. It analyzes their origin and the differences from the Augustinian text, as well as the way in which, over time, our Constitutions have been progressively*

updated to respond to historical changes and to the major renewals that have taken place within the Church. The aim is to highlight how these sources, while remaining in continuity with tradition, have been able to renew themselves in order to keep alive and relevant the spiritual identity of the Order.

1. Historical Excursus

Our *Constitutions* have undergone several modifications over the centuries. It is important to note the changes that occurred both in content and in the manner of preparing, reviewing, and renewing their texts.

1.1 The *Constitutions* of 1598

This text was prepared and approved at the First General Chapter, held in Rome in May 1598, and signed by the

capitulars on June 10, 1598, in the Convent of San Paolo alla Regola.

The complete text has been transcribed and can be read in the volume edited by Fr. Pietro Scalia in 1993.

The structure of the text, divided into Parts and Chapters, followed that of the *Constitutions* of the Order of Saint Augustine (1581) but differed from it in certain elements that highlighted its distinctive character.

In the *OSA Constitutions*, there were six Parts: Part IV, concerning the governance of nuns, and Part V, dealing with

the regulations on studies, were not incorporated into the *OAD Constitutions*.

Part I On Divine Worship and Other Matters Related to It (De divino cultu, et de aliis quae ad eum spectant) 1. On the Divine Office and the Evening Prayer 2. On the Mass and the Procession in Suffrage for Deceased Religious, Relatives, and Benefactors, held every Monday 3. On when the Conventual Mass and the Office are to be sung in choir, and who must take part 4. On those who do not attend Mass or the Canonical Hours, or arrive late, or make mistakes in singing or reading <i>5. On the Divine Office or the prayers that the lay brothers and conversi must recite at the appointed hour</i> <i>6. On the books to be used in choir</i> 7. On promotion to the priesthood and other orders, and on matters pertaining to confessor 8. On who is authorized to hear the confessions of the Religious of the Order, and on reserved cases 9. On how many times per year and when the Religious may receive Communion 10. On the confessions of women	Part I On Divine Worship and Other Matters Related to It (De divino cultu, et de aliis quae ad eum spectant) 1. On the Divine Office to be recited by the friars of our Congregation, and on Evening Prayer 2. On the Mass for the Dead, to be celebrated every Monday for deceased benefactors, and on other suffrages for our deceased Religious 3. On the Conventual Mass and the other Canonical Hours that must be recited 4. On the Office or the prayers that the lay brothers and conversi must recite at the appointed hours <i>5. On the books that must be used in choir</i> <i>6. On mental prayer and discipline</i> 7. On promotion to the priesthood and other orders, and on matters pertaining to confessors 8. On who is authorized to hear the confessions of the Religious of the Congregation, and on reserved cases 9. On how many times per year and when the Religious of our Congregation must receive Communion 10. On the confessions of women
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Part I, concerning the norms regulating divine worship, is identical, except for three chapters:

- a) the two Chapters in the *OSA Constitutions of 1581* dealing with the singing of the conventual Mass (Chapter 3) were reduced, in the *OAD Constitutions*, to norms on how and when to celebrate the conventual

- Mass and which Canonical Hours to attend (Chapter 3 OAD);
- b) the Chapter addressing those who do not attend Mass or the Canonical Hours, or who arrive late or make mistakes in singing or reading (Chapter 4 OSA);
- c) Chapter 6 OAD, which deals with mental prayer and discipline.

Part II On the Observances of Our Order (De observantiis nostrae sacrae religionis)	Part II On the Observances of Our Congregation (De observantiis nostrae sacrae Congregationis)
1. On the age and qualities of candidates who seek to enter the Order	1. On the age and qualities of candidates who are to be admitted into our Congregation
2. On the reception of novices	2. On the reception of novices
3. On the formation of novices and the qualities of their master	3. On the formation of novices and the qualities of their maste
4. <i>On the manner of making Profession</i>	4. <i>On the manner of making Profession</i>
5. <i>On the form and quality of the religious garments and when the cappa should be worn</i>	5. <i>On the form and quality of the Religious habit</i>
6. On how and when to provide clothing for the Religious	6. On how and when to provide clothing for the Religious
7. On the cells and their furnishings, and how to enter them to make a visit	7. On the cells and their furnishings, and how to enter them to make a visit
8. On how and when the hair is to be cut	8. On how and when to cut the hair
9. On how to enter the refectory and how to sit therein	9. On how the Religious should enter the refectory and how they should sit therein
10. On the use of food and on fasting	10. On the use of food and the fasting of the Religious
11. On how the Religious should gather on days of fasting	11. On how the Religious should gather on days of fasting
12. On where and when silence must be observed	12. On the places and times in which the Religious must observe silence
13. On the cloister of our convents and the places where women are not permitted to enter	13. On the cloister of our convents and the places where women are not permitted to enter
14. On the care to be shown toward sick Religious	14. On the care and attention to be given to sick Religious
15. On the care of dying Religious and what is to be done with the objects they used	15. On the care to be given to dying Religious
16. On the humane manner of receiving guests, and what they are bound to observe in our houses	16. On the humane and charitable manner of receiving guests
17. On how Religious should conduct themselves when it is necessary to leave the convent, and on the letters of testimony they must carry with them	17. On how the Religious should behave when it is appropriate for them to leave the convent

Part II, dedicated to observances, is identical in the structure of its Chapters, but it is within their content that distinct characteristics appear:

a) *regarding the garments, there is an emphasis on the poverty of the material*

(coarse and black cloth) and many other details meant to express a life of poverty;

b) *the rejection of luxury and of gifts that are inconsistent with the witness of a penitential way of life.*

This Section is well worth reading, in order to breathe its spiritual inspiration. It is especially interesting the manner of making Profession, in which the Superior addresses questions to the novice, asking whether he intends to observe the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity: obedience to Superiors, poverty,

meaning to possess nothing of one's own, and chastity, meaning purity of body and heart. The formula makes no mention of humility or of the renunciation of ambition.

A note on the **formula of Profession**, which read as follows:

In the Name of Our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

In the year one thousand ... from the birth of Our Lord, in the month of ..., I, Fra ..., son of ..., born in ... of the Parish of ..., make Profession and promise obedience to Almighty God, to the Blessed Ever-Virgin Mary, to the Blessed Father Augustine, to you, Reverend Father Fra ..., Prior of the Convent ..., in the name and on behalf of the Most Reverend Father Master ..., and of the Prior General of the Order of the Hermit Friars of Saint Augustine and of his canonically elected successors, to live having nothing of my own, in chastity, according to this **Rule** of Saint Father Augustine, in this **Congregation** of the Reformed Discalced Friars, until death.

The Superior welcomed the Profession by saying:

And I, ... in the name and on behalf of our Most Reverend Father General ..., and by the authority granted to me, accept your Profession and unite you to the mystical body of our holy Congregation.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

At this stage, there was no ambiguity whatsoever regarding the fact that the spiritual and juridical communion with

the Order of the Hermit Friars of Saint Augustine was beyond question.



Fr. Carlo Moro during his lecture

Part III On the Government of the Whole Order (De universi ordinis gubernatione)	Part III On the Government of the Whole Congregation and of the Provinces (De gubernatione totius Congregationis et Provinciarum) 22
1. On the obedience that our Religious must render to the Supreme Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ 2. On elections in general and on Religious appointed to any prelature outside the Order 3. On the manner of celebrating the General Chapter and the election of the Prior General 4. On the office and authority of the Prior General 5. On the office and authority of the Procurator General and the organization of the Roman Curia 6. On the office and authority of the Visitors of the Prior General 7. On the manner of celebrating the General Chapter 8. On the celebration of the Biennial Congregation 9. On the election of Priors and other officials outside the Provincial Chapter 10. On the private Chapter 11. On the office and authority of the Provincial Prior, and the cases in which he may be removed 12. On the office and authority of the Provincial Visitors, and the manner of conducting the visitation, how to proceed in judgments, and how Religious should testify in cases involving outsiders 13. On the office and authority of the Local Prior, and the cases in which he may be removed 14. On how the Religious should conduct themselves when the Prior assigns them an office 15. On the office and authority of the Subprior 16. On the office of the Sacristan of the convent 17. On the office of the Procurator of the convent, and the things that must not be alienated 18. On the office of the Depositaries 19. On the office of the Deputies 20. On the election and office of the Discreet, and the manner of electing the Vicar of the house when one must go to the Provincial Chapter 21. On the order of precedence	1. On the obedience that our Religious must render to the Supreme Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ 2. On elections in general within our Congregation 3. On the manner of celebrating the General Chapter of our Congregation 4. On the Provincial Chapter, which is held every two years 5. On the election of Priors outside the General Chapter 6. On the office and authority of the Vicar General, and the cases in which he may be removed 7. On the office and authority of the Local Prior, and the cases in which he may be dismissed 8. On how the Religious should conduct themselves when the Prior assigns them an office 9. On the office of the Sacristan of the convent 10. On the office of the Economes of the Congregation 11. On the establishment of new convents 12. On the election and office of the Discreets who must participate in the General Chapter of our Congregation 13. On the order of precedence of the Religious within the Congregation 14. On the office of the Preachers 15. On the custody of books and studies

Part III concerns government. Here, the differences are many, and I refer the reader to the text itself, for it is truly interesting to observe the different manner of organization. **Parts IV and V** were eli-

minated, and the subject matter regarding studies and the office of preacher was incorporated into the section on government, within two chapters, as indicated below.

Part IV On the Care and Governance of the Nuns and Mantellate of Our Order (De cura, ac regimine Monialium, ac Mantellatarum nostri sacri ordinis) (...)	
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Part V On the Norms Regulating Studies, Students, Academic Degrees, and Confessors in Our Order (De forma circa studia, studentes, graduatos, ac confessores in Ordine nostro servanda) 1. On the difference between the general and provincial study houses 2. On the office and authority of the Regent Master 3. On the office of Bachelor, Lecturer, Master of Students, Cursor, and Biblical Master 4. On those who are to be promoted to studies and academic degrees 5. On the manner of creating a Master in Sacred Theology, and on the Profession of Faith according to the Bull of Pope Pius IV 6. On the order of precedence among the gymnasia 7. On how graduates and students are bound to participate in the Office, on the support of students, and on religious who must be withdrawn from study 8. On the lecture concerning cases of conscience 9. On the office of Preachers 10. On how one who deviates from the truths of faith must be punished 11. On the library and the custody of books	
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Part VI On Faults and the Penalties Due to Them (De culpis, ac poenis eis debitis)	Part VI On Faults and the Penalties Due to Them (De culpis et poenis eis debitis) 24
1. When and how the Chapter of Faults must be held 2. On penalties in general and the sentence of excommunication 3. On penalties for those who destroy, falsify, or alter letters or seals of our officials, as well as the privileges of our Order, and on penalties for those who open or conceal their letters 4. On the penalty to be inflicted upon anyone who strikes another in anger 5. On penalties for those who fall into the sin of the flesh 6. On penalties for those who reveal the secrets of the Order or of confession 7. On the penalty for lying and for false testimony 8. On the penalty for theft 9. On the penalty for possessing anything as one’s own 10. On the penalty for appealing to secular persons in order to obtain promotion or to excuse oneself from a committed fault 11. On the penalty for conspiracy and for leading a faction 12. On the penalty for defamation or for sending anonymous defamatory letters 13. On the penalty for gamblers, jesters, and evildoers 14. On the manner of readmitting apostates and the penances to be imposed upon them 15. On the canonical remission of those accused of infamy 16. On the penalty of deprivation of voice and place 17. On the penalty of imprisonment and torture 18. On what constitutes a light fault and the penalty due to it 19. On what constitutes a grave fault and the penalty due to it 20. On what constitutes the most serious fault and the penalty due to it	1. On faults and the penalties due to them 2. On penalties in general and the sentence of excommunication; when and how the Chapter of Faults is to be held 3. On the penalties for those who destroy, falsify, or alter letters or seals of our officials; and on the penalties for those who open or conceal their letters 4. On the penalty to be inflicted upon anyone who strikes another in anger 5. On the penalties for those who fall into the sin of the flesh 6. On the penalties for those who reveal the secrets of the Congregation or of confession 7. On the penalty for lying and for false testimony 8. On the penalty for theft 9. On the penalty for possessing anything as one’s own 10. On the penalty for appealing to secular persons to obtain promotion or to be absolved of a committed fault 11. On the penalty for conspiracy and for leading a faction 12. On the penalty for calumny 13. On the manner of readmitting apostates and the penances to be assigned to them 14. On the canonical remission of those accused of infamy 15. On the penalty of deprivation of voice and place 16. On the penalty of imprisonment and torture 17. On what constitutes a light fault and the penalty due to it 18. On what constitutes a grave fault and the penalty due to it 19. On what constitutes the most serious fault and the penalty due to it

21. On what constitutes the most grievous fault and the penalty due to it	20. On what constitutes the most grievous fault and the penalty due to it
22. On incorrigibility	21. On incorrigibility
23. On how and by whom these penalties are to be imposed	22. On how and by whom these penalties are to be assigned
24. On the frequent reading of the Constitutions and their faithful observance	23. On the frequent reading of these Constitutions and their faithful observance



1.2 The Apostolic Superintendence of Fr. Pietro Villagrassa

When the Apostolic Superintendence of Fr. Pietro Villagrassa began, a distinct course was initiated, as shown by the renewal of Professions with an important modification: the insertion into the Profession of the solemn commitment **not to aspire** or seek promotion. The date was December 10, 1599.

From that moment, a process of revision of the *Constitutions* was set in motion, in which juridical aspects were intertwined with more ritual elements — such as liturgical norms, rites of passage, the manner of celebrating various chapter assemblies, the formulas to be used, when the different bells should be

rung, and the bodily gestures accompanying the ritual moments. In short, the *Ritual* was partially integrated within the *Constitutions*.

The text approved in general form by Pope Paul V in **1610** differed in structure and composition, but it was not the one that came to be followed. It was during this disputed period that some began to hold the opinion that the Discalced Augustinians had been **drawn away from the bosom of the Order**.

The intervention of papal authority between the Vicar General and the Prior General gave rise to such an impression. Traces of this view can be found in the text of the *Lustri Istoriali* (Second Lustrò, year 1600, p. 29, col. 49).

Since the Apostolic Superintendent Father had the authority to examine and reform our first Constitutions (which had been drawn up at the General Chapter, by order of Pope Clement VIII), he decided to compose new ones on his own, and began to arrange them into thirteen chapters, written in the vernacular language, namely:

1. *On the love of God, the Divine Office, and mental prayer*
2. *On Holy Communion and Confession*
3. *On other spiritual exercises: Chapter of Faults, Spiritual Challenges, and Saints of the Month*
4. *On charity toward one's neighbor*
5. *On Evangelical Poverty*
6. *On Obedience*
7. *On Chastity*
8. **On Humility**
9. *On Devotion, Silence, and Retirement*
10. *On the Manner of Governing*
11. *On Studies*
12. *On the Reception and Formation of Novices*
13. *On the Order and Distribution of Time*

However, the *Constitutions* approved in specific form by Pope Paul V in **1620** returned to the original model, thus resuming the tradition. This choice demonstrated the desire to preserve communion with the Order.

Nevertheless, a significant fact shows that the atmosphere was not entirely **one of communion**: the Discalced Augustinians do not appear to have participated in the General Chapters of the Order of Saint Augustine since the first approval of their Congregation in 1593, by decree of the Prior General.

And yet, the Congregation of the Hermit Friars of Saint Augustine of Sicily

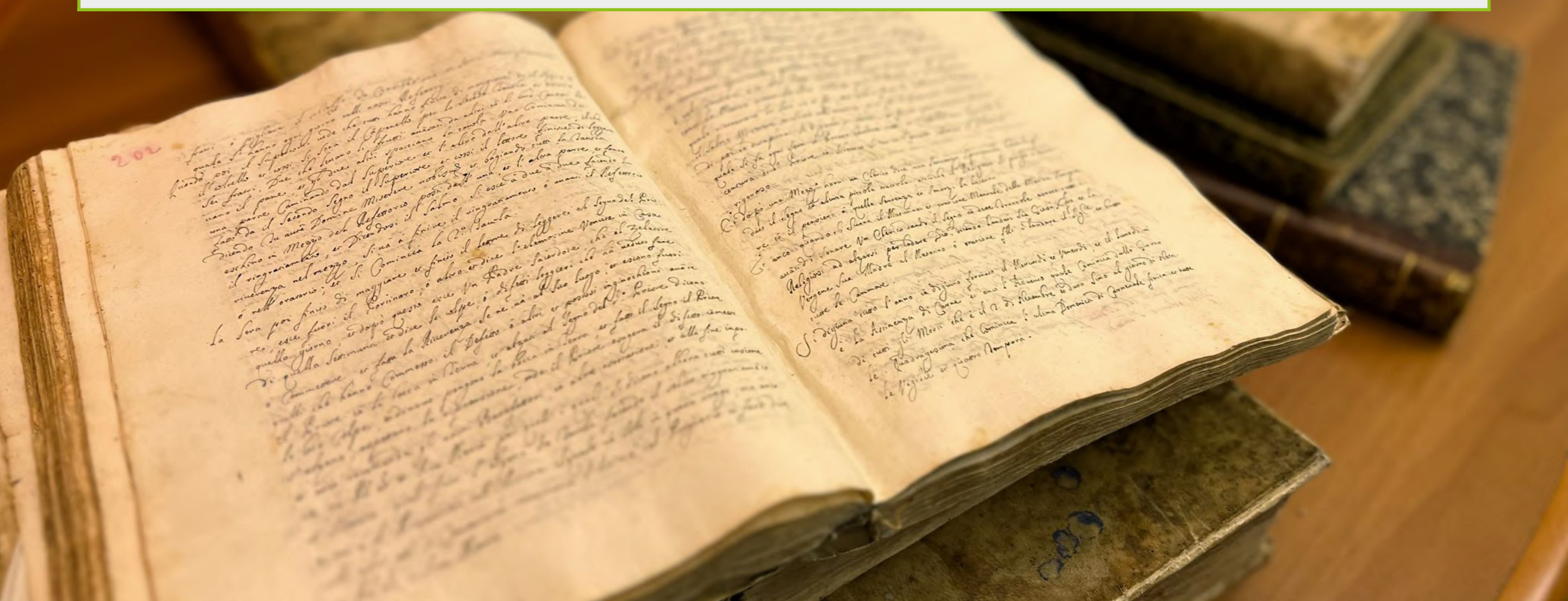
(known as the Centorbani) were already present beginning with the General Chapter of 1598, represented by their Vicar and two discreets.

In any case, it is from the renewal of the Professions of the members of the Congregation, under the Apostolic Superintendence, in December 1599, that a path began which would be definitively consolidated in the *Constitutions* of 1620, in which appears the vow **not to aspire** or seek promotion, later codified as the vow of humility.

This is reported by Fr. Bartolomeo of Saint Claudia in his *Lustri Istoriali*.

Likewise, the fourth vow of humility: that is, for the clerics, the commitment not to seek in any way dignities or prelatures, whether outside or within our Congregation; and for the lay brothers, the commitment not to seek the right to vote in our Chapters.

Fr. Pietro exhorted our religious to make this fourth vow on the occasion when they were all to renew their Professions in his hands, so that he might confirm them with the Apostolic authority that had been granted to him by His Holiness through the aforementioned Brief.



It was the Vicar General of the Congregation who received the Professions of the novices in 1600, also imposing the use of a **religious surname** instead of the name of their place of origin, as had been customary in the Order of the Hermit Friars of Saint Augustine.

1.3 The Constitutions of 1620

These retained the structure divided into **four Parts and Chapters**, with the contents arranged according to the same outline:

*The First Part was dedicated to divine worship and practices of common life;
The Second Part concerned formation, from admission to promotion to Profession, holy orders, and studies;
The Third Part dealt with government;
The Fourth Part with penalties.*

The **vow of humility** was not codified as a formal vow in the First Part, but rather in the Second, being inserted into the Profession formula.

A decree of the General Chapter of 1632 gave specific prescriptions con-

cerning the vow of humility, which was recognized as such, even though not explicitly mentioned in the *Constitutions*.

For further study, reference should be made to the text of the *Constitutions* and to the study by Fr. Gabriele Ferlisi published in 2008.

Several later editions of the *Constitutions* followed, whose articles underwent no substantial changes, though appendices were added containing subsequent papal **bulls or decrees** that supplemented the text. In a later edition, decrees of the General Chapters appear in the appendix, among them the decree declaring the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph as the protectors of the Order.

Following these are the papal bulls of Clement VIII, Urban VIII, and Alexander VII, and finally a decree of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, in which it was declared that the Discalced Augustinian Friars are true sons of Saint Augustine.



1.4 The *Constitutions* of 1931

The **1931** text represents a novelty, due to the influence of the 1917 *Code of Canon Law*, whose framework and orientation led to a rewriting and revision of the *Constitutions*. These remained structured in **Four Parts**, preceded by a *Prologue* and a series of general notions.

The revision of the *Constitutions* thus originated from a directive of the Church, and not from an internal need of the Congregation or from internal dynamics.

It is from these *Constitutions* onward that the Congregation is recognized as an **Order**, and the approval of the text was entrusted to the Congregation for Religious on April 21, 1931.

1.5 The *Constitutions* of 1984

The **1984** text was likewise the result of a process prompted by the Church. After the Second Vatican Council, all Religious Institutes were asked to revise their regulations, in order to return to the sources of their own spirituality and to embrace the conciliar directives.

In view as well was the reform of the ***Code of Canon Law***, which would be renewed in 1983. Thus began a process of revision within the Order, very different from previous ones, since all the religious were involved, through questionnaires and proposals.

