

PRESENZA AGOSTINIANA



Digital Edition

May / June 2025 - no 3

LEO XIV

A Religious and
Augustinian Pope



AUGUSTINIANS

From the Past
to the Future

AUGUSTINIAN POPES

Pontiffs linked
to Our Spirituality

COAT OF ARMS

Symbols linked
to Saint Augustine

NEW PONTIFICATE

Participation
of the Discalced Augustinians





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Editor-in-Chief

Calogero Ferlisi (P. Gabriele, oad)

Editorial and Administrative Office

Curia generale dell'Ordine degli Agostiniani Scalzi

Piazza Ottavilla, 1 - 00152 - Roma

e-mail: curiagen@oadnet.org, pec: curiagen@pec.it

Phone: +39 06 589 6345, WhatsApp: +39 324 089 3400

Cover, layout and publication

Fr. Diones Rafael Paganotto, oad

Cover

After his election, Pope Leo XIV greets the crowd gathered in St. Peter's Square
(Photo Alessandra Tarantino)

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EDITORIAL

Pope Leo XIV: A Joy for the Entire Augustinian Family

Dear readers,

the election of Pope Leo XIV has filled us, the Discalced Augustinians, with deep, simple, and grateful joy. For the first time in history, a Pope comes from the Order of Saint Augustine, and this event challenges us, consoles us, and encourages us.

This issue of *Presenza Agostiniana* is dedicated to Leo XIV, a religious, Augustinian, and missionary Pope.

As Discalced Augustinians, small branche of this great and ancient Augustinian tradition, we feel spiritually involved and motivated to live our vocation with renewed ardor.

His election is both a gift and a responsibility for us: an invitation to witness the Gospel with greater authenticity in the light of the Augustinian

charism, serving a Church that walks synodally, in listening, unity, and mercy.

In this time of grace, we unite in prayer for the new Pontiff, that his ministry may bear fruits of peace, communion, and renewal. And together with the entire Augustinian family, we rejoice: *Gaudete, quia propinquavit Dominus!* (Rejoice, for the Lord is near!).

Happy reading.





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Leo PP. XIV



Fr. Eugenio Cavallari, O.S.A.

AUGUSTINIAN POPE LEO XIV

From the Past to the Future



Abstract: *the election of Leo XIV, an Augustinian and missionary, surprised the whole world and immediately sparked enthusiasm among the faithful. His first message, simple yet profound, spoke of peace, God's unconditional love, and trust in the common journey. With humility, he presented himself as a son of Saint Augustine, inviting everyone to walk*

together in faith and hope. His mission aims to renew the Church in the spirit of synodality, following the example of the early Christian community, and to highlight the relevance of Augustinian thought today. The name Leo XIV recalls a pope from the past connected to the Augustinian Order and social doctrine. The new pontiff intends to evangelize by uniting spirituality and dialogue.

1. The surprising election of an Augustinian Pope

On the afternoon of May 8, 2025, the whole world was watching the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica to learn the name and figure of the new Pontiff.

Who could have ever imagined that it would be an Augustinian elected:

Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost? Once again, it was a "surprise" from the Holy Spirit. And Augustine's insight immediately came to mind: *"The Lord does nothing by chance but acts by surprise"* (De ord. 1,4,11).

The impact on the crowd in the square was immediate and overwhelming, as

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First appearance of Pope Leo XIV after his election (Photo Vatican Media)



First greeting of Pope Leo XIV (Photo Vatican Media)

Even his name, which was much loved by everyone, is a reference to the most Augustinian Pope in history, who canonized Saint Rita and beatified four Augustinians; who founded the Church's social doctrine with *Rerum Novarum* and opened the Vatican Secret Archives to scholars. This will be a pope who evangelizes in the era of artificial intelligence with the mystical intelligence of Saint Augustine, who unites the city of man with the city of God.

That first evening, Leo XIV concluded with a reference to the Madonna, cele-

brated in the Sanctuary of Pompeii, but also venerated on that same day by the Augustinian family under the title "Mother of Grace." What a great grace the gift of a new Pontiff!

It is truly true that nothing happens by chance in the life of the Church: let us ask Mary, woman-mother to whom nothing escapes. And let us prepare for other surprises.

Dear Pope Leo XIV: *ad multos annos* from all of us, your Discalced Augustinian confreres!



St. Peter's Square and the white smoke



Fr. Mario Genco, oad

RELIGIOUS AND AUGUSTINIAN POPES

In history following in the Footsteps of Saint Augustine



Abstract: *the election of Pope Leo XIV represents great joy for the Augustinian family, who see in him a sign of Providence and a call to their own mission.*

His figure unites significant dimensions: he is a Religious Pope, an expression of the richness of consecrated life; he is an Augustinian, guardian of the charism of Saint Augustine with its communal and

wise vision.