It was no longer a task of the Curia, a Commission, or solely of the General Chapter, but rather a participatory process from the base, begun in the aftermath of the Council, which led to a first draft in 1969.

This text was approved *ad experimentum* for two six-year terms, and underwent several revisions (1975 and 1981), which ultimately led to the structure of the new proper law, divided into two codes — the *Constitutions* and the *Directory* —, receiving approval from

the Congregation for Religious on August 28, 1983.

1.6 A Slow but Fruitful Gestation — from 1984 to 2017

The years that followed did not bring major changes, yet some developments created the need to revise certain parts.

A particularly significant moment was the celebration of the **Fourth Centenary of the Order in 1992**. On that occasion, the General Curia and several friars published a number of volumes on the history and spirituality of the Order.

In particular, the letter of the Prior General, Fr. Eugenio Cavallari — **Servire l'Altissimo in Spirito di Umiltà** — highlighted the deeper awareness that had matured regarding certain aspects of the spirituality of the Discalced Augustinians, especially concerning the vow of humility.

A new graphic design of the Order's coat of arms was also introduced. Furthermore, the papal document published on the centenary of Saint Augustine's conversion contributed to emphasizing several aspects of Augustinian spirituality within the Church.

Another key event was the **General Chapter of 1999**, during which the four existing Provinces in Italy were suppressed in order to establish a new Province: the Province of Italy of the Order of the Discalced Augustinians.

A **Commission** was appointed to study the process leading to this new structure, also revising the sections of the *Constitutions* and the *Directory* concerning Provincial governance. The Commission worked in preparation for the Plenary Congregation of 1996, but it was necessary to wait until the General Chapter of 1999 to approve the new articles of the *Constitutions* and the



Directory.

Meanwhile, the Delegation of Brazil was erected as a Province under a commissarial regime at the General Chapter of 1999, while the Mission in the Philippines, begun in 1994, had been erected as a Delegation on July 1, 1998.

In the **following years**, several proposals for revision were brought to the General Chapter or to the Plenary Congregation:

- a) regulation of the active and passive voice of Solemn Professed, so as to foster their participation in the life of the Order even prior to Ordination;*
- b) elimination of the five-year Plenary Congregation;*
- c) proposal to unify the faculties of the General Council and of the General Definitory, together with discussion on whether it is opportune to maintain the traditional term “Definitory,” already abandoned at the provincial level;*
- d) reordering the distribution of Chapters in order to highlight more clearly the relationship between personal and collegial authority;*
- e) other changes regarding certain aspects of the faculties of the Provincial Prior, with or without the*

consent/advice of his Council.

The Commission worked throughout the 1999–2005 six-year period. The religious were also asked to submit personal observations on this work.

At the **General Chapter of 2005**, discussion continued on the re-examination of proper law, introducing the need to devote a special General Chapter to this topic, in which no elections would be foreseen, but only deliberations.

In the same assembly, however, norms were approved to allow solemnly professed friars to exercise active and passive voice in certain circumstances. In addition, the articles of the *Constitutions* and the *Directory* on the provincial community were approved.

The Congregation for Religious responded to the newly approved proposals for modification, not accepting: the exclusion of the elective faculty of an Extraordinary General Chapter, if convoked; nor the involvement of Solemn Professed candidates to the priesthood in governance, in the situations we had proposed.

No specific observations were made regarding Provincial governance. It should be noted that, in light of the obser-

vations later sent, the examination of the submitted sections was not thorough.

In the following years, the General Curia continued to propose the study of the text, which were later brought to the Plenary Congregation of 2010.

The subjects of discussion included: transfiguration, collaboration among the Provinces, the composition of the General Definitory, and, with particular emphasis, the question of the Order's identity, still insufficiently assimilated by the religious.

It was proposed to dedicate an extraordinary General Chapter to the revision of the *Constitutions*, while allowing the friars to participate by preparing questionnaires and supporting materials.

At the **General Chapter of 2011**, it was decreed to convene a special General Chapter for the revision of the *Constitutions*, with the explicit intention of revising the sections on governance. The decision was first postponed to



2. The Process of Revising the *Constitutions*

The **General Chapter of 2017** was convened for the first time in Brazil, with the commitment to allow sufficient time for a careful examination of the text of the *Constitutions* and the *Directory*.

Supporting materials were prepared to aid the work, and four working groups were formed, entrusted with the task of reading the articles and raising observations.

The entire proper law was reviewed, even though the primary intention was to amend the sections related to governance.

In summary, the key innovations and modifications introduced can be outlined as follows: In general, it was recommended to transfer to the *Directory* all

provisions that are not reflections of the *Code of Canon Law*, but rather specific to our common life.

2.1 Prologue

To the *Prologue*, which deals with the origin of the Order, a new paragraph was added, which, for the first time, summarizes the charism of the Order in a concise and precise formula. The definition of the **charism** was then explicitly included in the text of the *Constitutions*.

2.2 Part I: Nature, Spirituality, and Purpose of the Order

New references were added to Saint Augustine's thought on humility (the humble Christ), thereby enriching the Augustinian foundations of our spirituality.

Part II was divided into two Sections: the first underwent a slight reorganization of its material, structured around the four cardinal dimensions — liturgical, consecrated, common, and apostolic life; the second deals with formation.

a) Section 1: Liturgical, Consecrated, Common, and Apostolic Life

The articles on **Liturgical Life** were reordered: beginning with sacramental life (celebration of the sacraments, Eucharistic worship), then addressing the Liturgy of the Hours, meditation, and study of the Word of God. The more specific aspects, not already regulated by *Canon Law* or by liturgical norms, were transferred entirely to the *Directory*.

The articles concerning **Consecrated Life** underwent greater modification and improvement, particularly those regarding the vow of poverty: the ways of living the vow during Simple Profession were clarified.

The corresponding section of the *Directory* was significantly enriched with clear and specific norms, taking into account both canonical norms and guidelines issued by the Holy See concerning the administration of temporal goods. The role and responsibility of the legal representative were further clarified.

The *Directory* stipulates that Economos and Legal Representatives may not leave the community before handing over their responsibilities (transfer of signatures and exchange of information).

The affirmation of the vow of humility was confirmed.

Common and Apostolic Life did not undergo significant revisions in the *Constitutions*, while the *Directory* introduced norms regarding the religious habit, and Masses to be celebrated for the deceased, including the closest rela-

tives of the religious. The *Constitutions* now also update the term “Third Order” to “Secular Fraternities,” a title meant to embrace all officially erected forms of lay participation associated with the Order by decree of the Prior General.

b) Section 2: Formation for Religious and Priestly Life

These articles received considerable reflection. Terminology was updated, using “formators” and “candidates” in place of other previous terms. The stages of formation were clearly defined: Aspirancy, Postulancy, Novitiate, Period of Profession, and Preparation for Sacred Orders, abandoning the term “cleric,” which had formerly covered the period from first profession to priestly ordination. The specific formative objectives of each stage are now referred to in the *Ratio Generalis Institutionis*.

The **duration of Simple Profession** was extended to four years, thus eliminating overly broad interpretations regarding the length of temporary vows.

The importance of the Major Superior was reaffirmed as the authority responsible for admitting to temporary and solemn profession, and the formula of profession was revised.

It is clarified that the Local Chapter *Quoad Mores* does not have the task of approving, but rather functions as a discernment process, whose outcome contributes to the judgment of the Major Superior, with the assistance of his Council, following the manner prescribed by the norms.

It is also made clear that the renewal of profession is a possible option, though never automatic; and it remains customary that the final word belongs to the Prior General concerning admission to Solemn Profession.

a) Preliminary Issues

Structure of the Order: real and personal

The structure of the Order required clarification: the erection or suppression of a jurisdiction could not be determined solely on the basis of numbers.

Likewise, it was important to reaffirm that a house with only two religious cannot be considered equivalent to a fully formed community, which must have at least three members.

It also seemed necessary to introduce an intermediate stage between Delegation and Province, distinct from the Province under commissarial regime; however, the solutions adopted and approved on this point were not particularly effective.

Certain Institutes, such as aggregation and affiliation, were clarified and distinguished from one another.

Right and Exercise of Active and Passive Voice

The limits and conditions for the exercise of active and passive voice were defined, distinguishing between the pos-

The *Directory* provides more detailed procedures, reaffirming the requirement that each candidate personally submit a written request to advance to the next stage.

Both the *Constitutions* and the *Directory* make reference to secondary or subsidiary normative texts, namely the *Ritual* and the *Ratio Generalis Institutionis*, both of which were completed during the 2017–2023 six-year term.

2.4 Part III: Governance of the Order

This was the section that required the most work during the six-year period, and it was also the one on which the Holy See intervened, issuing directives that brought about significant changes.

These observations highlighted that there were gaps both in the 1983 text and in the approvals issued at previous General Chapters; some norms were even in conflict with the *Canon Law*.

This sparked some discussion, but it also provided the opportunity to recognize how truly necessary this work was.



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session of such rights and their actual exercise. This clarification addressed difficulties that had arisen in the collaboration between Provinces, where religious were sent to the Province of Italy and later recalled to their Province of origin, without clear restrictions. It is now reaffirmed that there is a difference between a friar's personal request to transfer to another Province and a temporary assignment to assist another Province in collaboration. These two situations carry different consequences for the exercise of voice. In general, the exercise of voice is prohibited for those offices requiring sacred orders or where it is explicitly excluded.

Weight of Custom

An article often neglected in the past was retained: customs contrary to the Constitutions and to Canon Law have no force of law.

b) Authority and Its Exercise

This topic required considerable work, since already during the General Chapter it became apparent that there was a certain confusion between law and tradition.

Although it was clear to all that there are two types of authoritative bodies in the Order — collegial and personal authority —, the exercise of authority is expressed differently:

** In a College, all members have equal rights, and decisions must be taken by vote.*

** When the authority is Personal, the one who holds the office is the holder of decision-making power, and acts by appointment, which may be limited by the consent of a Council or influenced by its advice.*

The Council collaborates with personal authority by offering consultative opinions or expressing a favorable or

unfavorable judgment, to which the authority may not oppose or ignore, in the cases foreseen by law. Some bodies act collegially, others do not. The former possess certain faculties and responsibilities, the latter, others. To determine when one must resort to a college or not is the task of law.

In the case of our Order, the collegial bodies were numerous: all Chapters, the Plenary Congregation, and the General Definitors; this created a kind of two-headed system of authority: the Prior General and the Prior Provincial, who possess the prerogatives attributed by law to Major Superiors, and the Definitors, who were the bodies entrusted with the government of the Order.

Thus, the friars were subject under the Constitutions both to the personal authority of the Prior General or Provincial, and to the collegial authority of the Definitors, in which the Major Superior exercised his authority on equal terms with the other members of the college.

This **dual structure**, in which personal authority was placed on the same level as the Definitors, was corrected by the Holy See. The Church insists that the identity of the authority to whom obedience is owed be clearly defined, and that personal authority exercise its role of governance.

The Major Superior is therefore the personal authority who governs, assisted by the Council elected in the Chapter, according to the conditions established by universal and proper law.

At the same time, it was determined that the Plenary Congregation could not be considered the most important body after the General Chapter. Having already addressed the issue of merging the General Prior's Council and the

General Definitory before the 2017 Chapter, the task was now to harmonize the whole structure.

The offices that may be conferred by collegial authority and those that fall under personal authority by appointment were generically defined. All other mandates granted by personal authority are referred to as assignments, and are left to the discretion of the Superior.

Moreover, there had been no clear indication that Vicars, according to Universal Law, are Major Superiors, and therefore do not require delegation when the Major Superior is unable to govern.

c) Governing Bodies: Composition and Functioning

It was reaffirmed that the **General Chapter** is the supreme authority in the Order. The Plenary Congregation is a consultative body, no longer possessing governing authority, but serving as a guiding and advisory body.

After the General Chapter, ordinary authority rests with the **Prior General**, who exercises it according to the cases and methods indicated by universal and proper law. The General Definitory is the organ assisting the Prior General in the exercise of his mandate. Its composition ranges from four to eight members, and the General Chapter determines the exact number.

It was important to reaffirm that the Prior General may participate in Provincial Chapters, without the right to vote. This ensures his neutrality regarding the decisions of the chapter members, without depriving him of the authority to act upon those decisions. The President of the assembly is always elected by the Chapter.

The Procurator, the Economo, and the Secretary General may be appointed from among the elected Definitors or from outside, and are appointed by the Prior General. If the Definitors participate in the General Definitory, they have the right to vote; otherwise, they do not. However, they are ex officio members of the General Chapter, and their term ends with the appointment of their successors. The same organizational structure applies to other entities of the Order — Provinces and Commissariates.

The Economo General is prohibited from serving a third consecutive term, while the Economo Provincial is barred from a fourth term. Regarding the local Chapter, it acts as a collegial body only for the election of the local Treasurer; all other offices and assignments are made by appointment of the Prior of the Community.



2.5 Part IV: Administration of Goods

This Part was extracted from the part on Governance and largely rewritten. It reflects the Holy See’s regulations regarding the administration of ecclesiastical goods, taking into account the role and responsibility of the Legal Representative, as well as the risks involved. It also addresses certain aspects of the vow of poverty, both on the personal level and for the various juridical entities that must carry out financial transactions.

2.6 Part V: Protection of Laws

This part was updated in accordance with the latest provisions issued by Pope Francis concerning exclaustation and other related matters. It faithfully mirrors canonical law, which is why there is no corresponding regulation in the Directory. The Order, perhaps by God’s grace, has little experience with canonical trials, although it would be useful to establish norms to guide religious in acting correctly when faced with possible offenses. A chapter on protection against abuse could have been added, but such regulations vary by Episcopal Conference, and in any case, more religious should be trained in this field.

3. Some Notes on the Directory 35

This secondary code, though an integral part of the proper law, possesses a distinct dignity, as it should contain the practical provisions needed to apply the principles contained in the Constitutions.

In fact, the extensive revision that was carried out eliminated everything that falls under the *Code of Canon Law* or is its direct consequence, leaving those matters to the *Constitutions*.

Thus, *Code of Canon Law* and the *Constitutions* are the primary reference codes, while the *Directory* contains the applicative norms of these primary codes, in keeping with the spirit, tradition, and spirituality of the Order.

Structurally, the *Directory* mirrors the *Constitutions*, except in the sections concerning the protection of laws and penal matters.

The latter, though always present, was considered unnecessary, since it is already codified. In reality, however, it would merit a deeper examination, as there is a need to establish a procedure for both evaluating cases requiring disciplinary action and defining the types of penalties that may be incurred.



Constitutions	Directory36
<i>Part I. Nature, Spirituality, and Purpose of the Order</i>	<i>Part I. Sources of our Spirituality</i>
<i>Part II. Life of the Order</i> Liturgical, Consecrated, Common, Apostolic Life Formation for Religious and Priestly Life	<i>Part II. Life of the Order</i> Liturgical, Consecrated, Common, Apostolic Life Formation for Religious and Priestly Life
<i>Part III. Government of the Order</i> Structure, Laws, Authority Communities of the Order Provincial Community Commissarial Community Local Community	<i>Part III. Government of the Order</i> Structure, Laws, Authority Communities of the Order Provincial Community Commissarial Community Local Community
<i>Part IV. Administration of goods</i> • Right of property Goods of the Communities Alienations, debts, obligations Administrators	<i>Part IV. Administration of goods</i> Administrators Expenses and Tables
<i>Part V. Protection of the laws</i> Fraternal correction Penal procedures Separation from the Order	

By way of example: what penalty should be established for those who violate certain aspects of the vows? Which of these violations require the initiation of a dismissal process, and which instead warrant lighter sanctions? There is also a need to define how administrative processes are to be conducted, the procedures for preliminary investigations, and other procedural aspects, in order to provide clear guidance to Major Superiors in the exercise of their authority.

The most evident issue that emerged from the review of the *Directory* was the confusion between canonical matters and provisions more closely linked to our traditions. At the same time, certain prerogatives specific to our Order, particularly those pertaining to the exercise of specific offices, were retained in the *Constitutions*, to avoid excessive dispersion of content.

However, discussions during the Chapter made it clear that many religious were unaware of, or did not value, several norms already contained in the *Directory*, leading to the realization that this code

was little known and seldom used, both in governance and in daily life.

For instance, the reorganization of the norms governing the celebration of suffrage or community **Masses**, those offered *Pro Bono Ordinis*, and the most important solemnities — an area in which canonical visitations had revealed confusion and uncertainty.

Other important aspects regarding the observance of the vows were also clarified: how to carry out acts of disposition of personal property, how to accept the administration of third-party assets, how to receive inheritances, and how to undertake remunerated work outside ordinary pastoral activity (such as teaching, professional consultancy, publishing, etc.).

Previously entirely overlooked, the responsibilities and duties of the legal representative have now been explicitly defined, along with norms regarding the timing and procedures for transfers, particularly of Local Economos.

Certain aspects concerning the complementarity between religious life

and parish ministry were clarified and maintained. The renewed section on Secular Fraternities emerged as one of the most significant developments.

The regulations on the exercise of active and passive voice required further clarification. Another revised point concerns the management of the Chapter, with the major innovation that the Prior General may not participate with voting rights in Provincial Chapters, nor serve as their president. Furthermore, among the ex officio voting members of the Chapter are now the Economo General and Provincial, the Secretary Provincial, and the Procurator.

4. Conclusion

Initially, the revision of the 1983 *Constitutions* began quietly, motivated by very specific needs, particularly to adapt certain articles concerning the Province and other minor matters.

The collaboration of the religious in this work was rather limited, leaving it to the Plenary Congregation, the General Chapter, and the Commission to carry the process forward. There were detailed and substantial proposals for revision, but these did not come to fruition.

Eventually, the work begun during the 2017 General Chapter led to an unexpected process, from which significant developments emerged for the life of the Order, including:

- the definition of the Charism, later celebrated in 2019 with a year dedicated to it;
- the restructuring of the figures of authority and governance;
- the rediscovery of the importance of personal authority, not only in the exercise of its faculties but also in guiding the formation journey;
- the revision and updating of administrative matters;

- and a clearer definition of the vow of poverty and its practical implications.

The Holy See expressed keen interest in this work. The first observations received in 2018 were extremely valuable, as they helped harmonize the norms with ecclesial practice, since many existing provisions were found to be “*not in conformity with law and praxis.*”

Key emphases included:

- Highlighting the figure of personal authority, who governs the Order in its ordinary capacity;
- Prohibiting the creation of consultative or participatory bodies other than the Superiors and Chapters, which might replace or undermine their authority.

The contributions from the Dicastery were provided by Fr. Sebastiano Paciolla, Ocist., Fr. Pierluigi Nava, and Fr. José Rodríguez Carballo, OFM.





Fr. Gregorio Cibwabwa, oad

RITUAL AND LITURGY

Celebration of our Spirituality



Abstract: *this article explores our Ritual in depth, beginning with its liturgical and pastoral use in the life of the Church and the meaning it bears as an instrument of communion and spiritual identity.*

*It then examines several historical and liturgical sources that guided the drafting of the *Rituale ad experimentum* of 1999, the result of a long process of*

discernment and renewal in light of the conciliar directives.

Finally, it analyzes the Ritual promulgated in its definitive form in 2023, following the work of a special Commission and the approval of the General Definitory, with particular attention to certain key sections, which express the continuity between tradition and renewal in the liturgical life of the Order.

Following the LXXX General Chapter, held in Cebu City (Philippines), we are called to implement the programmatic plan which, among other aims, encouraged a return to the sources of our spirituality, in order to reaffirm our identity within the Church and enhance the quality of our service.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Term “Ritual”

First of all, it is important to clarify the meaning of the term “ritual.” The word “ritual,” when used without an article, functions as an adjective derived from “rite”; when used with an article, it refers to a book containing the norms that regu-

late a given rite. From a liturgical and psychological perspective, Sovernigo notes: *“The word ‘rite’ is used in various ways and senses.”*¹

1.2 Meaning

The most common meanings are as follows:

- *Rite as a set of ceremonial acts of worship practiced within a religious community or social group, with the traditional organization of such ceremonies. Example: the Roman rite, the Byzantine rite, etc.*
- *Since the seventeenth century, “rite” has also come to mean a particular religious act (practice, gesture, ceremony, sacrament), prescribed by the liturgy of a Church or by the ceremonial of a society. Thus, we speak of rites of blessing, purification, consecration, honor, initiation, entry, or funeral rites, whether public, private, or secret, etc.*²
- *It is also understood as “a rule or set of rules governing the performance of a rite” (Zingarelli, Italian Language Dictionary).*

It refers, therefore, to the “how” of performing a rite, including all its components — movements, verbal formulas, chants, objects used, and the order in which they are carried out.

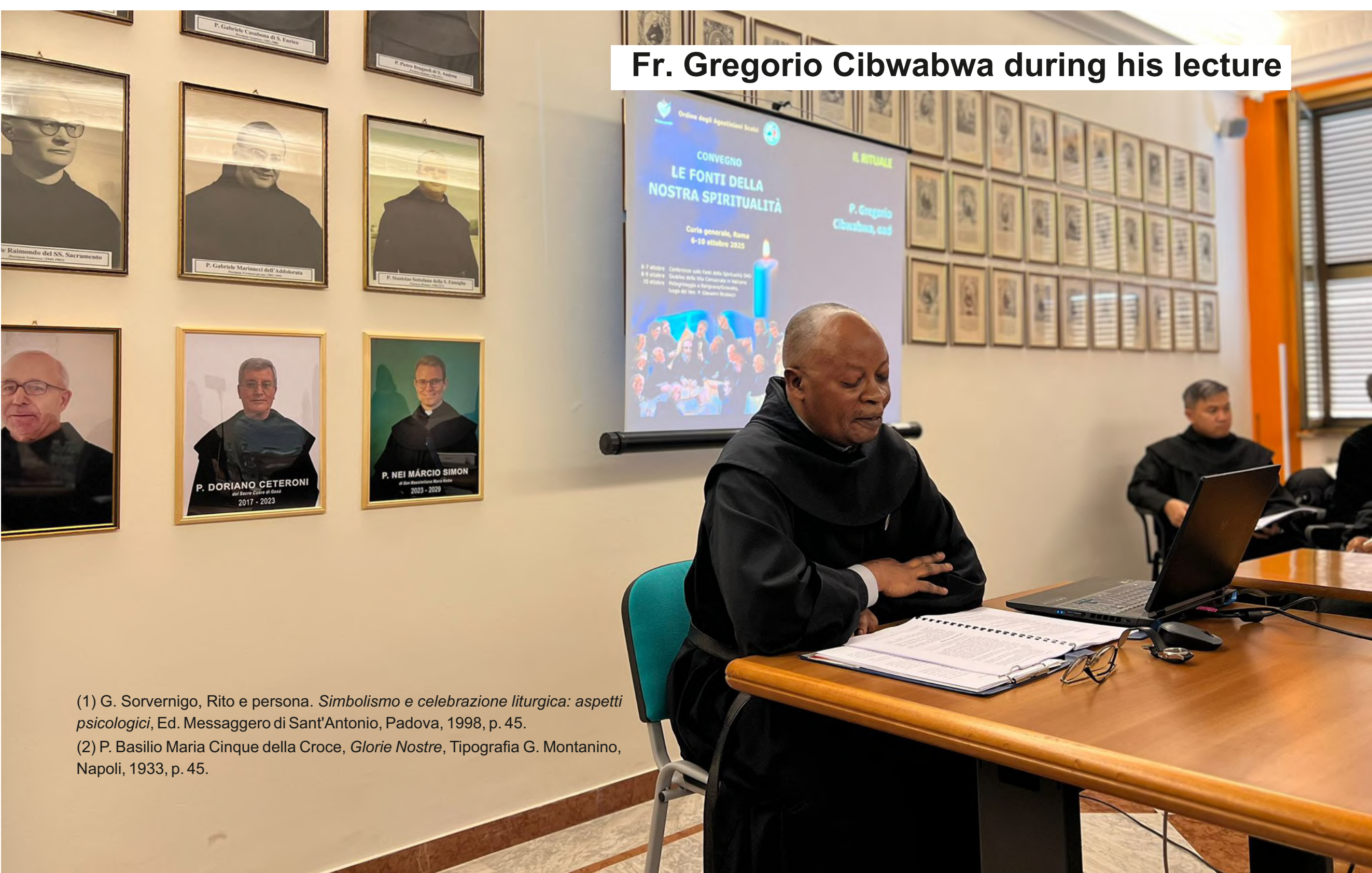
Terms like “rite” and “ritual”, generally associated with an image of an ancient or even primitive world, have entered our daily vocabulary with different and sometimes inaccurate meanings.

Often, a gesture is called “ritual” merely because it is repetitive. For instance, brushing one’s teeth or washing one’s face each morning does not make such actions a rite. Likewise, greeting someone when meeting them cannot be considered a true ritual.

These are instead formalized acts, whose repetitiveness resembles rituals, but which lack a symbolic dimension—that is, a reference to something beyond the immediate moment.

As Martine Segalen observes: *“The essence of the rite ultimately consists in the act of believing in its effects through practices of symbolization.”*

Fr. Gregorio Cibwabwa during his lecture



(1) G. Sovernigo, Rito e persona. *Simbolismo e celebrazione liturgica: aspetti psicologici*, Ed. Messaggero di Sant'Antonio, Padova, 1998, p. 45.

(2) P. Basilio Maria Cinque della Croce, *Glorie Nostre*, Tipografia G. Montanino, Napoli, 1933, p. 45.

2. The *Ritual* in the Church

The history of the liturgy shows that before the Council of Trent, each local Church had its own *Ritual*. After the Council, Pope Paul V, in 1614, promulgated the single *Ritual* known as the “*Roman Ritual*.”

Over time, subsequent editions, with revisions, additions, and modifications, were produced by: Benedict XIV (1752), Pius IX (1872), Leo XIII (1884), Pius XII (1952). The last two editions were still based on the *Ritual* of Paul V.

The desire to unify the various ritual books into a single volume arose from the need to express the oneness of the Church and to reaffirm the sense of ecclesial belonging and communion.

3. The *Ritual* in the Order of Discalced Augustinians

2.1 The Beginnings

From what has been said above, it can be deduced that in our various convents scattered across local Churches, there was no uniformity in the use of the *Ritual*, since the convents had to conform to the local rite (OAD Convents in Italy, Eastern Europe, France, Spain, Germany, and Tonkin).

Within our Order, the first draft of the so-called “*Ordinarium Precum*” *Ritual* dates back to 1727.

2.2 *Ritual ad experimentum* (1999)

This document proved decisive, together with other collections, in leading to the 1999 *Ritual ad experimentum*.

It contained important material from our liturgical tradition, with the aim of recovering everything that existed in the various traditions and usages throughout the historical journey of the Order (manuscripts, mimeographed booklets, etc.).

We can therefore affirm that the *Ritual* stands as the fruit of a long journey toward a unified text—a journey carried out with discernment, through the gathering of diverse materials and the study of ancient and modern sources, culminating in the systematic drafting of the document, into which also flowed several texts from the new *OSA and OAR Rituals*.

The process began with an organic program dating back to 1987 and concluded in 1999. The publication of the *Ritual ad experimentum* took place on the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, March 19, 1999. The *Ritual* was enthusiastically received in the communities of the Order, particularly in Italy, since it was published in the Italian language. Other linguistic regions had to await translations into Portuguese and English.

The formation houses thus obtained a valuable tool for the formative journey of future Discalced Augustinian religious. Each religious community was provided with a resource containing clear guidelines on how to live out community acts, thereby avoiding any undue improvisation.

2.3 Updates and Revision

At the level of the Universal Church, from 2000 to the present, the most significant liturgical changes have been connected to the ongoing implementation of the directives of the Second Vatican Council and to the subsequent provisions of the Supreme Pontiffs, aimed at enriching the participation of the faithful and promoting greater inculturation of the liturgy.

In essence, no radical changes occurred after 2000, but rather a refinement and deeper understanding of liturgical norms, including the revision of liturgical books and certain prayers.



Within this context, our *Ritual ad experimentum* is situated. After about twenty years, an update was necessary to bring it into harmony with internal needs — namely, the feedback gathered from confreres, the new *Constitutions*, the *Directory*, and the liturgical reforms introduced in the Church (such as the new Missal and the new prayers of the Rosary mysteries) — as well as with external developments in recent years.

Following the LXXIX General Chapter, a commission was established with the task of revising and updating our *Ritual*.

This commission was composed of two members from Italy, two from Brazil, and one from the Philippines. The work was conducted online, facing the challenge of coordinating different time zones.

The methodology consisted of sending the topics to be discussed in advance, before the plenary sessions, during which the text was presented and finalized for submission to the General Definitory. The commission remained faithful to the tradition of the Order, while at the same time welcoming the insights matured during the *ad experimentum* phase.

It adhered to the *Prenotanda* and to the directives of the Second Vatican Council and the Episcopal Conferences.

4. The Current Ritual (2023)

The current *Ritual*, approved definitively in 2023, is presented as a collection divided into two parts:

- *First Part: contains the liturgical acts practiced in community life, including the celebratory norms for chapters, and the rites related to formation in religious life and secular fraternities.*
- *Second Part: is a complementary anthology gathering the general norms that guide community celebrations, featuring biblical texts, prayers, hymns, blessings, and Augustinian writings.*

4.1 Liturgical Acts

“The essential reason for which you have come together is that you live in unity in the house, having one heart and one mind intent upon God” (Reg 3). These solemn words express the very essence of the Augustinian monastic ideal — for this reason you have come together — and represent its beating heart. The expression *“upon God” (in Deum)* qualifies the love with which religious are to love one another.

Following the example of the first apostolic community: *“They had every-*

thing in common, and it was distributed to each according to his need” (Acts 4:32).

Therefore, liturgical acts are means placed at the disposal of the confreres to carry out this holy purpose. These acts are divided into **five categories**:

- *Daily Liturgical Acts,*
- *Periodic Liturgical Acts,*
- *Occasional Liturgical Acts,*
- *Chapters – Provincial, Local, of Peace, and of Renewal,*
- *Religious Life,*
- *Secular Fraternities, and Lay Associations.*

a) Daily Liturgical Acts

Among the Daily Liturgical Acts, the Mass — the Eucharist — holds the first place. Regarding the Eucharist, we read:

“The most August sacrament is the Most Holy Eucharist in which Christ the Lord himself is contained, offered, and received and by which the Church continually lives and grows. The eucharistic sacrifice, the memorial of the death and resurrection of the Lord, in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated through the ages is the summit and source of all worship and Christian life, which signifies and effects the unity of the People of God and brings about the building up of the body of Christ. Indeed, the other sacraments and all the ecclesiastical works of the apostolate are closely connected with the Most Holy Eucharist and ordered to it.

(CIC 897)

The Eucharist is fundamental in Catholic religious life because it represents the real presence of Jesus Christ in the bread and wine, serving as spiritual nourishment that grants grace, strength, and unity among the faithful, culminating in the celebration of the Mass, the central rite of this sacrament.

Thus, the Eucharist, the center of Christian life, becomes for consecrated life both a model and a source of inspira-

tion, while consecrated life, through the evangelical counsels, is called to embody the Eucharistic dimension in action and service. In light of all this, it becomes a duty to prepare adequately for the liturgical celebration — for, as is rightly said, the liturgy cannot be improvised.

Given the importance of the Eucharist in consecrated life, which also possesses a contemplative dimension, it is clear that prayer assumes a fundamental importance, understood as a moment of intimate, personal encounter with God.

The Second Vatican Council, after recalling that the first duty of religious is to seek and love God, and to nourish the hidden life with Christ in God (*Perfectae Caritatis* 6), immediately adds: “*Therefore, members of institutes should diligently cultivate a spirit of prayer, drawing it from the genuine sources of Christian spirituality*” (PC 8b), namely, Sacred Scripture and the liturgy, especially the most holy mystery of the Eucharist.

The religious, by virtue of his total consecration to God, is called to “know” the Risen Lord through a fervent personal



experience, to know Him as a Person with whom he lives in deep communion. This takes place, in a primary and essential way, in both personal and communal encounter with God through prayer.

We have dwelt somewhat on these two liturgical acts — the Eucharist and prayer — because we consider the intimate relationship with the Lord to be fundamental: it is the response to the experienced love of God, which opens the way to a sincere relationship with one's neighbor.

Saint Augustine emphasizes this in the *Prologue* to the *Rule*: “*Brothers, first love God, and then your neighbor, for these are the precepts given to us as fundamental*” (Reg. 1).

b) Other Liturgical Acts

All the Liturgical Acts mentioned in the *Ritual* are intended to regulate the life of individual communities as well as that of the whole network of communities that together form a Province (or the Order).

When we highlight some characteristics of our *Ritual* compared to others, we can note: its sobriety, its fidelity to Augustinian spirituality, and its emphasis on the communal dimension.

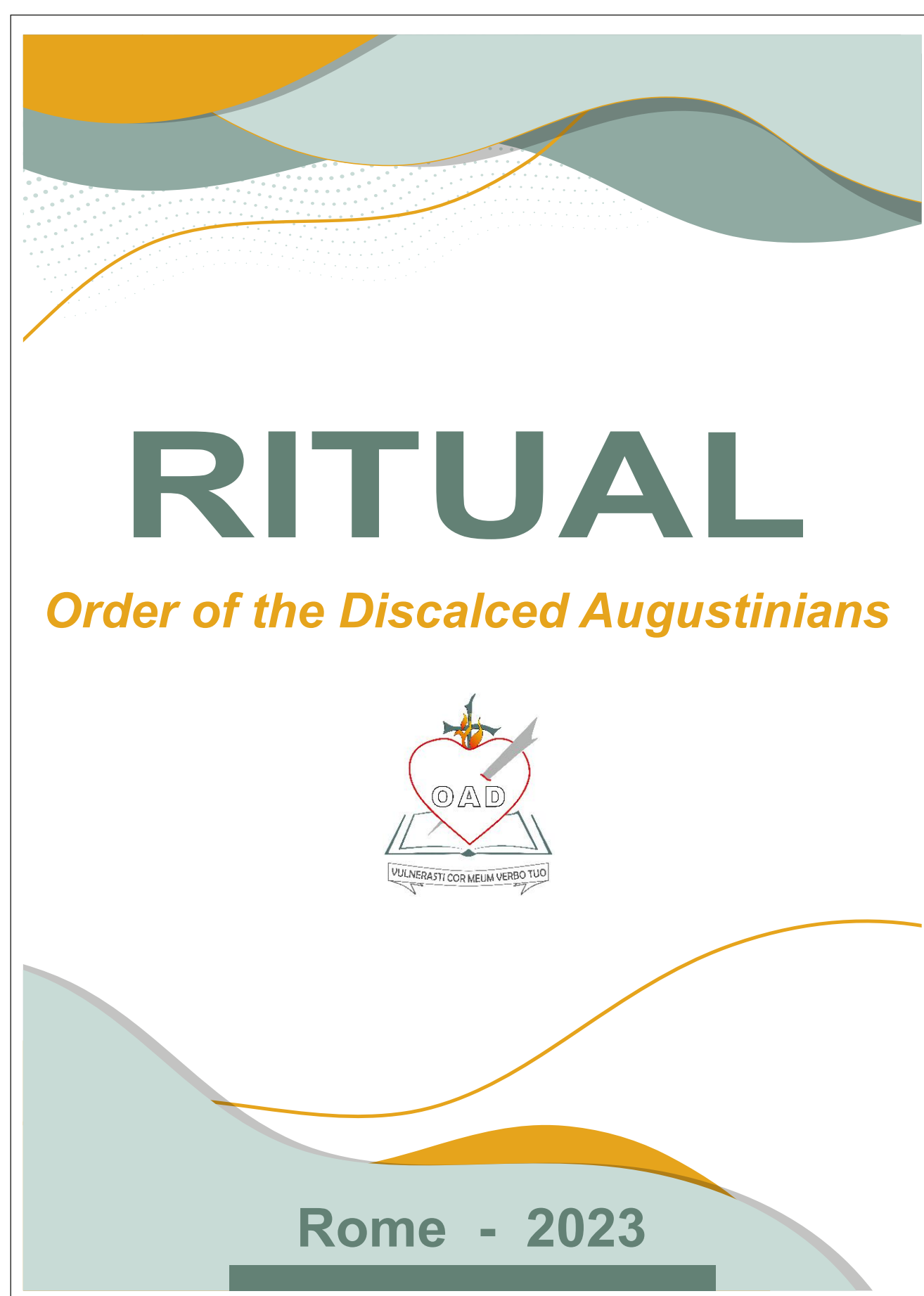
Moreover, our *Ritual* — compared with those of the other Augustinian families, though all share the same root — has preserved certain distinct features of the Reformed branch, such as: an emphasis on interiority, the centrality of fraternal life, liturgical simplicity, and the value given to silence and contemplation.

All these distinctive elements must be promoted and lived, lest the identity of the Discalced Augustinians be put at risk.

In today's world — where literary and cultural production is abundant and the law of least effort often leads people to rely on what the market offers — we must learn to value the richness of what we already possess. Therefore, the use of the Augustinian anthology should be prioritized in pastoral and catechetical contexts.

We must also acknowledge that, as we now live in a multicultural reality, our *Ritual* awaits enrichment from confreres of other cultures. The evangelizing mission today cannot do without the process of inculturation. Consequently, the *Ritual* must enter into a dynamic of continuous renewal.

Beyond its normative function, the *Ritual* remains an important source of Augustinian spirituality, since it brings together essential elements of the *Rule* of Saint Augustine, the *Constitutions*, the *Directory*, and the tradition of our venerable friars who preceded us.





Order of the Discalced Augustinians



CONVENTION THE SOURCES OF OUR SPIRITUALITY

**General Curia, Rome - Italy
October 6-10, 2025**

October 6-7 Conferences on the Sources of OAD Spirituality
October 8-9 Jubilee of Consecrated Life in the Vatican
October 10 Pilgrimage to Batignano/Grosseto,
place of the Venerable Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci





Fr. Diones Rafael Paganotto, oad
@freidiones

COMPLEMENTARY SOURCES

Living Expressions of our Spirituality



Abstract: *alongside the traditional sources of our Discalced Augustinian spirituality — the works of Saint Augustine, the Proper Law (Constitutions and Directory), the Ritual, the Acts of the General Chapters, the writings and figures of the Venerables — there also exist important sources that com-*

plete and enrich the knowledge of the charism: the Presenza Agostiniana journal, the Liturgical Calendar, the General Archive, the Analecta Ordinis, the official website oadnet.org, and the Ratio Generalis Institutionis, which support the formative journey and help to preserve and transmit our charism.

The sources of spirituality are the collection of texts, traditions, and testimonies that preserve and transmit our charism: *Joyfully serving the Most High in spirit of humility.*

They are: the writings of Saint Augustine (*Opera omnia*), the Proper Law (*Constitutions, Directory*), the *Ritual*, the General Chapters, and the writings and lives of the Venerables.

These sources are the **channels** through which the Holy Spirit continues

to speak to us today. Their knowledge is essential for living our consecration well: *“No one can love what is completely unknown”* (De Trinit. 10,1,1).

This article focuses its attention on **other sources** of our spirituality, complementary to those already mentioned, which constitute valuable instruments offered to all members of the Order to deepen, live, and study more fully their own identity.

Fr. Diones Rafael Paganotto during his lecture

1. Presenza Agostiniana journal

Introduction

Presenza Agostiniana is today the only organic and continuous source of the Order’s memory over the past fifty years.

Its pages chronologically retrace the most significant events that have marked our life: Provincial and General Chapters, names, faces, dates, decisions, and formation, among others.

It serves as both a means of communication and a living archive of the Order’s history.

However, the history of the journal is marked by complex transitions, geographical tensions, material difficulties, and continuous transformations, all of which have helped shape its identity

This section seeks to retrace those stages and present the journal’s characteristics as a source of our spirituality.

1.1 Origins and the Genoese Phase (1974-1975)

On December 28, 1973, during a meeting between the Commissary of the Genoese Province, Fr. Felice Rimassa, and his two Councillors, the idea of creating a Provincial journal was discussed, one that would focus on Discalced

Augustinian spirituality and the vocation question.

At that time, the Province’s communities each had their own bulletin, such as La Madonnetta (from the Santuario della Madonnetta in Genoa) and Fede e Lavoro (from the Parish of St. Monica and St. Maximus in Collegno). The idea was to unite them into a single publication, responding to the need to communicate with the faithful, much like today’s influencers do.

After much discussion about a meaningful title, Presenza Agostiniana (Augustinian Presence) was chosen: the Order had to be present among laitys who frequented our communities.

In February 1974, the first issue of Presenza Agostiniana was published, with the subtitle: Journal of the Vocational Center of the Discalced Augustinian Fathers, and with a vocational and informative character.

liberati
dalla
verità

La verità rende liberi: essa attira con tanta vicinanza da vincere ogni ostacolo che ne impedisca il conseguimento. La verità rende liberi: illumina sul valore reale degli avvenimenti personali e comuni; essa elimina i condizionamenti e le prevenzioni che si accompagnano necessariamente all'ignoranza.

Per i credenti cristiani è più facile giustificare le esigenze e i diritti della verità, più facile apprezzarne la eminenza, perché essa si identifica con il Maestro che disse: « sono io la Verità ». Alfermazione gratuita, hanno continuato a pensare molti, proseguendo a cercarla, la verità, solo nei ponderosi volumi che re rivedicano la proprietà esclusiva. Definizione interessan-

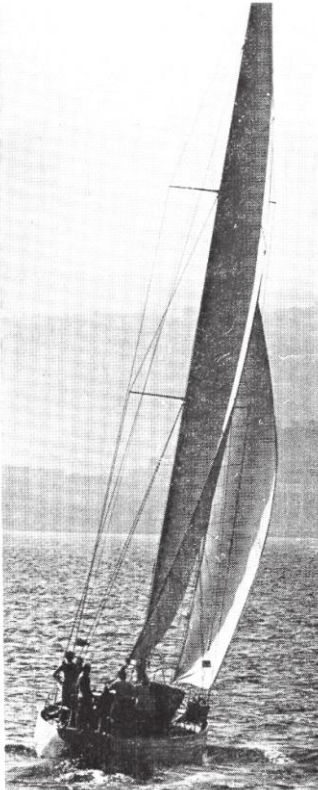
sante ed arricchente per altri. Dichiarazione folgorante per coloro i quali, come il generoso Paolo di Tarso, non si interessano d'altri che di Cristo perché « ciò che è stoltezza di Dio è più sapiente degli uomini », ed egli, Cristo, è diventato per essi « sapienza ». Accettare in assoluto l'identificazione tra Cristo e la verità comporta il distacco da ragionamenti interessati che rendono opaca la Verità; da atteggiamenti egotistici che la limitano; da alleanze vantaggiose che la addomesticano; comporta il rispetto della coscienza altrui e non delle paure ed incertezze proprie.