His election is part of a long tradition: in the history of the Church, there have been 35 religious popes, of whom 7 were linked to Augustinian spirituality — five in the 12th century, one in the 15th, and today, with Pope Leo XIV, this spiritual heritage is renewed in the present and it will be present in the future.

1. A Religious, Augustinian, and Missionary Pope

The election of Pope Leo XIV is a source of deep joy for us Discalced Augustinians, who recognize in him a sign of Providence and a renewed call to our mission. His figure embodies three characteristics close to our hearts: he is

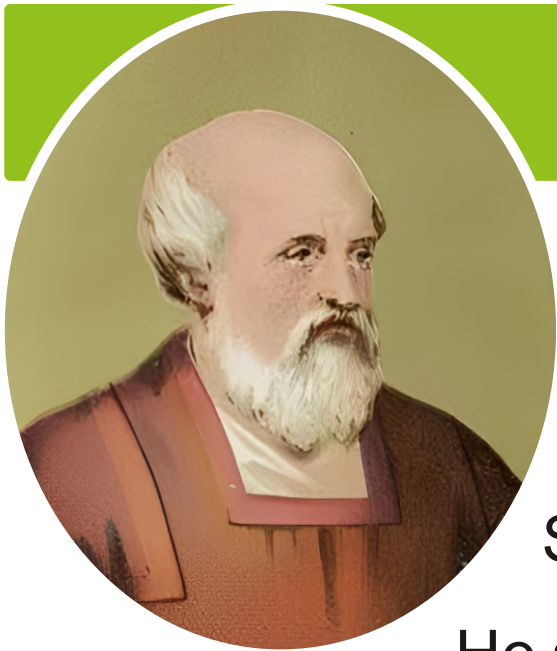
a **Religious Pope**, a sign of a Church born from consecrated life and acknowledging its spiritual richness; he is an **Augustinian Pope**, heir to the charism of our Father Saint Augustine, called to make his wisdom and communal vision shine; and he is an **American and Missionary Pope**, witness to a young,

missionary Church open to dialogue and the challenges of the contemporary world.

2. Augustinian Popes in the History of the Church

In the history of the Church, there have been **35 Popes** coming from religious Orders, a living testimony to the deep bond between consecrated life and service to the universal Church.

Among them, as many as **7 Popes** are linked to Augustinian spirituality, an eloquent sign of the fruitfulness of the charism of Saint Augustine. The Augustinian Pontiffs led the Catholic Church especially in the 12th century, one ascended to the papal throne in the 15th century, and today Pope Leo XIV joyfully and hopefully represents the continuity of this spiritual heritage connected to Augustine.



Honorius II (1124-1130)

Lamberto, known as Scannabecchi, was a Canon Regular of Saint Augustine.

He stood out for his profound doctrine, legal expertise, and spirituality deeply influenced by Augustinian thought, cultivated through communal life among the Canons Regular.

A humble and prudent man, moved by a sincere ecclesial spirit, he was able to place the peace of the Church above per-

sonal ambitions, as shown by his temporary renunciation of the papacy to avoid divisions. His Augustinian formation was reflected in his pursuit of truth, his sense of justice, and his striving for the unity of the Church.

He was a key figure in mediating between the Papacy and the Empire, contributing with balance and skill to the drafting of the Concordat of Worms, confirming himself as a pope of peace and reconciliation.

Innocent II (1130-1143)

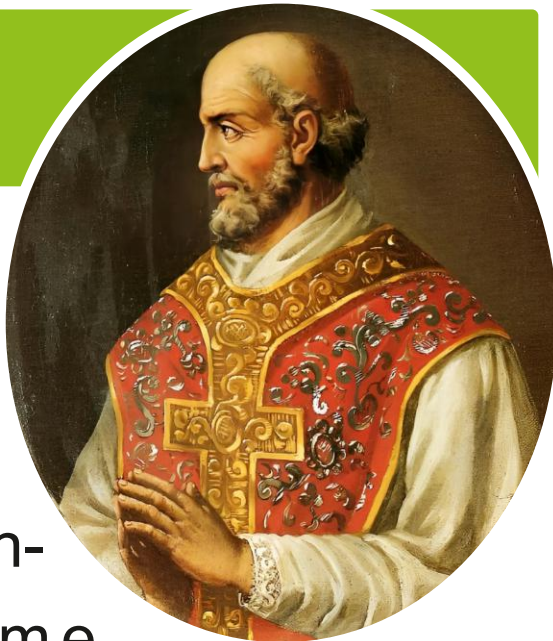
Gregorio Papareschi distinguished himself for his strong ecclesial sense, determination in defending the unity of the Church, and ability to face the political and religious tensions of his time.