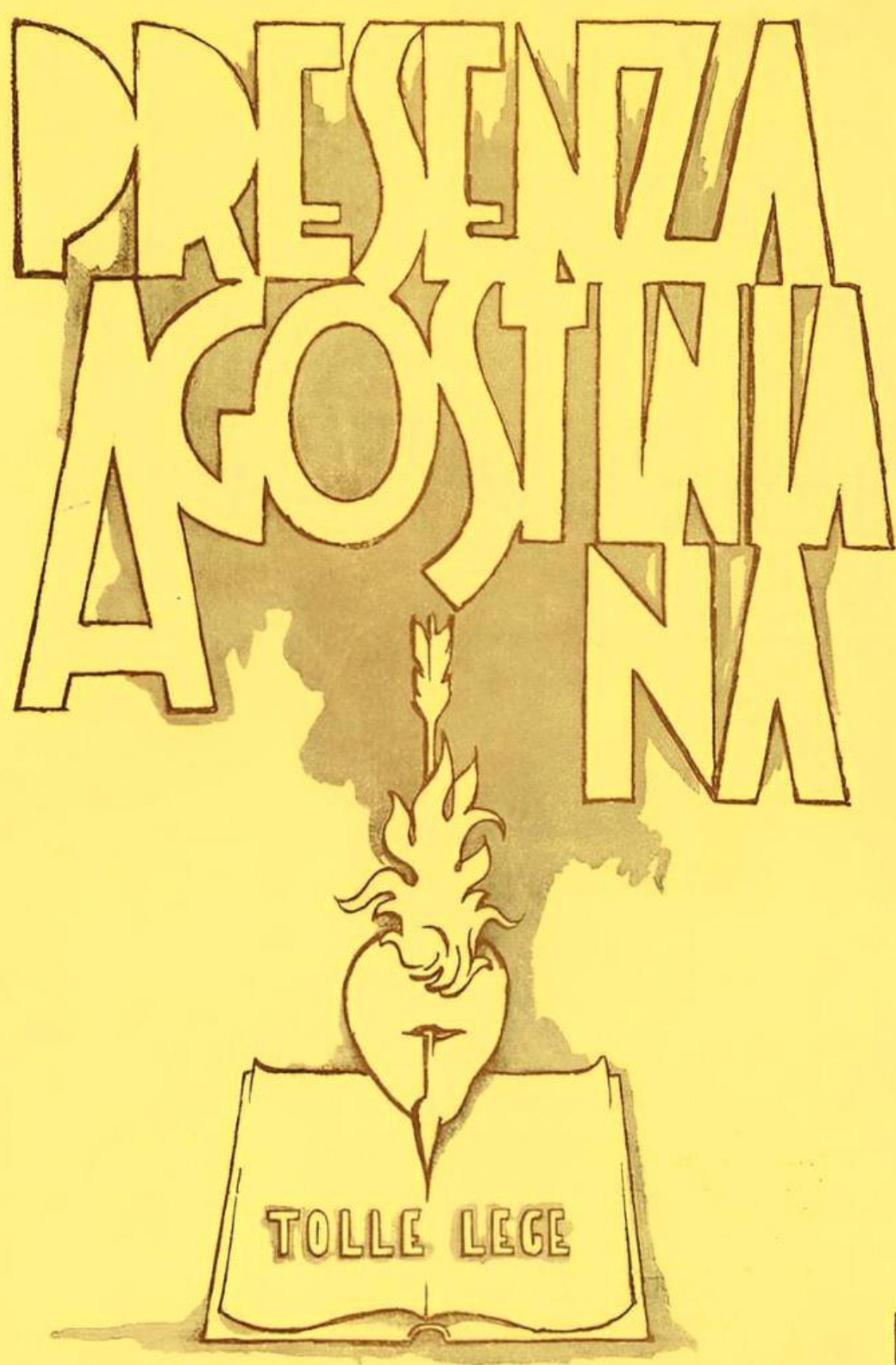
Il religioso, il frate, la suora, attribuiscono questo significato alla loro rinuncia che vorrebbe essere spogliazione totale: liberazione per il conseguimento della Verità, abbandono di tutto perché la sola Verità è più che sufficiente, disponibilità alla Verità.

Allora sono nate le associazioni religiose: quando uno o più credenti hanno risposto alle attese degli uomini e si sono impegnati per la verità fino al dono totale di sé. Credenti non sedotti dal profitto economico; perciò liberi; non frenati da interessi di classe; perciò liberi; non timorosi di perdere ciò che avevano abbandonato spontaneamente; perciò liberi; non in trepidazione per se stessi perché disposti al sacrificio: perciò liberi.

Il religioso, il frate, la suora, attribuiscono questo significato alla loro rinuncia che vorrebbe essere spogliazione totale: liberazione per il conseguimento della Verità, abbandono di tutto perché la sola Verità è più che sufficiente, disponibilità alla Verità.

Pur troppo — come fa notare Ernesto Balducci — può succedere che coloro i quali





Genova Febbraio 1974 - spedizione abb. post. Garzanti IV

From the very beginning, the journal featured regular sections: chronicle, history, anthology, vocational activity, and news. In its early years, *Presenza Agostiniana* was produced in an almost artisanal manner, later moving to lead printing, that is, **linotype**, where each line was manually composed using metal blocks.

In the following years, printing was entrusted to various printing houses in Spoleto, Frosinone, Rome, and Teramo, in addition to a period when it was printed within the General Curia itself.

Therefore, this first Genoese phase (1974–1975) was characterized by a vocational and informative focus, consistent with the local needs of a Province.

1.2 Change of Headquarters and the Italian Phase (1976-1999)

The **General Chapter of 1975** gave the Order a strong missionary orientation. It was a time when, after a long vocational stagnation (since 1948, the missionaries had remained only in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil), the Order sought to revive its presence in new contexts.

At the general level, the Order still lacked an official means of communication and collaboration among the four Provinces: Genoese, Roman, Marchigian, and Sicilian.

On **January 14, 1976**, the new Prior General, Fr. Felice Rimassa, after discussing the matter with the Genoese Commissary, proposed to the General Definitory that the journal be transferred to Rome and declared the **Official Journal of the Order**.

The minutes state that:

“ Its character was Augustinian, vocational, and missionary. It was to be the written reflection of our life. Every religious was therefore to cherish it as his own journal and commit himself, besides contributing with articles, to offering advice, suggestions, and to spreading it among friends and acquaintances, seeking subscribers. ”

Presenza Agostiniana thus took on the role of a tool for **formation and information**, aiming to widely disseminate Discalced Augustinian spirituality, especially in Italy.

Alongside the journal, the series **Quaderni di Spiritualità Agostiniana** later emerged as an additional instrument of formation, accompanying the revision of the Constitutions following the Second Vatican Council..

However, there were tensions and challenges: *a limited number of subscribers; a small pool of writers (mainly from the General Curia and Genoa); geographical contrasts, with some Genoese friars feeling disconnected from the jour-*

nal, while the General Curia struggled to produce a publication meeting expectations.

Over time, however, a stronger **sense of belonging** developed, helping to unite the Order and foster growth, thanks in part to the commitment of Priors General Fr. Felice Rimassa and Fr. Eugenio Cavallari, who oversaw a gradual qualitative leap, seeking greater academic depth, even at the cost of less popular appeal.

Thus, in this second Italian phase (1976–1999), the journal developed a strong formative character, in harmony with the Order's mission, affirming itself as the official instrument of communication.

1.3 Expansion and International Phase (2000-2023)

Starting in **2000**, after the Great Jubilee, *Presenza Agostiniana* underwent a graphic renewal, introducing new sections and contributions from **lays, religious sisters, and authors from other Orders**.

During those years, the Order experienced a significant reorganization: the creation of **two Provinces** (Italy and Brazil) and **one Delegation** (the Philippines) fostered greater sharing of our spirituality on an international level.

The arrival of professed friars in Italy for studies, the various Provincial Chapters, the opening of new houses, and the stories of everyday missionary life gained increasing prominence in the journal, which became ever more the mirror and voice of a **spirituality lived and shared** beyond Italian borders. However, the limitation of using only the Italian language still remained.

The journal also strengthened its presence within Augustinian circles in Europe and for many years maintained an **exchange network** with other Augustinian journals, including:

Percorsi Agostiniani (Augustinians of Italy); *La Ciudad de Dios* (Augustinians of Spain); *Augustinus* (Recoletos of Spain); *Augustiniana* (Augustinians of Belgium); *Revue d'Études Augustiniennes et Patristiques* (Assumptionists of France).

Many **special issues** have been published, dedicated to important events, significant figures of the Order, and thematic collections:

- 1980: *Iconografia di Sant'Agostino nei conventi OAD* (vol. 42),
- 1982: *Indice bibliografico degli Agostiniani Scalzi* (vol. 52),

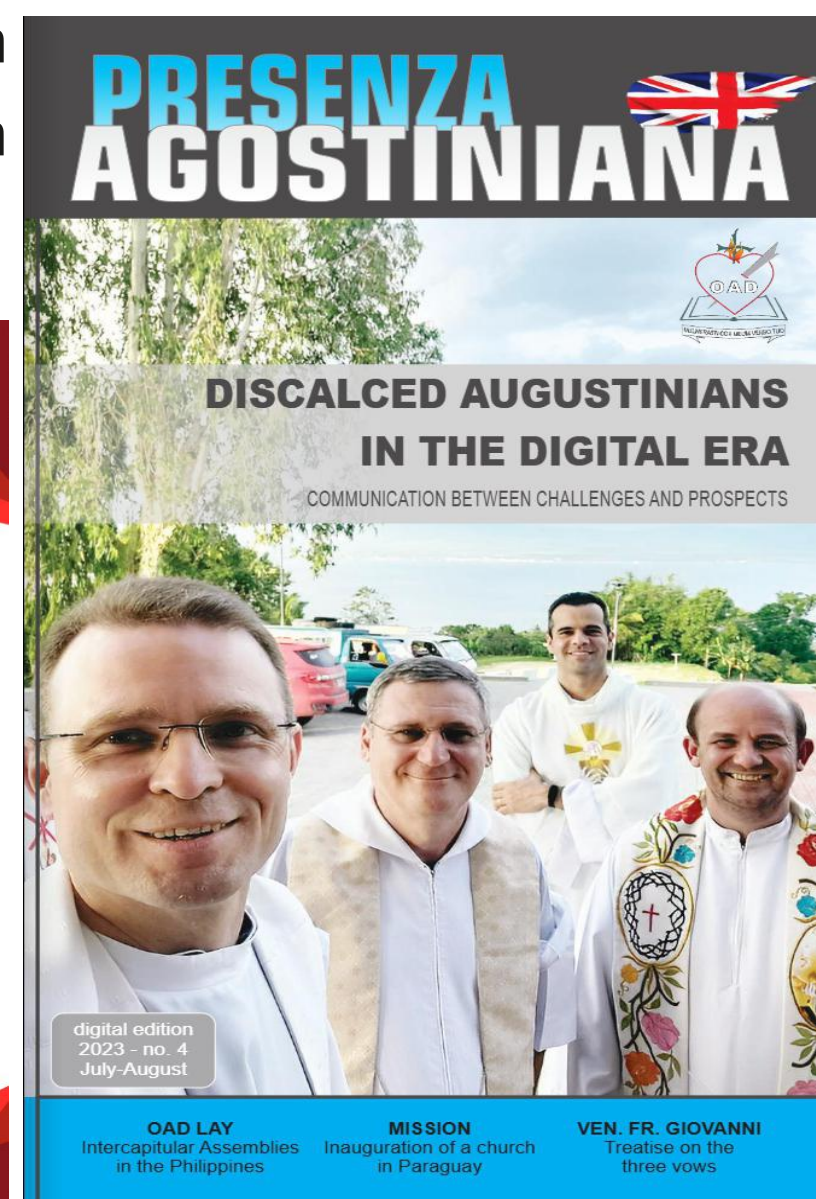
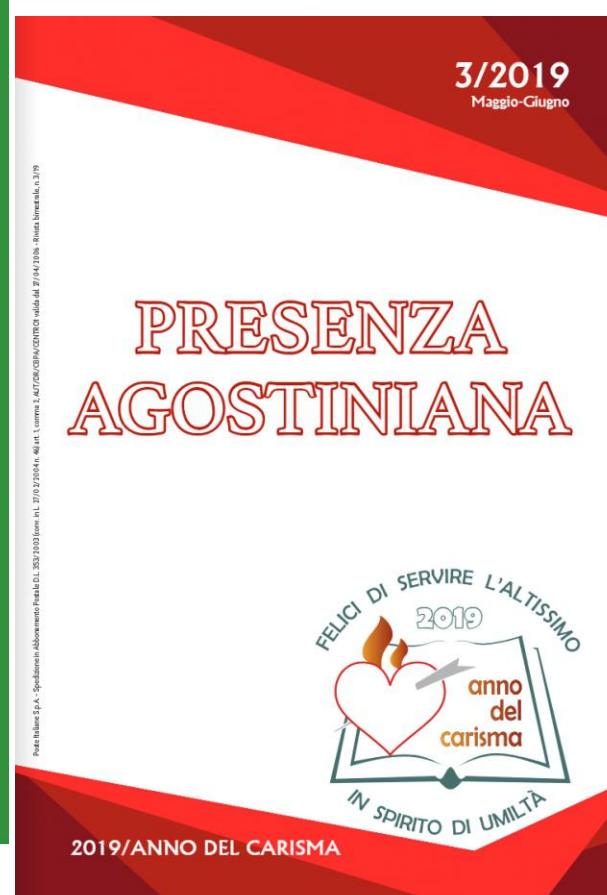
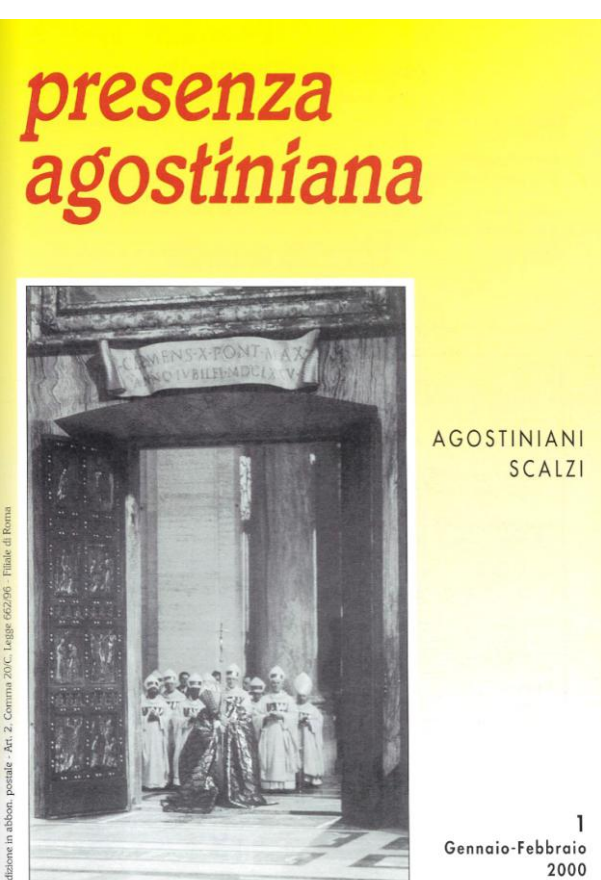


- 1987: *XVI Centenario del Battesimo di Sant'Agostino* (vol. 81),
- 1988: *Anno mariano* (vol. 85),
- 1989: *Ven. Fra Santo di San Domenico* (vol. 92),
- 1990: *Atti del corso di formazione permanente* (vol. 97),
- 1992: *IV centenario di fondazione dell'Ordine – 1592-1992* (vol. 105),
- 1993: *Ven. Paola Renata Carboni* (vol. 110),
- 1995: *Corso di formazione permanente* (vol. 119),
- 1996: *P. Andrea Diaz* (vol. 122),
- 2004: *Reliquie di Sant'Agostino a Roma* (vol. 159),
- 2021: *III centenario della morte del Ven. P. Carlo Giacinto* (vol. 251),
- 2023: *80th General Chapter (trilingual – vol. 264)*

In **2017**, the new Prior General, Fr. Dorian Ceteroni, established the **General Office for Publications**, which became the department responsible for the journal, aiming to involve more people and expand its dissemination.

However, the traditional printed version faced well-known challenges: high production costs and persistent financial deficits, declining subscriptions, lengthy and cumbersome postal delivery times, an audience limited to the Italian language, the new multicultural reality of the Order, and diminished internal interest.

In **2023**, the 80th General Chapter entrusted the new General Curia with the revitalization and continuation of the journal.



Over more than 50 years of history, *Presenza Agostiniana* has had only **three directors**: Fr. Felice Rimassa (1974-1993), Fr. Pietro Scalia (1993-2003), and Fr. Gabriele Ferlisi (2003-...). A clear sign of continuity and stability of this important and fundamental source of our spirituality.

Thus, in this third international phase (2000–2023), the journal's outlook expanded to other countries, with numerous articles on spirituality, cultural exchanges, and greater attention to the life of the various communities.

The new General Director for Communications (no longer just “for Publications”), Fr. Diones Rafael Paganotto, launched a series of studies and consultations, leading the journal into a new phase: **digital and trilingual** (Italian, English, and Portuguese), with a **renewed editorial approach**, initially focusing on **specific themes** for each of the twelve issues published, which were promptly disseminated and shared with readers in many regions around the world, with the possibility of reading and downloading.



2023: 80th General Chapter

- 80th General Chapter
- The Discalced Augustinians in the Digital Age
- Young People and Our Charism
- In Communion with the Church
- Augustinian Prayer
- Centers of Spirituality
- The Causes of the Saints
- 30 Years in the Philippines
- The 2025 Jubilee
- Religious Vows
- Apostolate
- Pope Leo XIV

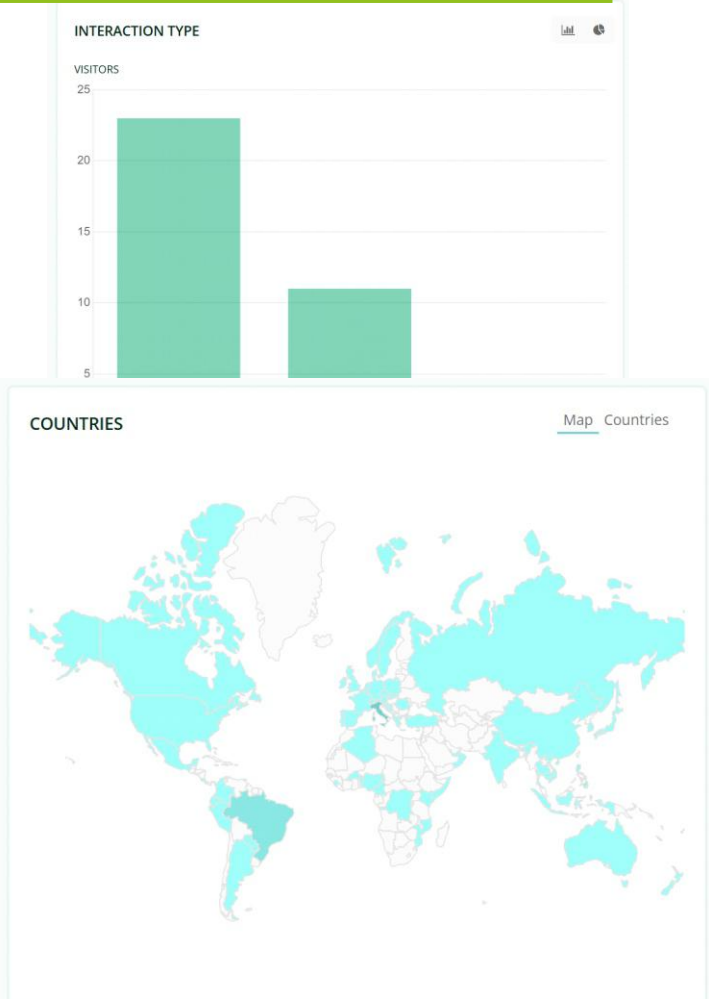
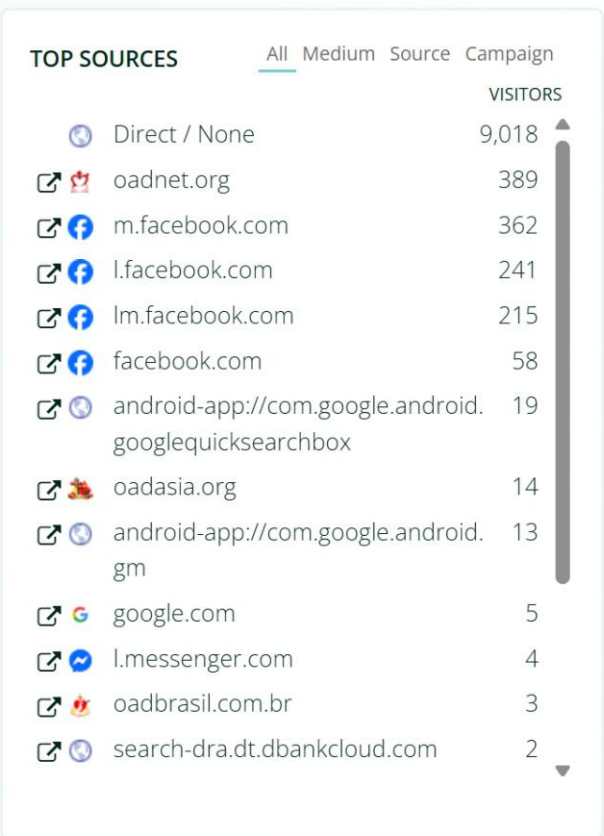
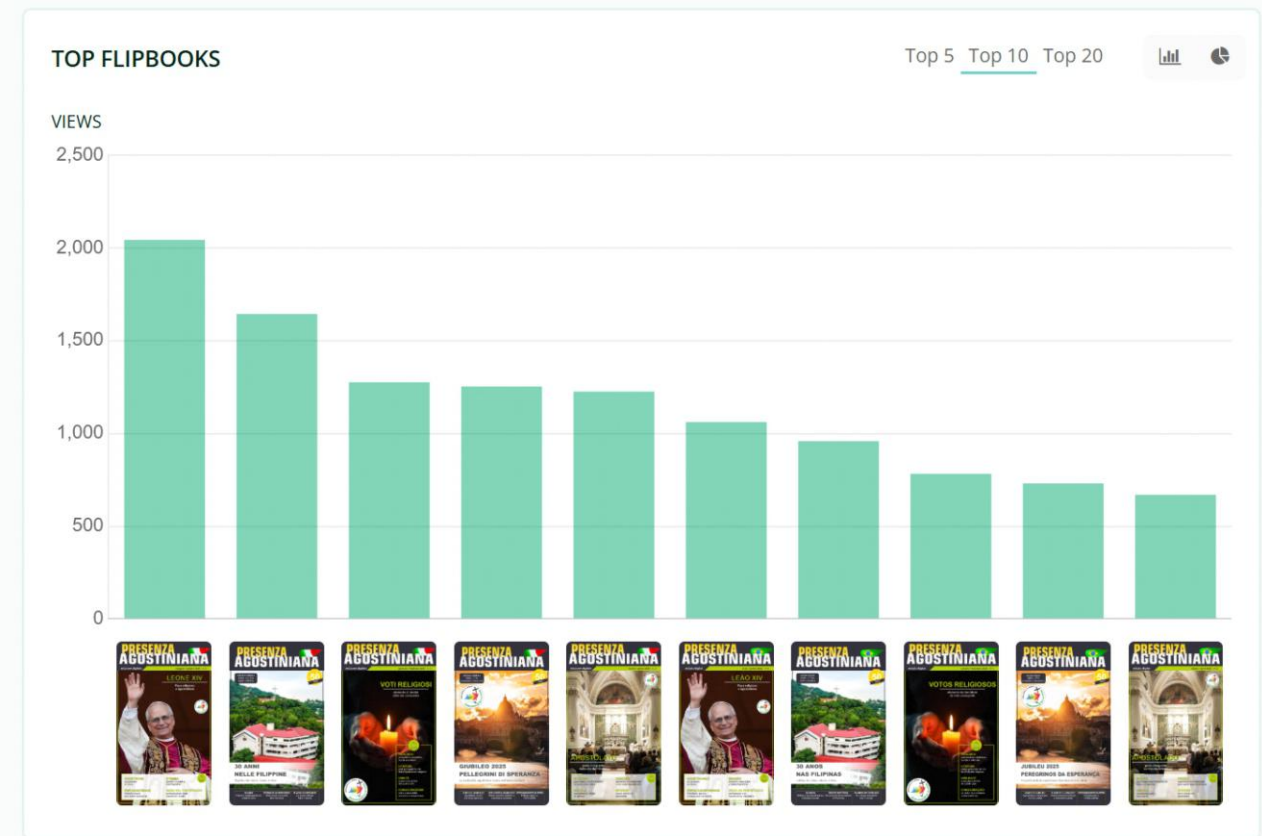
Currently, **all 275 volumes** of the journal are available on the Order’s website for reading, consultation, and download.