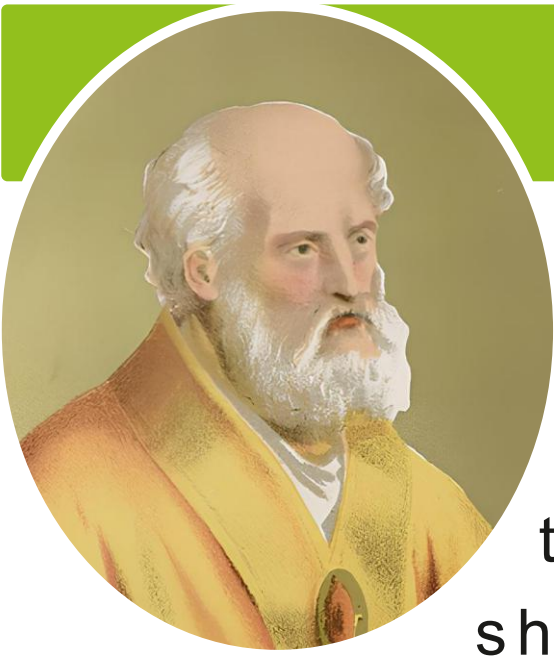
Formed in the Augustinian spirituality as a Canon Regular, he lived his pontificate with deep attention to communion and the reform of the Church, in line with the values of interiority, community, and service.

He was a key figure during a difficult period marked by a schism, which he managed to overcome

thanks also to collaboration with spiritual leaders such as Bernard of Clairvaux.

He promoted synods and councils to reaffirm the authority of the papacy and guide the Church toward a more authentic evangelical fidelity.





Lucius II (1144-1145)

Gherardo Cacciamnici dall'Orso was a pope attentive to the relationship between the

Church and civil authorities, standing out for his diplomatic skill and loyalty to papal authority.

His formation within canonical communities, likely Augustinian, influenced his pastoral style, marked by mediation, the pursuit of peace, and the appreciation of

ecclesial culture. He served as papal legate in Germany, where he played a decisive role in strengthening imperial support for the legitimate pope against the antipope.

Even during his brief pontificate, he left a lasting mark by officially dedicating the cathedral of Rome to Saint John the Evangelist, a symbolic act expressing the will to root the Church in apostolic tradition, in line with Augustinian spirituality that unites faith, history, and community.

Hadrian IV (1154-1159)

Nicholas Breakspear, the only British pope in history, was deeply shaped by the Augustinian formation he received among the Canons Regular of Saint Rufus, which forged in him a spirit of discipline, order, and ecclesial dedication.

He was an energetic and determined pope, committed to reaffirming the spiritual and political authority of the Church during a time of great tension between religious and civil powers. As a papal legate, he organized ecclesiastical structures in Scandinavia, demonstrat-

ing missionary zeal and pastoral vision.

During his pontificate, he firmly reaffirmed the supremacy of the papacy, intervening decisively in Roman affairs and collaborating with Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, while upholding the primacy of spiritual authority in the spirit of Augustinian tradition, which unites contemplation, action, and governance.



Gregory VIII (1187)

Alberto di Morra was a pope of great juridical and spiritual stature, connected to the

Augustinian tradition through his ties with the Premonstratensian Canons Regular of Laon, heirs to Augustinian spirituality. His formation made him a man of deep moderation and diplomacy.

During his very brief pontificate, he distinguished himself through his efforts to reconcile Christian powers such as Pisa and Genoa, and in attempting to mend relations with Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in view of a unified crusade. His pastoral style, marked by balance and reconciliation, reflects the Augustinian influence of seeking unity and peace through charity.



G a b r i e l e Condulmer was deeply influenced by the formation he received in the Augustinian community of San Giorgio in Alga, which he left only at the request of his uncle, Pope Gregory XII.

The experience he gained among the Canons Regular left a lasting mark on his style of governance, which was rooted in spirituality, discipline, and reform. He firmly faced the challenges of his time, wars, schisms, and internal Church con-

flicts, always seeking to reaffirm unity and papal authority.

His involvement in Church councils, especially the transfer of the Council from Basel to Ferrara and then to Florence, reflects the tension between papal primacy and conciliarism, but also his commitment to ecclesial renewal in line with the Augustinian ideal of a Church united in truth and charity.

The canonization of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, an Augustinian, confirms his enduring connection with this spirituality.



3. Pope Leo XIV

Pope Leo XIV is the seventh pontiff to come from the great Augustinian spiritual family and the first to belong to the Order of Saint Augustine in the strict sense.

His election marks a significant event for the entire Augustinian tradition, which sees in him a figure capable of embodying the distinctive traits of its spirituality:

the centrality of interior search, love for truth, fraternal life in community, and service to the Church in charity.

There is thus hope that his pontificate will be shaped by these deep values, bringing to the leadership of the universal Church the spirit of Augustine, as he declared in his first appearance:

*I am a son of Saint Augustine,
I am an Augustinian!*



Pope Leo XIV visits the Augustinians (Photo Fondazione Agostiniani nel Mondo)



Augustine Delivers His Rule to the Augustinian Monks,
Benozzo Gozzoli (1465),
Church of Sant'Agostino (detail, fresco),
San Gimignano - Italy



Fr. Gabriele Ferlisi, oad

THE AUGUSTINIAN COAT OF ARMS OF LEO XIV

An Added Value



Abstract: immediately after his election, Leo XIV introduced himself as a “son of Saint Augustine,” thus emphasizing his belonging to the Augustinian Order. This identity is also reflected in his choice to retain the Augustinian coat of arms, with its symbols: the flaming heart pierced by an arrow, the book, and

the motto. The Pope replaced the traditional “Tolle lege” with “In illo uno unum”, reinforcing the idea of ecclesial unity in Christ. Every element of the coat of arms is deeply rooted in Augustinian doctrine and spirituality, and reflects the integrity of Augustine’s figure: a man of faith, theologian, mystic, and shepherd.

1. “I am a son of Saint Augustine, an Augustinian”

Immediately after the white smoke appeared, in his first greeting from the outer loggia of St. Peter’s Basilica, the new Pope Leo XIV introduced himself to the faithful with these words: “*I am a son of Saint Augustine, an Augustinian*”.

In these simple words, his deep “**Augustinian identity**” is revealed, his sense

of belonging to the spirituality of Saint Augustine and to the Augustinian Order.

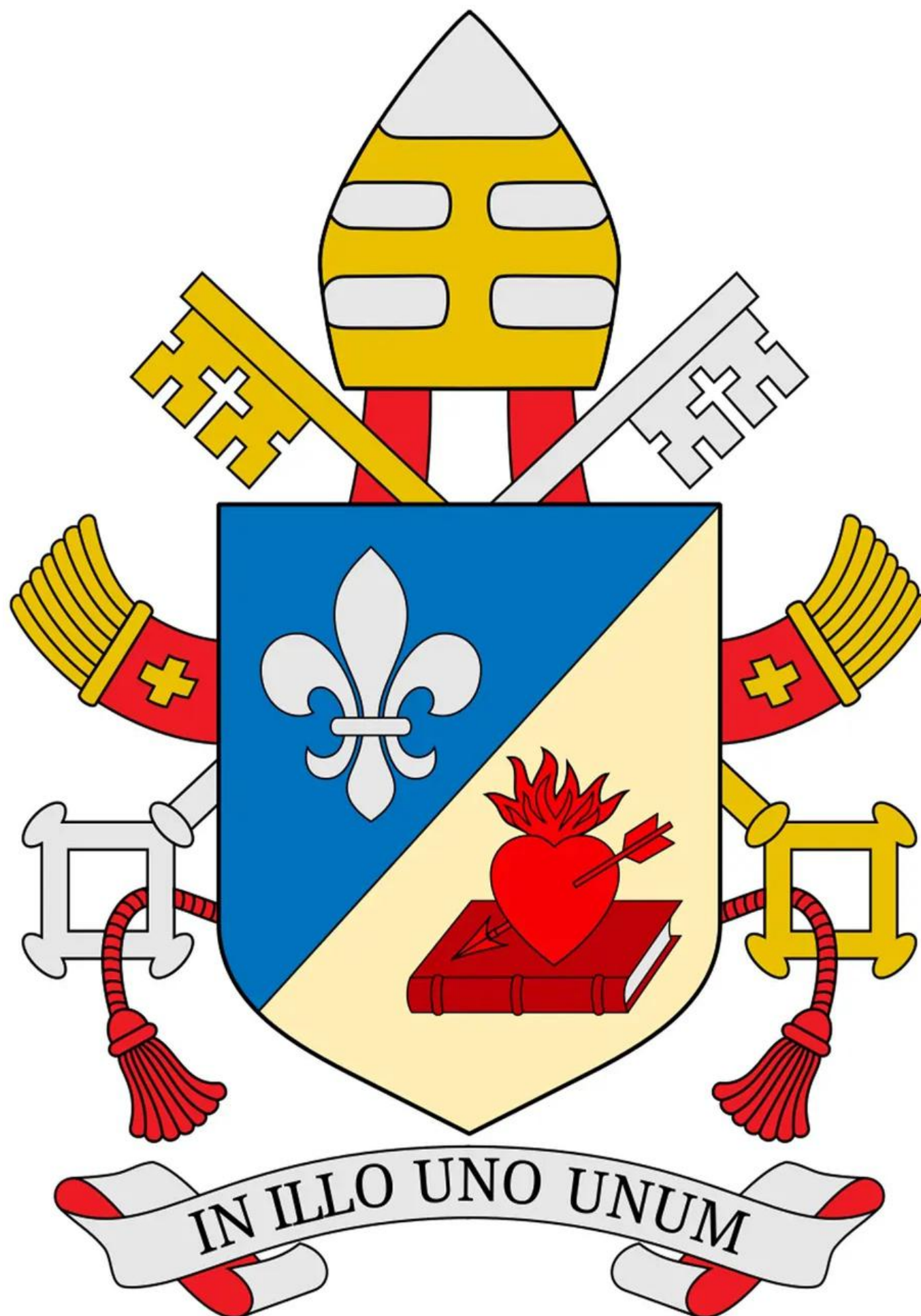
His choice to retain the Augustinian coat of arms and the motto from his episcopal consecration in his papal insignia is also a clear expression of this Augustinian identity. This strong connection to the Augustinian tradition is expected to be a true asset, not an obstacle, in his Petrine ministry.