The digital platform Heyzine provides a full **access report**: from July 2023 to September 2025, there have been 35,036 accesses (22,860 visitors), averaging about 1,298 accesses per month. The most recent issues receive the highest number of visits, though the

older ones are still being viewed. The most accessed issue so far is Volume 268 (No. 1 – January/February 2024, Italian edition), on Augustinian Prayer, with 2,252 views.

Some readers have reported **difficulty** reading the journal on smartphones, tablets, or computers. However, the ability to access online, download, and print individual pages or entire volumes has made consultation much easier, more complete, and faster. Moreover, sharing via link allows the journal to reach a far wider audience than the approximately 250 subscribers and religious communities that received the last printed editions.

Thus, in this fourth digital phase (2023...), the journal has fully entered the online world of rapid communication, becoming more thematic and informative, multilingual, and strengthening its international profile.



Conclusion

The vitality of *Presenza Agostiniana* depends on one fundamental factor: **the passion of both religious and lay people for Saint Augustine and for the Order**. Only in this way can the journal become rich, beautiful, profound, and an integral part of our spirituality, helping us rediscover an authentic Augustinian identity and serving as a true source of our spirituality. It is not merely about reading, copying, or binding, but about **rediscovering, sharing, and collaborating**.

The online project is still in its early stages and faces major challenges in its development and dissemination: to expand the network of readers, to increase the number of contributors, to

make the editorial board more participatory, to collaborate with the General Director for Communications in editing and design, and to improve the formative content, so that the journal does not become merely an instrument of information, but something to be read, lived, and shared.

In short, there is a need for **shared responsibility and collaboration** to ensure its continuity and to make it truly a “Augustinian presence” wherever we are. If it manages to renew itself without losing its soul, the journal will continue to be a precious instrument for communion, formation, history, and the charismatic identity of the Order: a true source of our spirituality.



2. Liturgical Calendar

Introduction

Two elements find their synthesis in the *Liturgical Calendar*:

- the organization of time, which marks religious life;
- and the celebration of the mystery of salvation, which unfolds annually within the liturgy.

The Calendar is not merely a list of dates, but rather the organization of life in the light of liturgical celebration. It is a true **pedagogy of memory**, which preserves our identity, inserts us into the rhythm of the Church, and accompanies us day by day in the celebration of faith.

By tracing its history, from the first post-conciliar editions to the most recent revisions, we can understand how the Calendar has become, for us Discalced Augustinians, a genuine source of spirituality, and one of the most frequently used instruments by the friars in daily life.

2.1 Post-Conciliar Calendar (1966-1970)

The **Second Vatican Council** (1962–1965) was a milestone of renewal for the Church.

On **December 4, 1963**, the Constitution ***Sacrosanctum Concilium*** was promulgated, the first conciliar document that initiated the liturgical reform, introducing principles such as: the simplification of rites, the use of vernacular languages, and the greater participation of the faithful.

During this period of renewal, religious Orders were invited to update their celebrations in accordance with the new *Roman Calendar*.

In **1966**, the Prior General, Fr. Gabriele Marinucci, published in **Latin** the volume:



Ordo Divini Officii Recitandi sacrique perangedi iuxta calendarium Ordinis Augustiniensium Discalceatorum Pro Anno Domini 1966

Provisions for the Recitation of the Divine Office [Liturgy of the Hours] and for the Celebration of the Holy Mass according to the Calendar of the Order of the Discalced Augustinians for the Year of the Lord 1966

The Order, faithful to tradition yet open to renewal, responded promptly by providing the confreres with a tool that united Augustinian identity with the reformed liturgy. This edition presented, day by day, the liturgical indications for the celebration of the **Mass** and the **Liturgy of the Hours**.

It was still an **initial** phase, but one that reestablished the foundations of the liturgical path proper to our Order.



2.2 Post-Conciliar Calenda
(1971-1997)

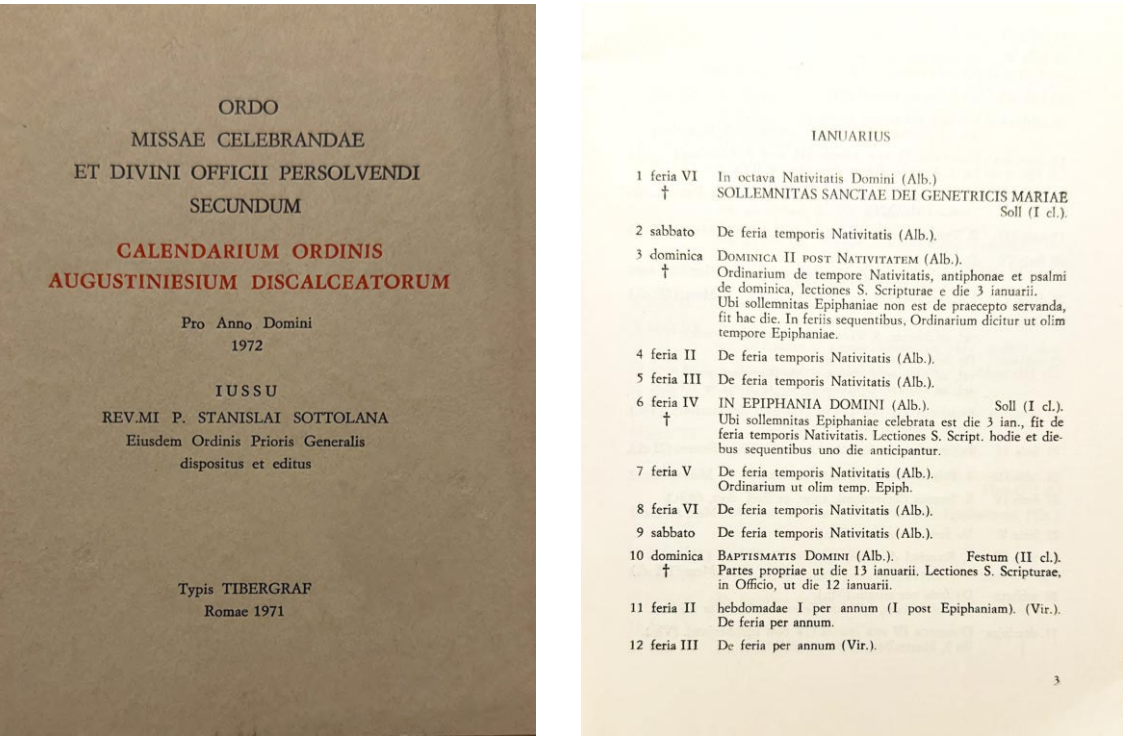
In 1971, Fr. Stanislao Sottolana, Prior General, provisionally titled the annual publication:

Calendarium Ordinis Augustiniensium
Discalceatorum Pro Anno Domini 1971
Calendar of the Order of the Discalced
Augustinians for the Year of the Lord 1971

In this way, the idea of the Calendar was consolidated as a means to live and celebrate the daily liturgy in communion.

In 1972, the title was resumed as:

Ordo Missae celebrandae et Divini
Officii persolvendi secundum Calendarium
Ordinis Augustiniensium Discalceatorum
pro Anno Domini 1972
Order for the Celebration of Mass and
the Recitation of the Divine Office
according to the Calendar
of the Order of the Discalced
Augustinians for the Year of the Lord 1972



In 1976, the Prior General, Fr. Felice Rimassa, published for the first time the Calendar in the Italian language under the title:

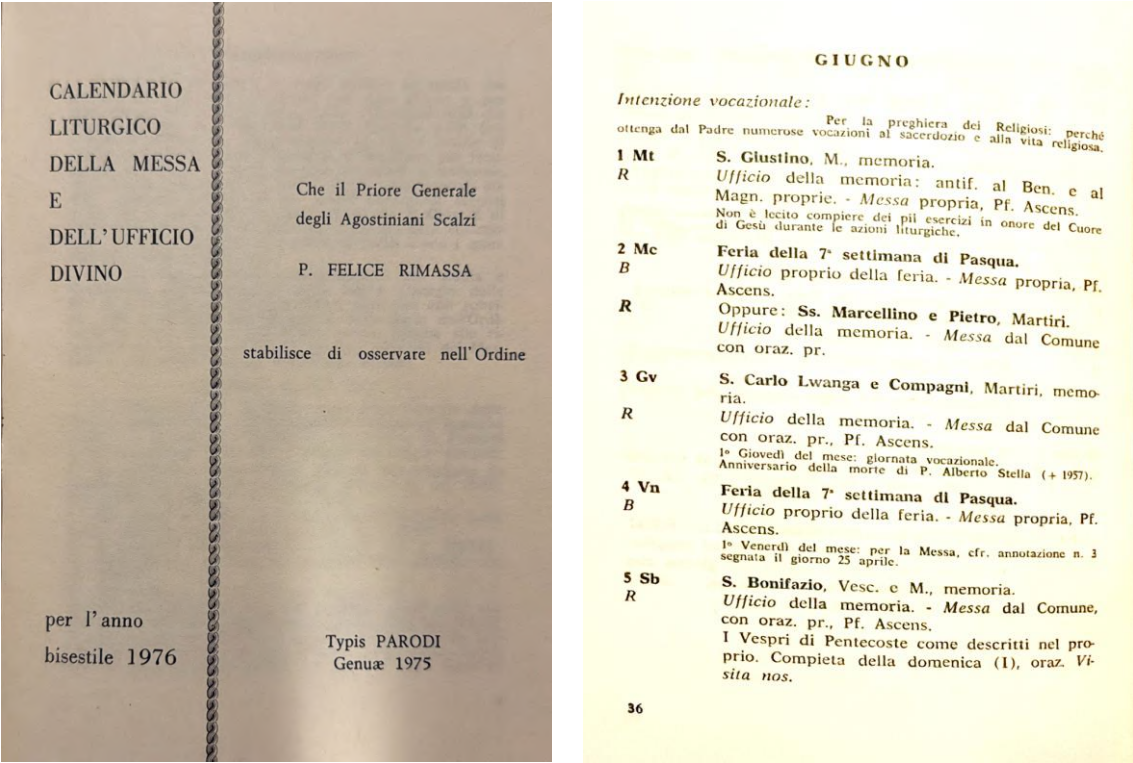
Liturgical Calendar of the Mass
and the Divine Office

Common monthly intentions of prayer for the entire Order were introduced, thus presenting the Calendar as a concrete instrument of communion and unity:

This Calendar has been prepared so as to offer our Religious, for each day and each season of the Liturgical

Year, the useful indications regarding both the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours and of the Mass; as well as general information such as the Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity, various world and national days, etc.; and also those items directly concerning us, such as the anniversaries of our deceased confreres and of priestly silver jubilees, the celebration of the first Thursday of each month, established by the Prior General as a vocational day, the beginning of certain devotions, such as the fifteen Thursdays of St. Rita, etc.

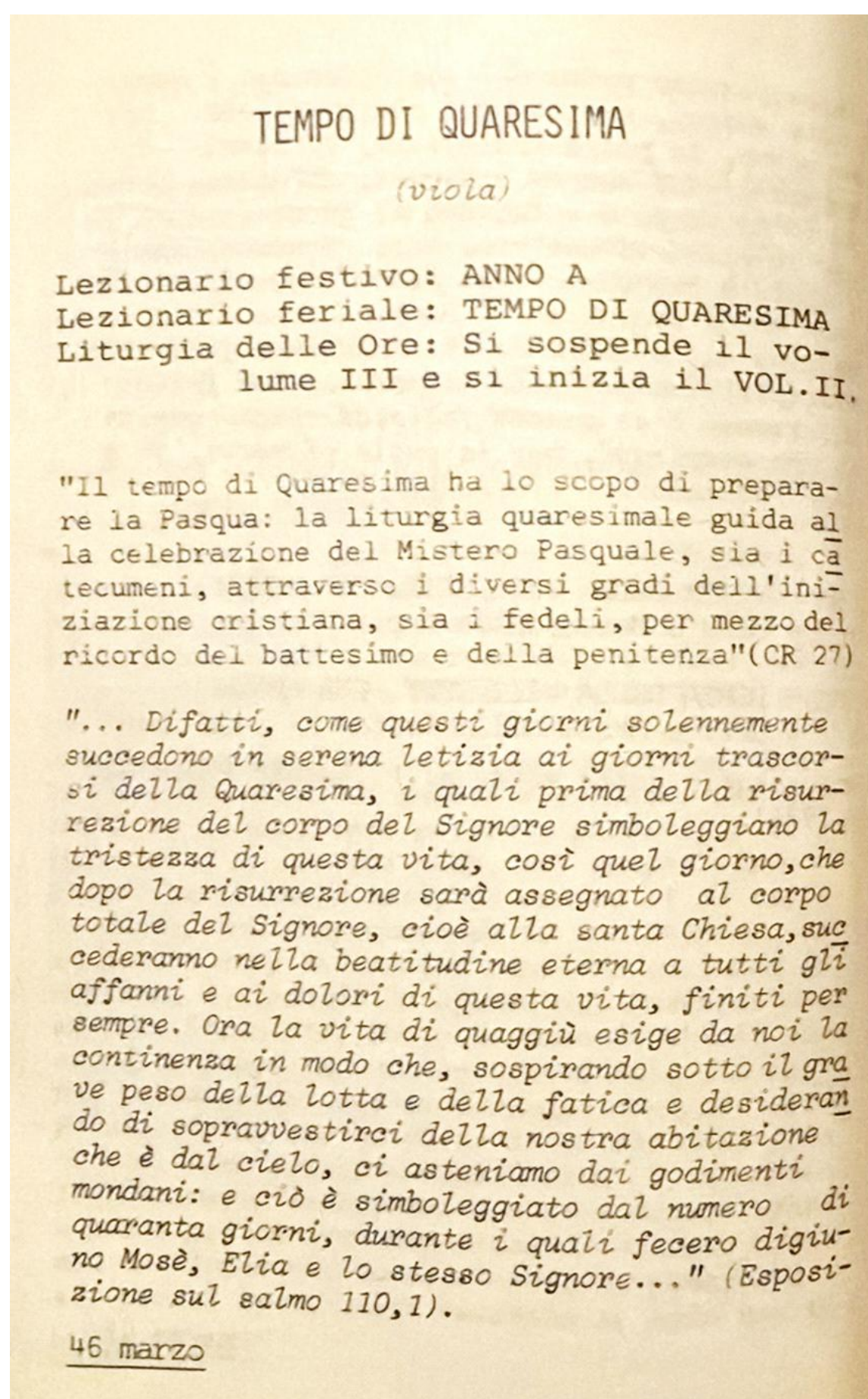
For broader and more detailed information regarding the structure of the new Liturgy of the Hours and the Eucharistic Celebration, reference is made to the rubrics found in the Missal and in the Ordinary section of each volume of the Divine Office, as well as to the general norms at the beginning of the Missal and of the first volume of the Divine Office.



The Calendar retained the most important information for the celebration of the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours, adding commemorations related to our history, jubilees, the remembrance of deceased confreres, and our typical devotional practices.

In 1981, the Calendar began to be guided by two practical principles: **usefulness and simplicity**. In addition to

the liturgical rubrics for the principal celebrations, quotations from **Augustinian texts** were added to encourage a greater familiarity and reading of St. Augustine.



In **1982**, the list of plenary indulgences proper to the Augustinian family and the addresses of the communities were included, giving the volume a format more akin to a **Liturgical Agenda**, useful even outside the celebration of Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours.

In **1985**, the volume received a new graphic design (colored cover) and was presented as a **Vademecum** (from the Latin *vade mecum*, meaning “go with me”), indicating a small manual containing essential information and practical instructions on a given subject:

As for several years now, this Calendar has been prepared as a valuable Vademecum.

Indeed, it contains, besides the liturgical rubrics, also many other pieces of information concerning our life. For

example: jubilee anniversaries of profession

and priesthood, anniversaries of our deceased confreres (since 1945), devotional practices proper to our Order, such as the fifteen Thursdays in honor of St. Rita, titular feasts of our churches, the list of indulgences proper to the Augustinian Family, the addresses and telephone numbers of our houses, etc.

In particular, that year, in view of the celebration of the 16th Centenary of the Conversion of St. Augustine (1986–1987), the Calendar aimed to serve as a useful aid for meditation and perhaps also for catechesis on that important historical event.

How? By focusing, at the beginning of each month, on an Augustinian theme, and gathering around it some quotations from St. Augustine, printed at the bottom of each page. Of course, these were only very brief indications, which then required further personal study and reflection.

The Augustinian quotations and excerpts from our Statutes appeared on every page, making the *Calendar* once again a true **source** from which to draw the essential elements of our liturgical and Augustinian spirituality.

In **1986**, the final title change took place:

Liturgical Calendar

In **1988**, the Prior General, Fr. Eugenio Cavallari, included a specific and official **introduction** in the Calendar, prepared by the Secretariat for Studies and Formation:

Dearest Brothers, I present the new Calendar of the Order, hoping that it may be for everyone a valuable liturgical aid and a useful instrument of communion. The liturgy, uniting us to the

prayer and sacrifice of Jesus, becomes the center of contemplative, communal, and apostolic life.

Two texts of St. Augustine remind us of this: “The highest work of man is only to praise God” (In Ps. 44,9), and “Christ prays for us as our Priest, prays in us as our Head, and is prayed to by us as our God. Let us recognize in Him our voice and in ourselves His voice” (In Ps. 85,1).

Keeping this reality in mind, we will enter into the very heart of the mystery, tasting and helping the faithful to taste the richness of liturgical life.