2. The Augustinian coat of arms

The Augustinian coat of arms consists of a flaming heart pierced by an arrow, a book, and the motto: *“Tolle lege, tolle lege”* (*“Take and read, take and read”*),

which the Pope replaced with another phrase drawn from the works of Saint Augustine: *“In illo uno unum”* (*“In the one Christ, we are one Christ”*).

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- **Flaming Heart:** this symbolizes the heart of Augustine, passionately in love with God: *“Struck in the heart by you through your word, I loved you”* (Conf. 10,6,8).
- **Arrow:** pierces the heart and represents the Word of God.
- **Book:** refers primarily to Augustine’s extensive literary work, and also to the book of Sacred Scripture, which Augustine meditated on daily.
- **Motto:** taken from *Exposition on Psalm 127,3*, it reflects Augustine’s Christology and ecclesiology: *“Let us rejoice, then, and give thanks to God: not only have we become Christians, but we have become Christ himself.*



Do you understand, brothers? Do you grasp the grace God has poured out on us? Be amazed, rejoice: we have become Christ! If Christ is the head and we are the members, then the whole man is both he and we” (In Io. Ev. tr. 21,8).

3. Analysis of the Augustinian Coat of Arms

Each element of the Augustinian coat of arms would deserve an extensive treatment, given how deeply they resonate with the life, thought, and pastoral mission of Saint Augustine. Space allows us only to say this:

- As for the **heart**, Augustine spoke of it so often and with such ardor and depth that iconography has portrayed him with a flaming heart pierced by the arrow of God's Word. He saw the heart as synonymous with the mind, conscience, and interiority, the seat of thoughts and feelings, of longings and of love. More precisely, it is the center of the human being, synonymous with the person, because a person is what their heart is, and their heart is what their love is. It is a human space inhabited by the Trinity and by Christ, a temple of God.
- Regarding **Sacred Scripture**, Augustine saw it as the Word of God, the unfolding of the Christian revelation, to be read, meditated on, and ruminated over: *"Let your Scriptures be my chaste delights. Let me not be deceived in them, nor deceive others*

with them. [...] Certainly, you did not have so many pages written filled with such deep mystery without a purpose. Nor are those forests [the books of Sacred Scripture] without their deer [those who read them], who take refuge in them and find refreshment, roam and graze, lie down and ruminate in them" (Conf. 11,2,3).

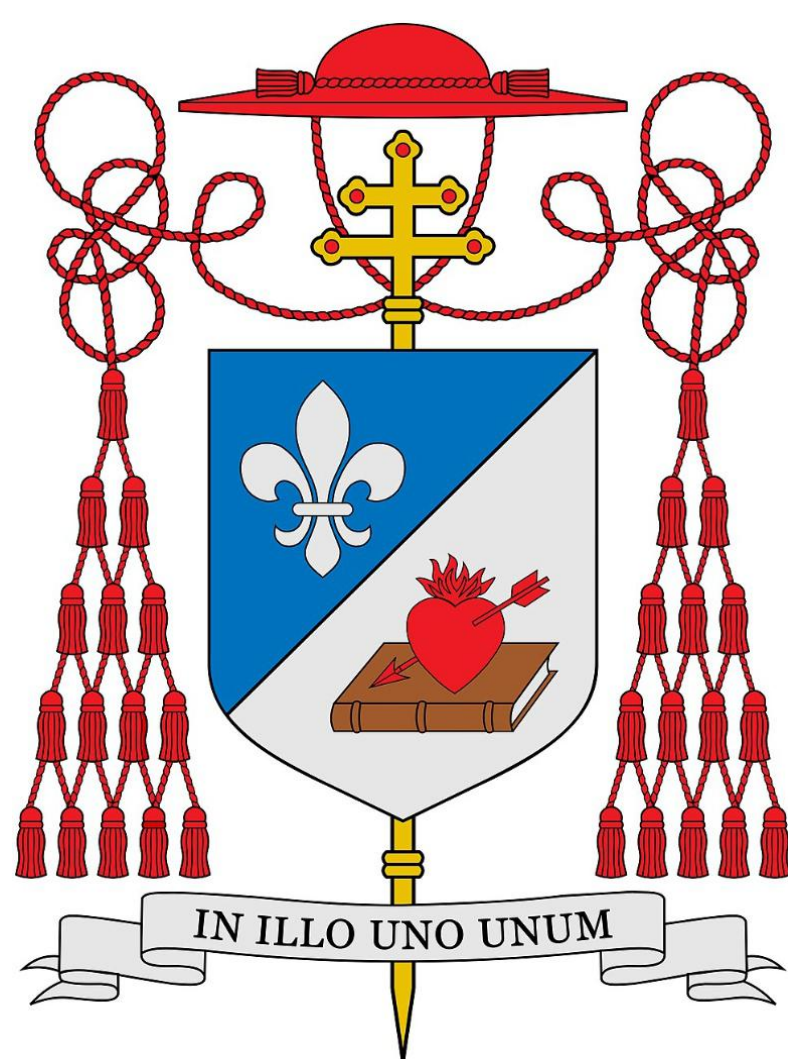
4. A Unified Vision of the Coat of Arms

Let us place ourselves before the elements of the Augustinian coat of arms and contemplate them together. What immediately stands out is that in it we find the **whole of Augustine**: the man, the convert, the monk, the mystic, the theologian, the pastor, the friend, the father; and we find his entire doctrine and spirituality.

Augustine is a man not only of analysis but of synthesis. His intellect was one with his heart, and vice versa. He wrote and acted not with the cold detachment of an intellectual, but with the warm spiritual and human passion of a convert—with the awe of a mystic, the zeal of a monk, the faith of a believer, and the



**Episcopal Coat of Arms
of Mons. Robert Francis Prevost,
Bishop of Chiclayo (Peru)
2015 - 2023**



**Cardinal's Coat of Arms
of Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost,
Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops
2023 - 2025**

far-sighted wisdom of the humble. He wrote with the heart, he wrote in prayer, convinced that the act of seeking itself becomes prayer, and prayer becomes the act of seeking: *“Let me seek you, Lord, by calling upon you; and let me call upon you believing in you, since you have been proclaimed to us”* (Conf. 1,1,1).