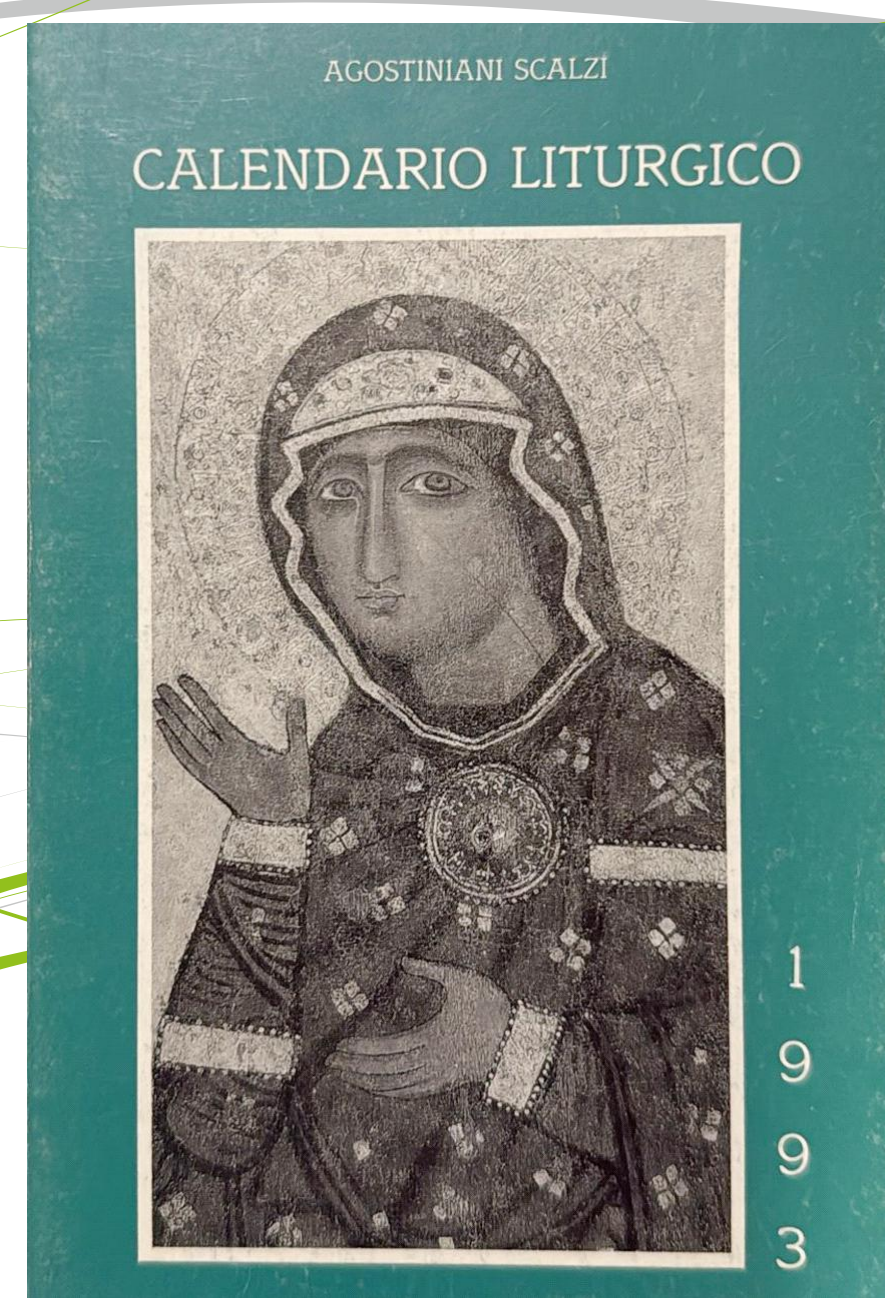
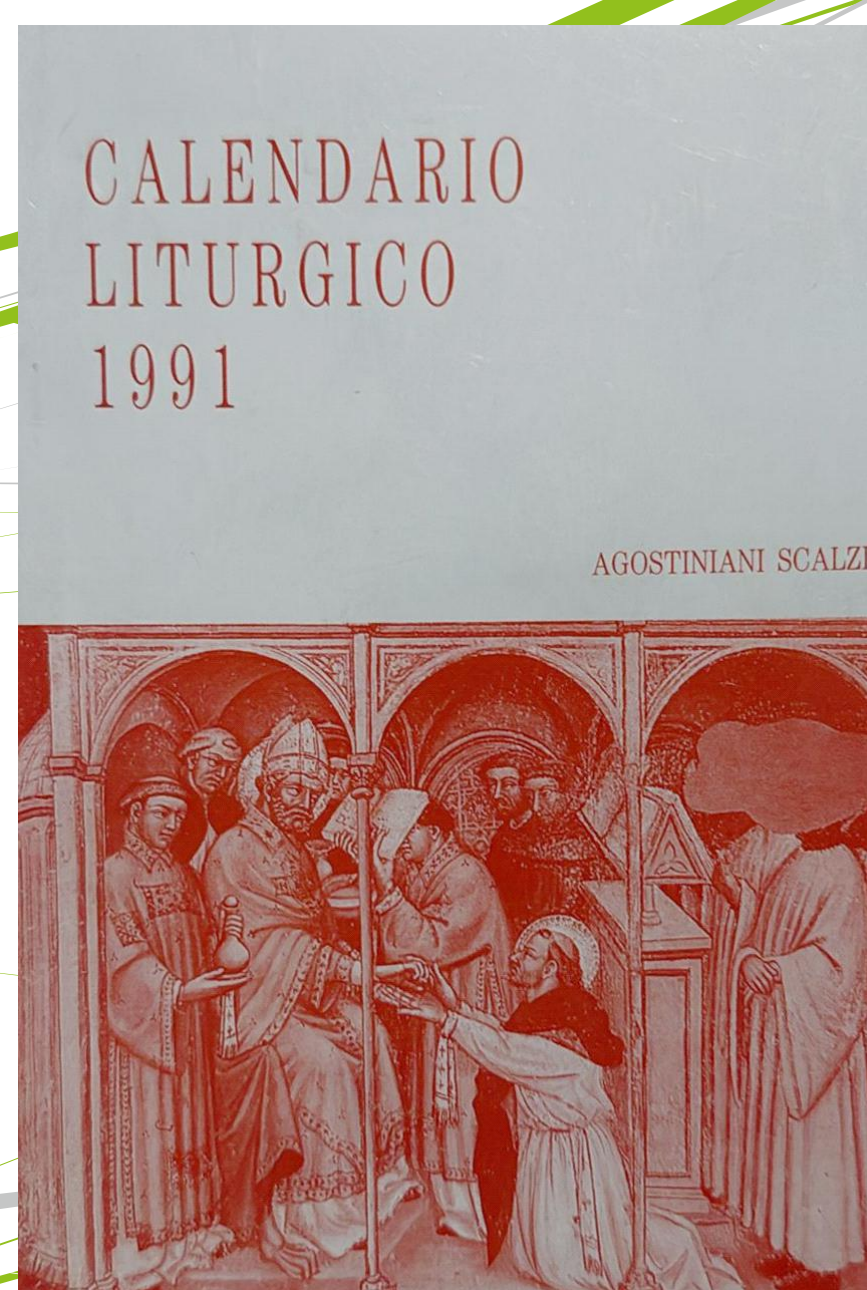
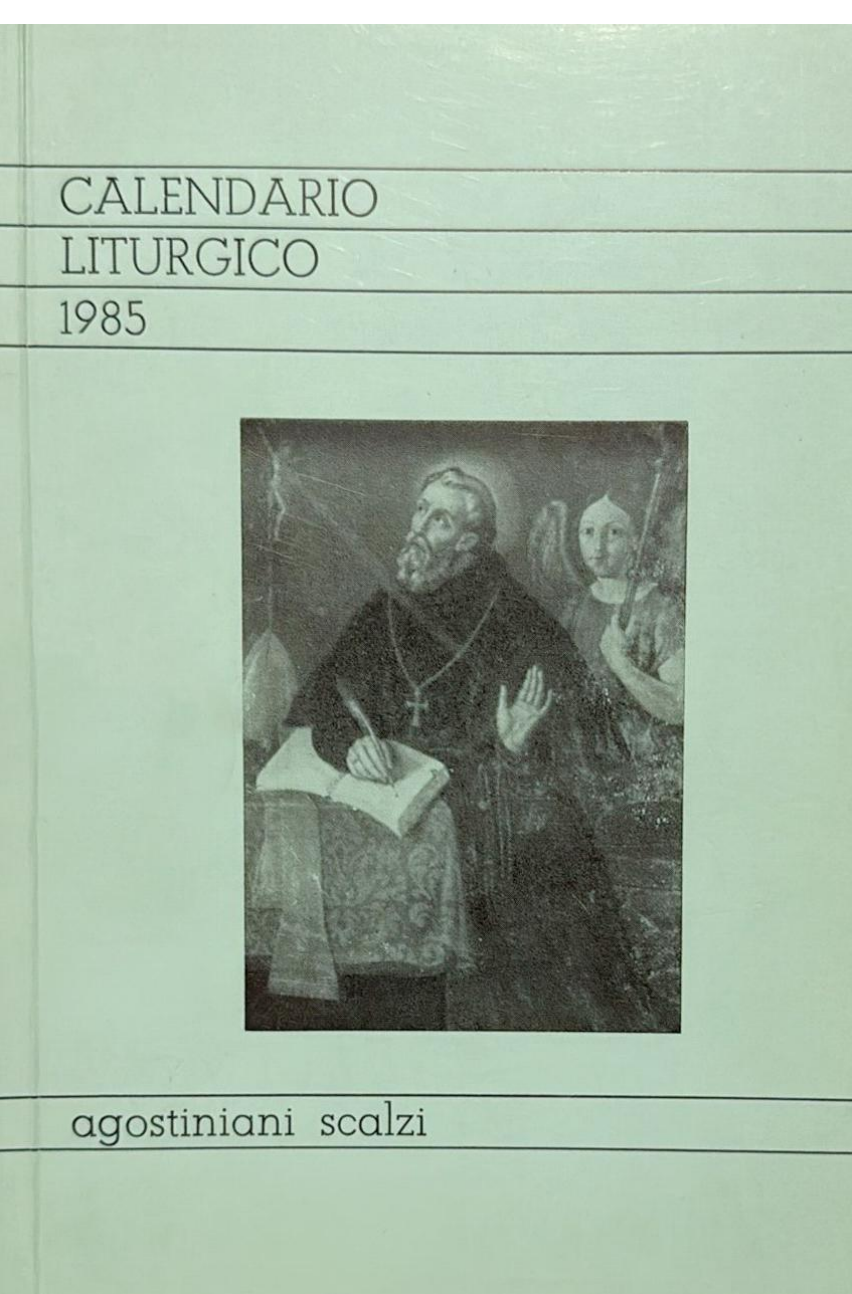
The Marian Year suggested adding a text at the bottom of each page to foster meditation on the mystery of Mary.

This year also marks the beginning of the preparation for the 4th Centenary of the Reform. The General Definitory has invited each house to pray on a specific day of the month so that our Order may remain faithful to its own charism and strengthen its presence in the Church. The Calendar concretely designates this day.

In 1994, each month was introduced with a **theme for meditation**, taken from the letter *To Serve the Most High in a Spirit of Humility*, written for the Fourth Centenary of the Reform. The themes included: praise, conversion, charity, unity, humility, obedience, chastity, poverty, St. Augustine, apostolic life, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and mission, along with a **prayer intention** taken from the *Six-Year Work Plan* approved at the 1993 General Chapter.

In the following years, the monthly meditation themes featured:— quotations from documents on consecrated life,— texts published by the Congregation for Religious,— excerpts from letters sent by our missionaries in Tonkin,— passages from the Constitutions and teachings from the Pope’s magisterium.

The *Calendar* was presented as a tool to rediscover our identity, nourish spirituality, and strengthen the unity of the confreres, who, in different parts of the world, meditated on the same themes and prayed for the same intentions.



2.3 The New Liturgical Calendar of the Augustinian Family (1998-2017)

The Pro-Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Msgr. Jorge Medina Estévez, approved on April 8, 1997 (Prot. 2320/95/L) the new *Augustinian Liturgical Calendar*.



ORDINIS FRATRUM S. AUGUSTINI
ORDINIS AUGUSTINIANORUM RECOLLECTORUM
ORDINIS AUGUSTINIENSIIUS DISCALCEATORUM

Instantibus Reverendis Patribus Petro Bellini, Procuratore Generali Ordinis Fratrum S. Augustini, Climaco López Montes, Procuratore Generali Ordinis Augustinianorum Recollectorum, Antonio Giuliani, Procuratore Generali Augustiniensium Discalceatorum, litteris die 16 novembris 1996 datis, vigore facultatum huic Congregationi a Summo Pontifice IOANNE PAULO II tributarum, Calendarium proprium eorundem Ordinum, prout in adiecto exstat exemplari, libenter confirmamus, ita ut ab omnibus, qui eo tenentur, in posterum servetur.

In Calendario imprimendo mentio fiat de confirmatione ab Apostolica Sede concessa.

Contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Ex aedibus Congregationis de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum, die 8 aprilis 1997


(+ Georgius Medina E.)
Pro-Praefectus


(+ Gerardus M. Agnelo)
Archiepiscopus a Secretis

ORDER OF THE FRIARS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE, ORDER OF AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECTS, ORDER OF DISCALCED AUGUSTINIANS

At the request of the Reverend Fathers Pietro Bellini, Procurator General of the Order of Saint Augustine; Climaco López Montes, Procurator General of the Order of Augustinian Recollects; and Antonio Giuliani, Procurator General of the Discalced Augustinians, by letters dated November 16, 1996, by virtue of the faculties granted to this Congregation by His Holiness Pope John Paul II, we gladly confirm the Proper Calendar of the above-mentioned Orders, as it appears in the attached specimen, so that it may henceforth be observed by all who are bound to it. In the printed Calendar, mention must be made of the confirmation granted by the Apostolic

See. Any contrary disposition is not an impediment.

Given at the offices of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, April 8, 1997.

The new *Augustinian Calendar* was not merely a revision of the previous one, but a liturgical text for the celebration of the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours, with its own identity rooted in the **Augustinian charism** and in the tradition of the Church. Each Augustinian memorial, feast, and solemnity was not just a date, but an opportunity to renew our vocation to the Augustinian consecrated life.

In **1999**, the adoption of the new Augustinian Calendar began to accompany the confreres in their personal, ecclesial, and religious journey within the Augustinian family.

This characteristic continued to mark the Calendar throughout the following two decades, without substantial developments.

2.4 Liturgy between Calendar and Agenda (2018...)

In **2018**, for each day, in addition to the remembrance of deceased confreres, the birthdays, Solemn Professions, and priestly Ordination anniversaries were also added.

In **2020**, the *Calendar* was published in **three languages** — Italian, English, and Portuguese — and made available **online**, so that every confrere could easily access it even from his smartphone. Moreover, the General Office for Printing — now known as the General Direction for Communications — became the responsible office for its publication.

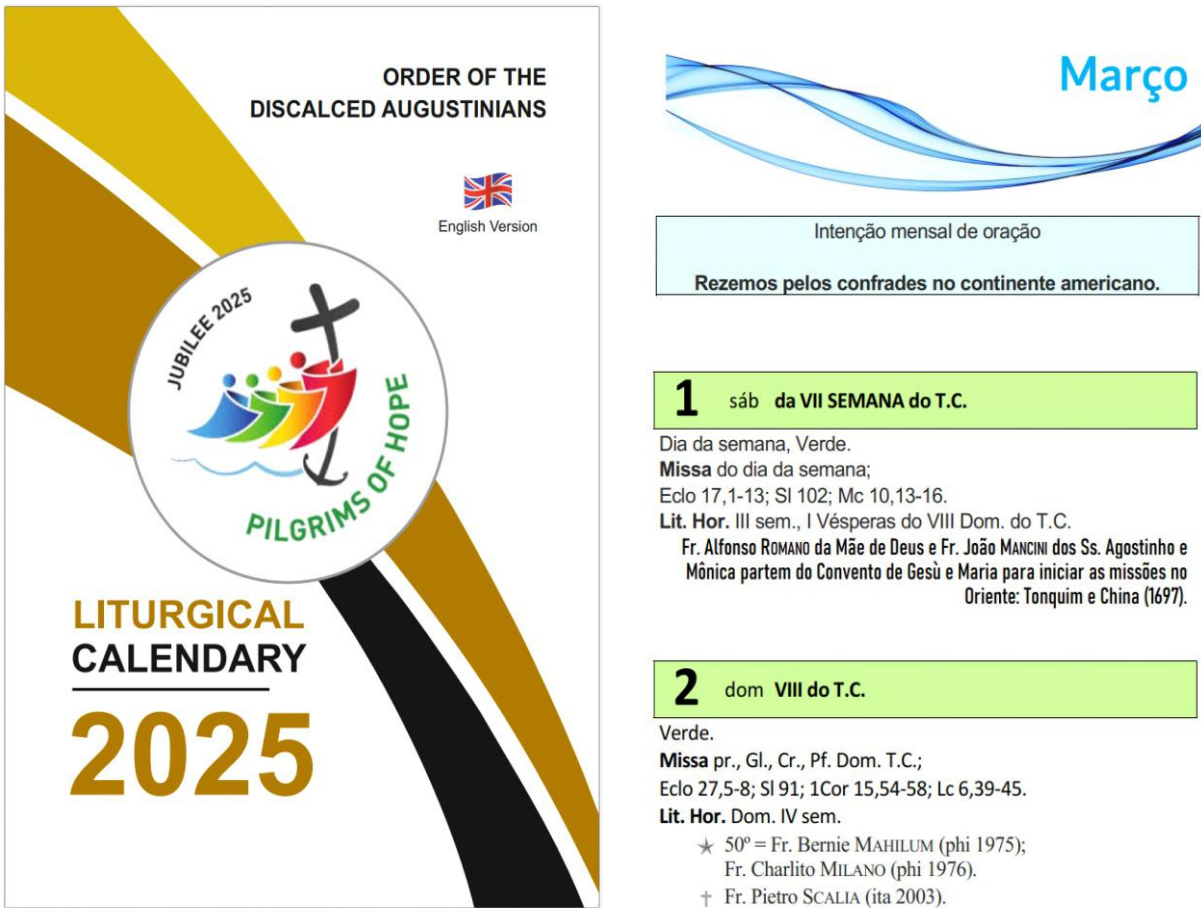
In recent years, the *Calendar* has increasingly resembled a liturgical agenda, providing more space for daily personal notes, while omitting

Augustinian texts and liturgical rubrics.

In **2023**, the ***Programmatic Document*** of the 80th General Chapter gave the following directives regarding Liturgical Life (nn. 12–13):

To enrich the Liturgical Calendar with a table summarizing the annual celebrations and devotional exercises;
To appoint, in each Province, a representative to collaborate with the General Curia in preparing the proper Liturgical Calendar of the Order.

The table has already been included, together with the Table of Liturgical Days and the guidelines on Fasting and Abstinence, in the preamble of the volume. The collaborative work has recently begun.



As our Order is present in **eight different countries**, each with its own national *Calendar*, the General Director for Communications sought to make our Calendar as inclusive as possible, using the **General Roman Calendar** as a base, combined with the *Augustinian Calendar*, and indicating the specific celebrations of each country: solemnities, feasts, memorials, transfers, additions, and modifications.

Conclusion

Throughout its history, the Calendar has undergone a significant **linguistic evolution**: born in Latin, it later moved to Italian, and is now published also in

Portuguese and English.

The volume has seen a great variety of **titles**, reflecting historical changes and different purposes:

- *1966: Disposition for the Recitation of the Divine Office and for the Celebration of the Sacred according to the Calendar of the Order of Discalced Augustinians*
- *1971: Calendar of the Order of Discalced Augustinians*
- *1972: Disposition for the Celebration of the Mass and the Recitation of the Divine Office according to the Calendar of the Order of Discalced Augustinians*
- *1976: Liturgical Calendar of the Mass and the Divine Office*
- *1986: Liturgical Calendar*

Today, the volume stands somewhere **between two forms**:

- Liturgical Calendar: an official text, approved by the ecclesiastical authority, regulating celebrations in the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours, indicating the liturgical rank (solemnity, feast, memorial, feria), the biblical and liturgical texts to be used, and any specific features of the Order; it carries normative and binding value.
- Liturgical Agenda: a practical and pastoral tool, a diary that follows the liturgical calendar, but presents it in a more accessible and user-friendly form, often enriched with notes, comments, anniversaries, or useful reminders for community and personal life.

Perhaps the most fitting title could be: *Liturgical Calendar with Pastoral Agenda of the Discalced Augustinians*, reintroducing Augustinian quotations and offering more space for personal notes and various activities.

The *Calendar*, in **constant evolution**, is not merely a practical tool, but a means to form and celebrate our spiritual identity as a religious family.

Each confrere finds a place within it: he is remembered and accompanied in prayer during the significant moments of his life, and even after death, as a concrete sign of communion and remembrance.

3. General Archive

Introduction

At first glance, one might think of the Archive as a purely technical place, where documents, files, and dust are kept. In reality, it is a source of spirituality, because it preserves the living memory of confreres who lived and transmitted our charism in the past and continue to live it in the present.

3.1 Organization

The General Archive consists of two main sections:

- 1. **Current Archive** gathers incoming and outgoing correspondence produced from the 1960s to the present.

Holy See

- Communications
- Legal representatives
- Statistics

Persons

- Prior General
- Vicar General
- Procurator General
- Secretary General
- Postulator General
- Various General Directors
- Religious (files for each confrere, former religious, and deceased, with biographical schedule)

Minutes of Collegial Bodies

- General Chapter
- Plenary Congregation
- General Definitory

In this sense, the *Calendar* becomes a true **pedagogy of memory**: it preserves our history, strengthens communion around the liturgy, and orients each day toward Christ. It reminds us that the charism is incarnated in time and continues to generate life, calling us to celebrate with fidelity and hope around one of the sources of our spirituality.

Former Council of the Prior
General
Meetings

Provinces e Delegazioni

- Provincia Madre del Buon Consiglio (Provincial Chapters and Councils, Communities)
- Província Santa Rita de Cássia
- Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino

Former Provinces,
Commissariates, and Delegations

Communities under Central Authority

Canonical Visits

Celebrations

Properties

Miscellaneous

- 2. **Historical Archive** preserves the memory of the past, encompassing a wide range of documents and publications that tell the history of our Order from its beginnings up to the mid-20th century. Thus, memory is organized and structured.

The current challenge is to make the General Archive easily accessible, so that it is possible to quickly find what concerns a confrere, a community, or a specific matter, etc.

3.2 Digitization and Remote Access

In recent years, the General Archive has entered a **new phase**: the digitization of documents, which allows for better preservation and remote accessibility.

At present, the digital General Archive contains about **22,000** files, a number that is constantly growing thanks to the ongoing digitization work carried out by the General Archivist in collaboration with members of the Curia.

Each file follows a precise cataloguing method, including four key pieces of information:

*Protocol – Date –
Recipient – Subject*

This system facilitates consultation and reduces research time. The work is **demanding and meticulous**, involving removing duplicates, scanning, naming, storing, and uploading each document.

Today, through a secure **server** installed at the General Curia, and with the necessary permissions, it is possible to request access from the Archivist and consult the documents from anywhere in the world, thus promoting research, study, and understanding. This does not diminish the value of the original paper documents, but rather extends their reach and shares the spiritual heritage of the Order.

3.3 Responsibility of the Provinces

The Archive can only be **complete** and continue to grow if all Provinces and communities collaborate responsibly. It is essential that each Province regularly sends its official documents: Minutes, Acts, Decrees, Petitions, Admissions,

Reports, etc.

In this way, the Archive can collect the life of the entire Order, not in a fragmentary manner or with gaps. This is a commitment that expresses fraternal communion, which is not only spiritual but also documented.

To preserve documents does not simply mean to classify them: it means to safeguard our heritage, so that nothing is lost and everything can be handed down. Each document is a piece of a mosaic that tells the story of our centuries-old journey.

Conclusion

The General Archive serves as a **model** – on a larger scale – for Provincial and local Archives. It is not a dusty museum, nor a place reserved only for scholars: it is a source of spirituality, for it preserves the memory and fidelity of many confreres who came before us.

To value it means to safeguard the soul of the Order, to foster communion, and to prepare the future with strong roots. Each document, page, and name is a **fragment of spirituality** that the Holy Spirit has written into our history.

The hope is that those interested may draw from this richness, both at the General Curia and in the State Archives, which preserve many documents connected to our history.



Introduction

Directory n. 164, §5 states that the Secretary General shall:

Oversee the preparation of the Analecta Ordinis, which collect all the Acts concerning the life of the Order, according to the directives of the Prior General.

The Latin expression *Analecta Ordinis* literally means “**collection**” or “*selection of texts of the Order.*” It refers to the official volume published periodically to gather the most significant documents **received and produced** within a given period of time.

The **purpose** of the *Analecta* is to serve as a reliable juridical and institutional source, aimed at sharing the docu-

4.1 Limited Use

Unfortunately, the *Analecta Ordinis* are **almost unknown** to most religious today: the volume is often left aside in community corners, seldom consulted, and viewed as technical or bureaucratic.

This lack of appreciation represents a **loss**, as it deprives the religious of a valuable tool to better know the Order and strengthen their sense of belonging to our religious family.

4.2 Published Volumes

Over the past **60 years, 22 volumes** of the *Analecta Ordinis* have been published by the following Secretaries General:

Fr. Raffaele Borri - three volumes (two years)

- 1965¹; 1965²
- 1966

no publications for nine years

Fr. Flaviano Luciani - four volumes (six years)

- 1975-1977
- 1978
- 1979
- 1980

no publications for eighteen years

Fr. Vincenzo Sorce - one volume (six years)

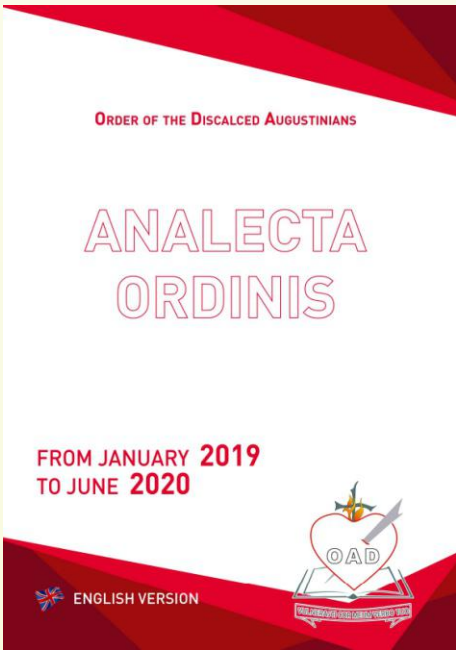
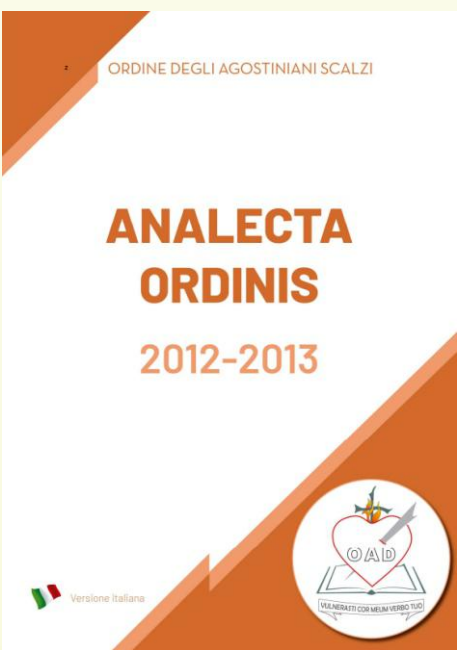
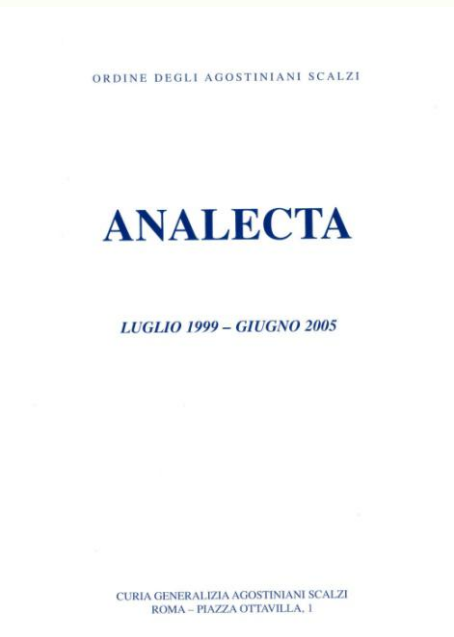
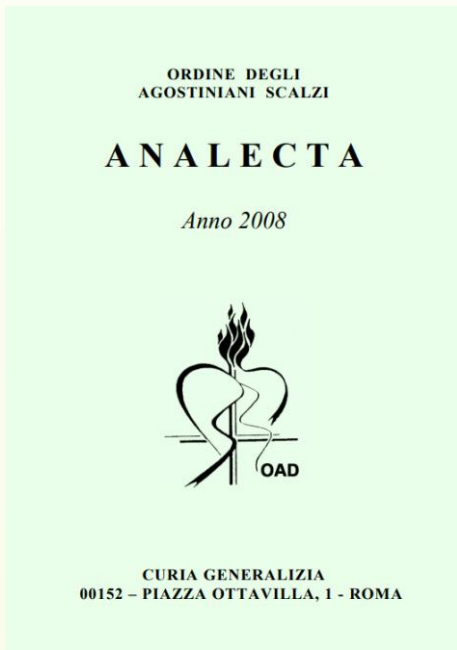
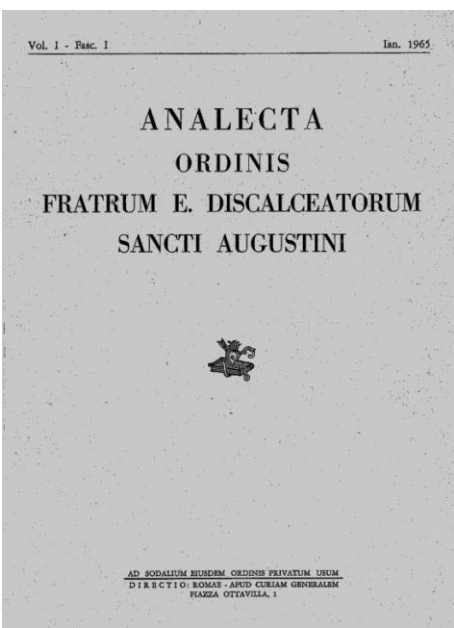
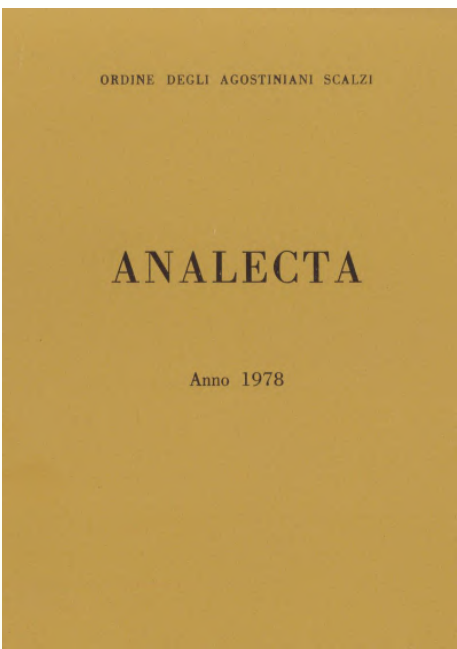
- 1999b-2005a

Fr. Jan Derek Sayson - five volumes (six years)

- 2005b-2006
- 2007
- 2008
- 2009
- 2010

Fr. Diones Rafael Paganotto - nine trilingual volumes (fourteen years)

- 2011
- 2012-2013
- 2014-2015
- 2016-2017a
- 2017b-2018
- 2019-2020a
- 2020b-2021
- 2022-2023a
- 2023b-2024



All volumes are now available online on the official website of the Order, making access easier, even when a community has lost the printed copy sent by the General Curia.

4.3 Collected Documents

The most recent volumes have been organized as follows:

- *Acts of the Holy See addressed to our Order.*
- *Acts of the General Chapter.*
- *Acts of the Prior General addressed to the religious, communities, ecclesiastical and civil authorities, individuals or specific groups, in addition to administrative acts.*
- *Acts of the General Definitory.*
- *Matters concerning the Religious, such as admissions, permissions, dispensations from vows, necrolo-*

gies, and nominal lists.

- *Acts of the Provinces:
Provincial Chapters and First Councils.*

Some older volumes also included: Acts of the Plenary Congregation, Acts of the former Council of the Prior General, Acts of the General Postulation, Chronicle notes.

Conclusion

The *Analecta Ordinis* are not merely a collection of documents, but a **precious heritage** of the Order, preserving and documenting the decisions, communal paths, challenges, and hopes that have shaped our recent history. To know and consult them as one of the sources of our spirituality means deepening the knowledge of the Order at a global level, not merely provincial or local.



5. Website oadnet.org

Introduction

Today, an institutional website serves as an informative showcase, an official channel through which to share documents, news, initiatives, and our spirituality, making all of this quickly and universally accessible.

In an increasingly digital world, the website becomes an open door and a reliable point of reference for knowing, participating, and walking together in the charism of the Order.

5.1 Relaunch

After a failed attempt in the 2000s to create an official and institutional

website of the Order, the idea of reintroducing it was repeatedly raised in the reports of the Prior General at the General Chapter of 2011, the Plenary Congregation of 2014, and the General Chapter of 2017, as well as in several sessions of the General Definitory.

However, no significant progress had been made. In the first months of his service as Secretary General, Fr. Diones Rafael Paganotto resumed the project, and on **28 January 2019**, the official website of the Order was relaunched as an information portal of the Discalced

Augustinians, included among the initiatives of the Year of the Charism.

5.2 Information Portal

The website serves as a tool of integration, presenting in Italian (with automatic translation into other languages) all the essential information about our Order, as indicated below, especially the **Documents section**, which gathers in three languages the most important texts published by our Order, representing **Sources of our Spirituality**.



Ordine degli
Agostiniani Scalzi



Chi siamo ▾

Curia generale ▾

Province ▾

Santi e Beati ▾

Notizie ▾

Presenza Agostiniana ▾

Documenti ▾

IN EVIDENZA



Convegno sulle Fonti della nostra spiritualità:
Giubileo della Vita religiosa

leggi di più

CALENDARIO

AGENDA

12 Novembre 2025

25° anniversario della Provincia Madre e Consiglio
Diverse Comunità (Italia)

13 Novembre 2025

Ordinazione diaconale
Cebu City

26 Novembre 2025

Assemblea dell'Unione Provinciale Generale (USG)
Roma (Italia)

Conclusion

Unfortunately, the website is also little used by most religious: it is often not consulted regularly and is sometimes perceived as a secondary tool compared to other communication channels, such as WhatsApp groups.

In reality, it represents the **main official means of communication** of the Order and a reliable, up-to-date source for accessing documents, initiatives, and texts. Its lack of appreciation therefore constitutes a loss, as it deprives the religious of a privileged channel through which they can remain informed and continually formed!

Documenti ▾

Regola

Costituzioni

Direttorio

Rituale

Ratio Generalis Institutionis

Analecta Ordinis

Vademecum

Calendario liturgico

Annuario dei religiosi

Necrologio

Regolamento dello Studentato Internazionale

Statuto per i religiosi ospiti in Curia generale

Statuti (laici)

6. *Ratio Generalis Institutionis*

After several projects and discussions, the former General Director for Studies and Formation, Fr. Carlo Moro, together with the members of the General Definitory, drafted and approved the *Ratio Generalis Institutionis*, published in three languages by the Prior General on May 22, 2023.

It consists of 296 paragraphs and a comprehensive set of forms and annexes that accompany the **formation process**, structured as follows:

PART I Formation: Theological, Spiritual, and Charismatic Foundations

Fundamental notions

Objectives of formation

PART II Formation in its stages

General principles

Aspirancy

Postulancy

Novitiate

Temporary Profession

Clericate: preparation for sacred orders

Ongoing formation



RATIO

GENERALIS INSTITUTIONIS

Order of the Discalced Augustinians



Rome - 2023

The *Ratio* is intended primarily for formators and candidates; however, the care of both initial and ongoing formation is a responsibility shared by all. It **complements** the other sources of our spirituality concerning formation, defining the stages, establishing objectives, and indicating the specific methods for each phase of the formative journey.

The *Ratio* challenges every member of the Order with a strong moral duty: to participate, contribute, and improve both personal formation and that of one's brothers, in order to preserve and nurture together the charism entrusted to us.

7. Conclusion

The sources of our spirituality are not merely technical tools or documents to be archived: they form the **core of our Discalced Augustinian identity**.

The journal *Presenza Agostiniana*, the *Liturgical Calendar*, the General Archive, the *Analecta Ordinis*, the website *oadnet.org*, and the *Ratio Generalis Institutionis* – together with the already mentioned sources, such as the writings of Saint Augustine, the *Constitutions*, the *Directory*, the *Ritual*, the General Chapters, and the Venerables – weave a precious fabric that preserves memory, guides the present, and prepares the future of our Order.

To **know, value, and use** these sources means to nourish communion, deepen the charism, and remain faithful to the mission entrusted to us by the Spirit.

Each page, document, and text is, ultimately, a tangible trace of God's presence in our history and a call to live with renewed enthusiasm our vocation as Discalced Augustinians, knowing the sources of our spirituality, for as our Holy Father Augustine reminds us: "*No one can love what is completely unknown*" (De Trinit. 10,1,1).



Fr. Dennis Ruiz, oad

JUBILEE OF CONSECRATED LIFE

Sharing our Spirituality



Abstract: *during the Convene on the Sources of our Spirituality, the participants had the grace of joining the celebrations of the Jubilee of Consecrated Life at the Vatican.*

They first took part in the audience with the Holy Father in St. Peter's Square, sharing a moment of encounter with the Pontiff.

In the evening, they joined religious men and women from all over the world for a prayer vigil in the Basilica, and finally participated in the Jubilee Mass celebrated by Pope Leo XIV.

At the place of the Order's origins, the Basilica of Santo Stefano Rotondo, the rite of renewal of the vow of humility was celebrated — a living memorial of the Discalced Augustinian charism.

At the heart of the Jubilee Year of Hope, dedicated in a special way to Consecrated Life, the Convention on the Sources of our Spirituality was held in Rome — an event of grace and remembrance that brought together religious and affiliates from all the Provinces of the Order.

1. Pilgrimage to the Basilica of Santo Stefano Rotondo

On the afternoon of October 8, participants made a pilgrimage to the Basilica of Santo Stefano Rotondo, the church where, on December 10, 1599, the first Discalced Augustinians professed for the first time the peculiar vow of humility. A



The readings and universal prayers, proclaimed in various languages, highlighted the intercultural and universal character of the Order, now present in three Provinces and several missions throughout the world.

The prayerful and fraternal atmosphere made visible the living continuity between origins and present, between memory and mission.

2. Vigil in St. Peter's for the Jubilee of Consecrated Life

After the rite, the participants joined the Prayer Vigil for the Jubilee of Consecrated Life in St. Peter's Basilica, presided over by Cardinal Ángel Fernández Artime, Pro-Prefect of the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

In his reflection, the Cardinal strongly emphasized that consecrated life is a journey of openness and service, an inner pilgrimage expressed through closeness to others and a witness of hope. As he stated:

Consecrated life is a pilgrimage of availability: to go out to meet others, to bring the presence of Christ who dwells within us, to let the joy of the Gospel resound where hope is fragile.

Rite of Renewal of the Vow of Humility was celebrated, presided over by the Prior General, Fr. Nei Márcio Simon.

During the rite, the participants — religious, students, and affiliates — recalled the charismatic roots of the Order, with words that echoed the spirit of that first profession:

We turn with grateful memory to December 10, 1599, when here the first Discalced Augustinians professed for the first time the peculiar vow of humility. In this Jubilee Year of Hope, we renew that gesture with grateful hearts, desiring to follow Christ humble and crucified, and to serve the Church in the spirit of our charism: Joyfully serving the Most High in spirit of humility.



Participants in the ritual of renewing the vow of humility



Prayer vigil (Vatican Media)

And he added, recalling the example of Mary:

Like Mary, a woman on the way and bearer of Christ, you are called to go out to meet others, to bring the presence of Christ, and to let the joy of the Gospel resound.

These words invited all consecrated men and women to rediscover the missionary and paschal dimension of their vocation, lived not as a privilege, but as a gift of love to be shared with the world.

The event gathered thousands of consecrated persons — religious, nuns, members of secular institutes, of the *Ordo virginum*, hermits, and members of new forms of consecrated life — coming from about one hundred countries.



Pilgrimage (Vatican Media)

3. Jubilee Mass with Pope Leo XIV

The following day, October 9, the confreres had the joy of concelebrating with the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, at the Jubilee Mass in St. Peter's Square, sharing with the whole universal Church the grace of communion and a renewed vocational zeal.

In his homily, the Pope addressed to the consecrated words of encouragement and hope:

Consecrated life is a sign of hope that does not disappoint, for it springs from the encounter with Christ who became poor to enrich us with his grace. I invite you to preserve the joy of your calling, not as a memory of the past, but as a living source that renews each day the gift of yourselves.

And he added, with a paternal and firm tone:

The Church needs humble and joyful witnesses, not officials of the sacred. Humility is the key to evangelical fruitfulness: whoever serves with a simple heart, like Mary and the saints who preceded you, becomes a light for many.



Confreres with Pope Leo XIV (Vatican Media)

4. Pilgrimage to the Holy Doors

The afternoon was dedicated to the various groups who made their pilgrimage to the Holy Doors of the Major Basilicas of Rome, thus continuing their spiritual journey in the footsteps of Augustinian holiness and within the horizon of jubilee hope.

Passing through the Holy Door is one of the most powerful signs of the Jubilee: crossing it means recognizing Christ as the only Door of salvation (Jn 10:7).

To cross it with faith becomes a gesture of conversion and interior renewal. It signifies the decision to abandon sin, cross the threshold of mercy, and enter again into full communion with God and with one's brothers and sisters.

It is not merely an external rite, but a spiritual journey involving freedom, will, and openness of heart to receive grace. Moreover, the Holy Door reminds us that every Christian — and in a special way, the Discalced Augustinian religious — is a pilgrim, journeying toward the heavenly homeland, sustained by

Christ's love and by the communion of the Church. To cross it together with other consecrated persons and the faithful is to profess the same hope, share the same mission, and witness before the world that God's mercy is for all.

Through this Convention, the Order of Discalced Augustinians sought to rediscover its own charismatic and historical sources, in order to renew, at the heart of today's Church, the humble and joyful witness of those who, following Christ poor and crucified, proclaim once more: **Joyfully to serve the Most High in spirit of humility.**





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@mainardifreiairton

PILGRIMAGE AT BATIGNANO

Following the Footsteps of the Ven. Fr Giovanni Nicolucci



Riassunto: during the Conference on the Sources of Our Spirituality, the participants experienced a deeply meaningful pilgrimage to Batignano, in Tuscany, walking a stage of the Path of the Venerable Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci of San Guglielmo.

The initiative offered an opportunity to

deepen one of the Sources of our spirituality through prayer and remembrance of the Venerable, culminating in the celebration of the Holy Mass in the church that houses his remains, in an atmosphere of recollection, fraternal communion, and spiritual renewal.

The Convention on the Sources of Our Spirituality was a moment of encounter and reflection that brought together religious from various parts of the world, united by the desire to rediscover the most authentic roots of the spiritual tradition of the Order of the Discalced Augustinians.

Among these roots stands out the radiant figure of Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci of San Guglielmo, a friar who made the

Maremma his land of contemplation, prayer, and apostolate. An entire day of pilgrimage was dedicated to him, during which participants were able to learn more about his life, visiting the ruins of the ancient Hermitage of San Guglielmo, near Castiglione della Pescaia, and concluding with the Eucharistic celebration in the parish church of Batignano, where his remains are preserved.