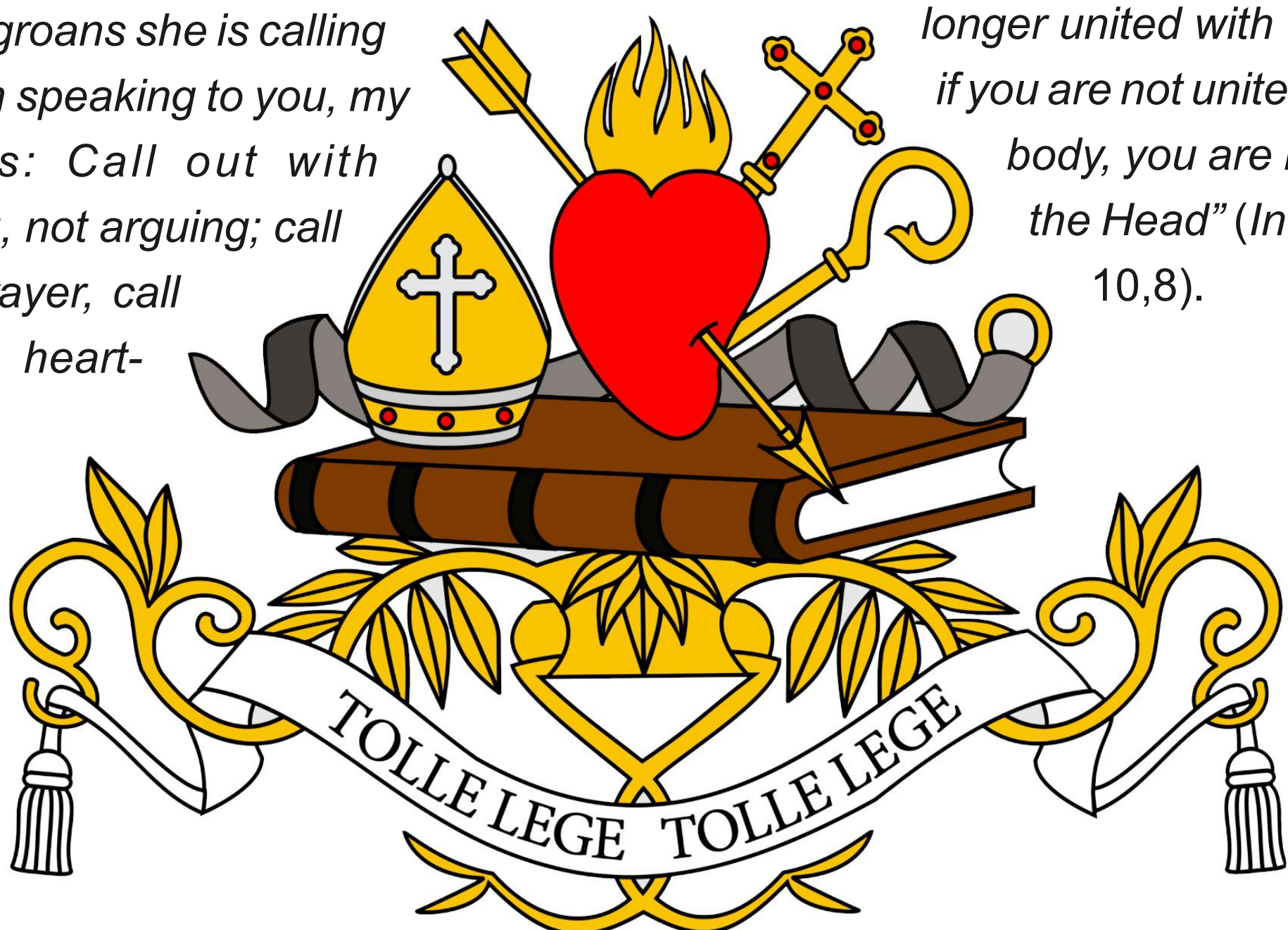
When Augustine spoke and wrote about the **Church**, he did so with the faith of one who sees her as Mother and Teacher, as a divine institution, not as he once said, *“a shipping company”* (Serm. 355,5), or, as we might say today, a corporation or political party. The Church is, yes, a social reality, but above all, she is a reality of grace, the Body of Christ, the “whole Christ.”

Augustine spoke and wrote about the Church with the devotion and affection of a son. That is why he never tired of warmly inviting the Donatists, who had separated from ecclesial communion, to stop tearing at the Church’s unity like crows, and instead to listen to the mourning dove calling them back to **Christ’s one Church**: *“Come, then, come and stop saying: I have received baptism, so I’m fine. Come, the dove is calling you, with her groans she is calling you. I am speaking to you, my brothers: Call out with groaning, not arguing; call out in prayer, call out with heart-*

felt invitation, call out with penance; let them see by your charity that you are suffering for them. I am certain, my brothers, that if they see your sorrow, they will be moved and return to life. Come, then, come, and do not be afraid. Be afraid only if you do not come. Indeed, you should not merely fear, but weep. Come, and you will rejoice. Yes, you will groan in the tribulations of this earthly journey, but you will rejoice in hope. Come to where the dove is, to whom it was said: My dove is unique, the only one of her mother (Song 6:8)” (In Io. Ev. tr. 6,15).

5. An Added Value

This is the Augustinian “added value” to the Petrine ministry now undertaken by Fr. Robert Francis Prevost, today Pope Leo XIV. We will hear him **speak and act** with the same words and the same passion as St. Augustine with his same clarity, gentleness, and firmness; with his same longing for unity, communion, and mission: *“Extend your charity to the whole world if you want to love Christ; because the members of Christ extend throughout the world. If you love only one part, you are divided, you are no longer united with the body; if you are not united with the body, you are not under the Head”* (In Io. Ep. tr. 10,8).



Classic Augustinian Coat of Arms



Fr. Alejandro Moral Antón, osa

LETTER TO THE AUGUSTINIAN FAMILY On the Occasion of the Election of Leo XIV



Abstract: *on May 29, 2025, the Prior General of the Order of Saint Augustine (OSA) sent a letter to the entire Augustinian Family to share the joy of the election of the confrere Fr. Robert Francis Prevost as Supreme Pontiff and Bishop of Rome.*

In this message of joy and gratitude,

Fr. Alejandro expressed the deep sense of communion and hope that this election represents for the entire Order.