1. A Bit of History

Giovanni Nicolucci was born on July 15, 1552, in Montecassiano, in the Marche region of Italy. From an early age, he knew suffering: orphaned of both parents, he grew up in a simple environment, welcomed into the home of a wealthy townsman who cared for him.

Soon, however, Giovanni felt a deep religious vocation awakening in his heart. In September 1570, he entered the Order of the Hermits of Saint Augustine, at the Convent of San Marco in his hometown.

He devoted himself with great zeal to theological studies and community life. Ordained priest in 1576, he was appointed lector in theology in 1581, after completing his studies also in Padua. His superiors recognized in him not only intelligence and academic rigor, but also a deep dedication to prayer, penance, and spiritual guidance — traits that would mark his entire life.

Although he held various positions — teacher, community superior, and mas-



Church of Tirli

ter of novices — Giovanni felt an inner call to a more contemplative life. Toward the end of the 16th century, around 1597, he withdrew to the Tuscan Maremma, near the Hermitage of San Guglielmo, close to Castiglione della Pescaia.

There, immersed in the silence of nature, he chose to live as a hermit, not to flee the world, but to serve the Gospel more authentically. As he himself said, *“the eremitical ideal is not disengagement, but the most suitable condition to unite contemplation and pastoral action.”*

In the Maremma, Giovanni combined solitude with preaching, the administration of the sacraments, spiritual direction, and the care of the poor. In a harsh land — marshy, isolated, and scarcely evangelized — he soon became a spiritual reference point, earning the title *“the Apostle of the Maremma.”*



Maremma

He also founded a small hermitage in Tirli, in the same area, as a place of prayer and silence. His life was austere, marked by penance and prayer, yet his heart remained open to the world: his hermitage became a destination for pilgrims, and his preaching drew crowds of faithful.

On May 3, 1621, already elderly, he joined the community of the Discalced Augustinians at the Convent of Batignano (Grosseto), taking the name “Giovanni of San Guglielmo.” A few months later, on August 14 of the same year, he died “in the odor of sanctity,” leaving behind a living memory of humility, prayer, and radical evangelical service.

2. A Path Between Memory and Spirituality

In 2021, on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of Fr. Giovanni’s death, the Diocese of Grosseto launched a commemorative year dedicated to his memory, presenting him as a “witness of mercy.”

Among the most significant initiatives of that year was the creation of the



Path of the Ven. Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci, a pilgrimage route of about 160 kilometers that passes through the places where the friar lived, prayed, and preached.

The path combines nature, history, and spirituality, inviting pilgrims to rediscover, step by step, the depth of his experience of faith.

We too, participants in the conference, wished to walk a short portion of this path as an experience of prayer, contemplation, and silence. Upon reaching the ruins of the ancient Hermitage of San Guglielmo, we listened to Fr. Pier Mosetti, one of the creators of the project, who explained the importance of





rediscovering the figure and spirituality of the Venerable Fr. Giovanni, who remains a source of inspiration for contemporary Maremma and for the whole Church.

3. The Culminating Moment of the Pilgrimage

In the afternoon, after experiencing the profound atmosphere of the hermitage, we proceeded to the town of Batignano for the celebration of Holy Mass, marking the conclusion of the pil-

grimage. The liturgy took place in the parish church of Saint Martin, where, in a reliquary beside the side altar, the remains of the Venerable are preserved.

The Mass was presided over by the Prior General, Fr. Nei Márcio Simon, who, in his homily, emphasized the importance of rediscovering our spiritual roots and living our religious consecration with enthusiasm, as a genuine instrument of evangelization and a living expression of the sources of our spirituality.



The Prior General recalled how the Venerable, through his simplicity and determination, was able to transform the reality of the Maremma and leave a legacy of faith and hope that still speaks to us today.

4. Conclusion: Fr. Giovanni Still Speaks to Us Today

Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci continues to speak to us even today, and for many reasons. In this brief reflection, I would like to gather some insights that make him a living source of Discalced Augustinian spirituality and a relevant witness for the Church of our time.

First, for his coherence between contemplation and service: his life shows that withdrawal does not mean escape from the world, but rather a preparation to serve it with greater intensity, through charity and preaching.

Second, for his presence in a frontier territory of faith — the 17th-century Maremma. In a harsh environment,

marked by isolation and poverty, Fr. Giovanni managed to transform not only souls but also the spiritual landscape of that region.

Finally, for his testimony of silent holiness. His cause for beatification, opened centuries ago, remains a powerful sign of how the Church knows how to recognize and value even the “little saints” of the peripheries — men and women who, though far from the spotlight, made the Gospel visible through their daily lives.

Sources

Lucerna Ardente e Luminosa. The Venerable Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci of San Guglielmo, Apostle of the Maremma, Diocese of Grosseto.

cassiciaco.it – Venerable Giovanni Nicolucci of San Guglielmo, by Agostino Giocamini, OSA.

acistampa.com – The Venerable Giovanni of San Guglielmo, Apostle of the Maremma, by Gianluca Giorgio.

agensir.it – Diocese of Grosseto: website dedicated to the path of the Venerable Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci of San Guglielmo presented.



The Path of the Ven. Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci



SOME PICTURES

Sharing a bit of our Life



Simple Professions in Puertobello



July 19 – At the Novitiate House, the Prior Provincial, Fr. Luigi Kerschbamer, received the Simple Profession of eight young confreres at the end of their novitiate year: Fra Clint Bautista Villanueva, Fra Bringino Freo, Fra Tang Thanh Khuong, Fra Nguyen Huu Thuan, Fra Nguyen Huu Truong, Fra Nguyen Van Phuc, Fra Pham Van My, and Fra Pramod Mallick.

August 2 – Also at the Novitiate House, the Prior Provincial received the Simple Profession of three more confreres: Fra Yohanes Boli Jawang, Fra Soter Damai Baene, and Fra Frederikson Pehan Ritan.



FABRA Congress at Indaiatuba



July 21–25 – At the Monastery of Itaici, the Congress of the Augustinian Federation of Brazil (FABRA) was held, inspired by the theme: “Saint Augustine: Doctor of Grace, Pilgrim of Hope.” The meeting celebrated the 50th anniversary of the first FABRA Congress, held in the same place in 1975. It brought together religious men and women, lay people, and participants from parishes, movements, social works, and educational institutions connected with Augustinian spirituality.



New Religious Community in Mercedes



July 30 – The Diocese of Daet expressed interest in the presence of the Discalced Augustinians, offering the Quasi-Parish of Saint Isidore the Farmer in Mercedes, Camarines Norte, about 350 km from Manila. After the first contacts and the visit of the Prior Provincial Fr. Luigi Kerschbamer and Fr. Noel Ignacio, the reception by the bishop and the local community was very positive, showing strong apostolic and vocational potential. Thus, the Province gave its approval for the opening of a new religious community dedicated to Saint Clare of Montefalco, approved by the general definitory, to strengthen the pastoral ministry and evangelizing presence of the Order in the Philippines.



Affiliation of SMIT with UST in Manila



August 18 – At the Faculty of Theology of the University of Santo Tomas (UST), the official Decree of Ecclesiastical Affiliation was formally granted to the Saint Monica Institute of Theology (SMIT). It was received by the Prior Provincial Fr. Luigi Kerschbamer, Fr. Annacletus Nzewuihe, director, and Mrs. Beverly Despi, secretary. The event marks a historic milestone for the Discalced Augustinians, the fruit of years of work, commitment, and collaboration.

OAD Sportfeast in Cebu City



August 25–29 – At the Saint Monica Institute of Theology (SMIT), the OAD Sportfeast 2025 took place — a week of fraternity combining sports, reflection, and prayer. With the theme “Pilgrims of Hope: Game on with Faith, Triumph in Charity”, students took part in competitions, cultural activities, and community gatherings, strengthening friendship and holistic formation.

Affiliazione dello SMIT alla UST a Cebu City



August 27 – On the day of Saint Monica, the ecclesiastical inauguration of the affiliation between the Saint Monica Institute of Theology (SMIT) and the University of Santo Tomas (UST) was celebrated. Present were Msgr. José Palma, Fr. Luigi Kerschbamer, Fr. Annacletus Nzewuihe, students, confreres, and friends. The Mass,



concelebrated by 34 priests, and the fraternal lunch marked a moment of joy and gratitude. The affiliation strengthens the academic growth of SMIT after 21 years of history.



Solemn Profession in Cebu City



August 28 – In the Saint Rita Hall in Middle Tabor, Cebu City, during the Feast of Saint Augustine, the Prior Provincial, Fr. Luigi Kerschbamer, received the Solemn Profession of eight confreres from Vietnam, Indonesia, and the Philippines: fra Bedi Tiberius Rangga, fra Falerianus Tapehen, fra Nguyen Van Ngoc, fra Nguyen Van Quoc, fra Patrick Geneblaza, fra Reynoso Jimeno Perez, fra Shivianus Tapehen, and fra Vu Van Linh.



Anniversary of the Saint Rita Association in Toledo



August 28 – At the Saint Monica Seminary, on the Solemnity of Saint Augustine, the 34th anniversary of the presence of the Saint Rita of Cascia Association was celebrated. The Mass was presided over by Msgr. João Carlos Seneme and concelebrated by confreres, seminarians, laypeople, and members of the association. With gratitude, they recalled the journey accomplished, the fidelity to the Augustinian charisma, and the testimony offered to the community. The commitment to serve the Church with humility and hope, following the example of Saint Rita, was renewed.

Provincial Retreat in San Gregorio da Sassola



September 2–6 – The annual Retreat promoted by the Madre del Buon Consiglio Province took place at the Santa Maria Nuova Community. The days were guided by Fr. Mauro Oliva, of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary, who proposed three daily medita-

tions, developing a spiritual path focused on the call to eternal Life in Christ and the risk of losing it when an authentic response to the Father's gift is lacking.

His reflections were not limited to the theoretical aspect but invited the participants to a personal and concrete response, lived out in prayer, fraternal life, and pastoral service.

The journey was enriched with numerous biblical references and texts by Saint Augustine.



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49th Edition of the Olympics in Frosinone



August 28 – September 9 – The 49th edition of the Olympics took place at the Madonna della Neve Parish, a local tradition that has involved young people, families, and the community for almost fifty years, with the participation of around a thousand young people. The organization was led by the parish priest, Fr. Richie Porras, and the parish commission. Civil authorities and the Prior General, Fr. Nei Márcio Simon, were present during the event, as a testament to the communion between the Diocese and our religious family.

Priestly Ordination in Frosinone



September 13 – At the Madonna della Neve Parish, Msgr. Santo Marcianò conferred the presbyteral ordination on confreres Fr. Wilfred Dubila and Fr. John Yohtoh Nuh, both originally from Cameroon. The well-attended celebration included the presence of the Prior General, Fr. Nei Márcio Simon, members of the Curia, the Prior Provincial, Fr. Jan Derek Sayson, numerous priests of the Province, the Professed of the International College Friar Luigi Chmel of Rome, religious sisters, friends, and parishioners. At the end of the Mass, a fraternal reception allowed for the expression



of gratitude to God for the gift of two new priests in the service of the Church and the Order. Fr. Wilfred and Fr. John will continue to be part of the Province's communities in Italian territory.

2nd Retreat in Toledo



September 22–26 – The second session of the annual retreat for the Discalced Augustinian religious of Brazil and Paraguay took place at the Santa Monica Seminary. The days were once again guided by Msgr. Adenis Roberto de Oliveira, auxiliary bishop of Curitiba, who proposed meditations inspired by the book *Pastori e Pescatori* (Shepherds and Fishers) by Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa. The moments of prayer, silence, and reflection offered the friars a time of intense spirituality and vocational renewal. As is the Province's tradition, the retreat was organized into two groups to ensure the continuity of pastoral assistance in the Communities and Parishes administered by the Province.





1st Pilgrimage of the Monica Mothers to Aparecida



September 28 – The 1st Augustinian Pilgrimage of the Christian Mothers of Saint Monica took place at the National Shrine, dedicated to praying for their children's faith. Mothers from different regions of the country gathered in an atmosphere of joy and fraternity. The central moment was the Mass, presided over by Msgr. Orlando Brandes and concelebrated by the Discalced Augustinian Friars, including the Prior Provincial, Fr. José Valnir da Silva. Subsequently, in the Noé Sotillo Auditorium, there were songs, reflections, and testimonies, including a conference by Márcia, an Augustinian Recollect mother, who delivered a strong message of faith and hope. The day concluded with intense communion and gratitude.



Convention on the Sources of our Spirituality in Rome



October 6–10 – The Convention The Sources of our Spirituality took place at the General Curia, structured in five days of study, prayer, and fraternity.

October 6 – Official opening with addresses by Fr. Diones Rafael Paganotto and the Prior General, Fr. Nei Márcio Simon. In the morning, Fr. Gabriele Ferlisi presented the Discalced Augustinian spirituality; in the afternoon, Fr. Gregorio Cibwabwa reflected on the *Ritual*.

October 7 – Fr. Carlo Moro explored the *Constitutions* and *Directory*; in the afternoon, Fr. Diones Rafael Paganotto presented the supplementary sources of the Order.

October 8–9 – Participants took part in the central moments of the Jubilee of Consecrated Life in the Vatican: an audience with Pope Leo XIV, a prayer vigil, and the concluding Mass, in addition to a pilgrimage to the Basilica of Santo Stefano Rotondo with the renewal of religious vows.

October 10 – Pilgrimage to Grosseto and Batignano, a visit to the places of the Venerable Fr. Giovanni Nicolucci, and the concluding Mass of the Convention in front of his remains.



Solemn Profession in Rome



October 11 – In the church of Gesù e Maria, the Prior General, Fr. Nei Márcio Simon, presided over the Mass during which Fra Ephafroditus Fau, Fra Phan Thanh Vu, and Fra Ta Quang Trung made their Solemn Profession. Confreres from different countries present in Rome for the Conference on the Sources of Spirituality participated in the celebration, along with the formation community, friends, and acquaintances.

Meetings of the Prior General in Rome



October 13–14 – Two important meetings took place with the presence of the Prior General and the Priors Provincial.

The first was at the Gesù e Maria House when the Administrative Council of the International College Fra Luigi Chmel met. Topics related to the life of the formation community, the use of the Italian language, the economic situation of the House, the quality of the formation path, and any modifications to the *Regulation* were addressed.

The second, at the General Curia, was the annual meeting between the Prior General and the Priors Provincial, foreseen by the General Chapter Program, focusing on vocations, support for confreres in difficulty, formation, the publication of the new *Constitutions* and *Directory*, translations of the *Ritual*, canonical visits, and the organization of the General Archive.



Visit to the Bishop of Trapani



October 15 – The Prior General, Fr. Nei Márcio Simon, accompanied Sister Resmay Memorial (Philippines) and Sister Serafina Mazza (Italy) on a visit to the Bishop of Trapani, Msgr. Pietro Maria Fragnelli. The meeting, dedicated to dialogue and discernment, concerned the presence and future prospects of the Discalced Augustinian Sisters in the diocese. There was reflection on the mission and growth of the Institute, which is of diocesan right and has been experiencing significant development in recent years, particularly in Asia.



Prior Provincial at the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints in the Vatican



October 15 – At the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, the Postulator General, Fr. Dennis Ruiz, introduced the Provincial Prior, Fr. José Valnir da Silva, to the Relator of the Cause of the Servant of God Fr. Angelo Possidio Carù. During the meeting, Fr. José was entrusted with bringing the volumes of documentation for the Cause to Brazil, to be delivered to Fr. Vilmar Potrick, who closely monitors its progress. An important step in the process of recognizing the sanctity of Fr. Angelo Possidio Carù.





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MESSAGE FROM THE PRIOR GENERAL

Celebrating and Living Sources

In the pulsating heart of Rome, a place of encounter and history, the Convention on the Sources of our Spirituality recently took place.

This event, strongly desired by the last General Chapter of the Order of the Discalced Augustinians, represented an opportunity for study and in-depth reflection and, at the same time, formalized the invitation to rediscover the spiritual heritage that sustains and guides us.

The sources of our spirituality are not mere memories of the past, nor theoretical concepts to be sterilely preserved. Rather, they represent living roots that nourish our faith and our daily commitment. To know them means to deepen our origins. But to value and celebrate them implies our commitment to make them live again in the present, allowing them to illuminate the personal and communal journey.



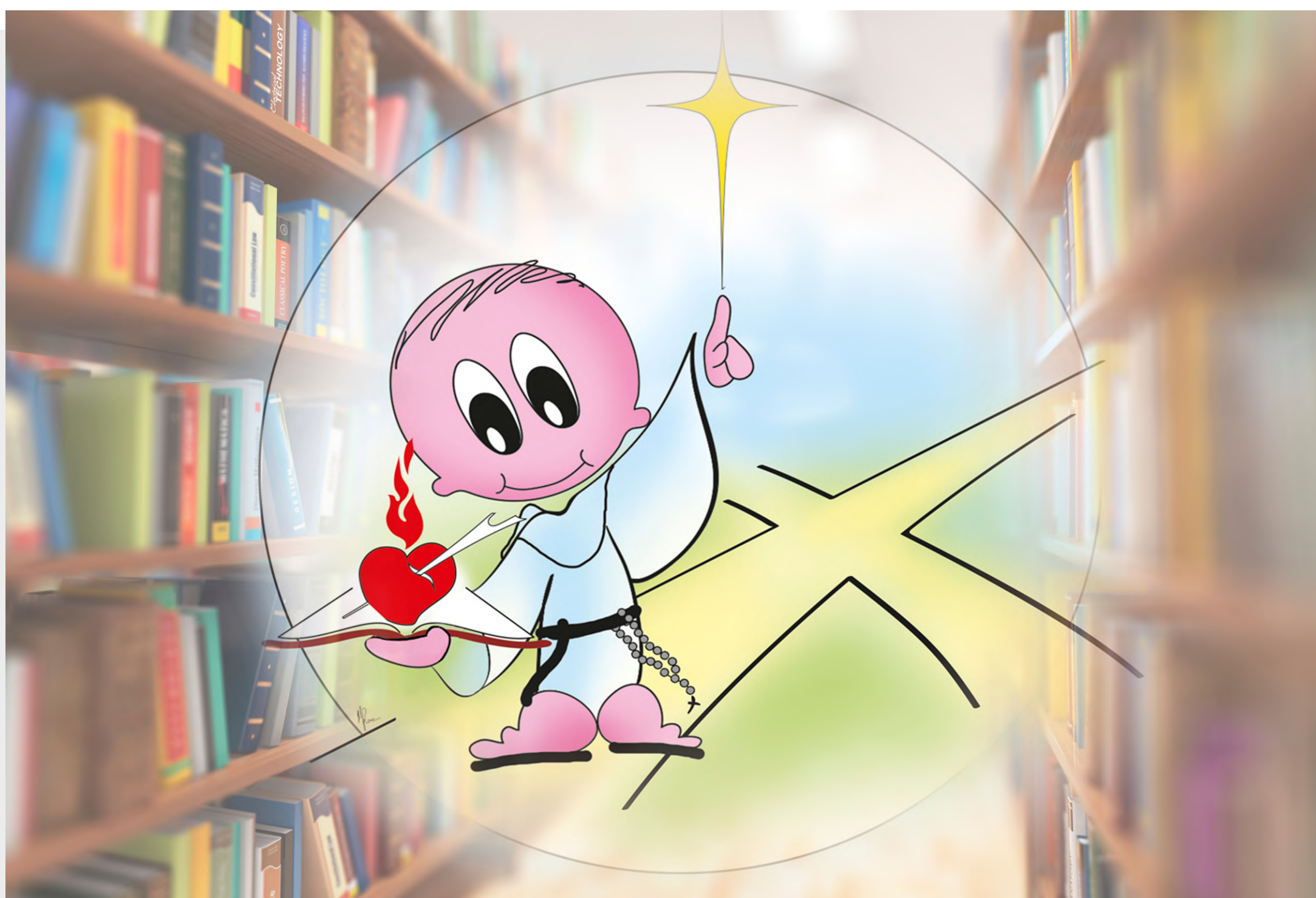
During the Convention, the various presentations highlighted the richness of the foundational texts, the spiritual experiences of our venerables, and the traditions that have shaped the Discalced Augustinian identity.

Through moments of communal prayer, reflection, and fraternal exchange, a profound communion was felt, a tangible sign that the sources are not static relics, but springs of living water that regenerate and give impetus to the mission of living the charism, happy to serve the Most High in a spirit of humility.

In this spirit, our journey continues with the awareness that every day offers

new opportunities to draw from the depth of our spiritual roots and translate them into concrete gestures of charity, service, and fraternity toward the communities and confreres.

We are called to safeguard and transmit this precious heritage, not as museum curators, but as artisans of hope, capable of renewing fidelity to our origins through the creativity of a love that knows how to speak to the present day. By doing so, we allow the sources of our spirituality to continue to flow clear and fruitful with meaning and future for our religious family and for all those who cross our path.



The drawing above was created by Sister Mariarosa Guerrini (Augustinian) on the occasion of the Conference on the Sources of our Spirituality.

The illustration depicts a Discalced Augustinian friar who, with one hand, holds the heart pierced by the flame of the Word — the Augustinian symbol of love burning with truth — thus pointing to the precious heritage of texts, history, and traditions: our sources.

With the other hand, the friar points upward, from where the light of Christ that illuminates every step originates, while his feet rest on the path, a sign of the pilgrimage of faith.

Only those who know and draw daily from the sources of their own spirituality can live their charism and have a clear understanding of the goal towards which they are walking.