Below we publish some significant excerpts from that letter, so that everyone may partake in this historic moment of grace and reflection.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

for three weeks now, we have been experiencing a special time of grace in the Order and throughout the Augustinian Family. The **election of our brother**, Fr. Robert Francis Prevost, as Supreme Pontiff has been a source of immense joy for all of us, which has been furthered by the numerous expressions of affection and congratulations we have received from all corners of the world.

This joy, which springs from the depths of our hearts because of the love we profess for the Church and the personal affection with which we welcome Pope Leo XIV, is not only a sign of recognition for his dedication over so many years as an Augustinian religious, but also an expression of our deep desire to live in communion with our brothers and with him in his ministry as Pastor of the universal Church.

[...] Last May 13, when the Holy Father came to celebrate the Eucharist with us in the General Curia and once again shared the table with the community, he told us:

“ suddenly, my life has changed completely, and I have had to give up many things, but I will never give up **being an Augustinian.** ”

His words moved us and evoked in us the Augustinian profession he had made to the world a few days earlier in his first speech from the balcony of Saint Peter's Basilica: I am an Augustinian, a son of Saint Augustine, who said: *“With you I am a Christian, and for you, a Bishop”* (Leo XIV, *First Greeting*, May 8, 2025). There is no doubt that this beautiful statement represents a challenge for each of us, who also **call ourselves and are sons and daughters of Saint Augustine.**

[...] I understand that this time is, without a doubt, a special opportunity to strengthen our union with the Holy Father and to renew our service to the Church. Our Father Augustine presents us with the **image of the Church** as one body, with Christ as its Head. Each of us is part of that body and, with our particular charism, we are called to collaborate in its building and in the mission of the Church.

It is a propitious moment, then, to reflect on our own vocation within the community, in the Order, at the service of the Mystical Body of Christ, which, like our Augustinian communities, is rich in the diversity of its members, who are, however, *One in their one Head: Christ, Shepherd and Guardian of our souls* (cf. 1Pet 2:25).

Let us work as an Order for a united and missionary Church that seeks peace and justice, composed of men and women without fear, because they have placed their trust in Jesus Christ and



desire only to remain faithful to Him. Our Order, with its long missionary history, has proclaimed the Gospel on every continent.

Today we wish to continue being the voice and hands of a missionary Church that builds bridges, embraces all those in need of charity, and is a living presence of God's love (Leo XIV, *First Greeting*, May 8, 2025); a Church that is a community of friends of Jesus, of believers who proclaim the Good News and proclaim the Gospel; a Church that safeguards, deepens, and transmits the faith in unity and communion.

[...] The Latin motto "*In illo uno unum*" ("*In the one Christ, we are one Christ*") profoundly expresses this ideal.

The Church, as the Body of Christ, can only live through Him, with Him, and in Him, and likewise, in our communities, we can only live united by Charity. Without Charity, our communities would fail and lose their reason for being. It is love that leads us to enter into the innermost depths of our being to discover there the Lover and the Beloved - *interior intimo meo*, as our Father (Conf. 3,6,11) said - the true author of communion.

[...] I **thank** all those who have collaborated in addressing the media that have approached us. Many professionals have expressed their gratitude "*for the open, helpful, and humble welcome they have received*". Some of the questions most frequently posed to us by the media have been:

- *What is the essence of Augustinian life?*
- *What does your charism consist of?*
- *What does it mean for the Holy Father to be an Augustinian?*

Undoubtedly, the Pope's frequent citations of the writings of Saint Augustine

will foster knowledge of his doctrine, a task to which we too are called. Therefore, echoing Pope Benedict XVI's exhortation to the Augustinians, which Pope Leo also reminded us of during his visit to the Curia, I invite you:

“ let us read more of Our Father's works, let us draw closer to him in our minds and affections, let us meditate on his life, let us invoke his intercession, let us immerse ourselves in his teachings... ”

because this will help us live with greater love our consecration to God, to whom we too can turn with the words of Augustine: "*Beauty ever ancient and ever new, help me to live ever anew that Love which I once tasted and breathed, and for which I yearn, and for which I hunger and thirst*" (Conf. 10,27,38).

[...] Let us ask the Holy Spirit to guide us on this journey we wish to walk alongside our beloved Pope Leo XIV.

Let us ask him to grant us a time of renewal for our communities, in which the fire of his love helps us recognize our brothers as brothers.

Let us also ask him, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Mother of Good Counsel, and of our Father Saint Augustine, to grant us the gift of making ourselves small so that Christ may be known and glorified (cf. John 3:30), spending ourselves to the end so that no one may lack the opportunity to know and love him (Homily of the Holy Father Leo XIV in the Holy Mass *pro ecclesia*, May 9, 2025).



Fra Wilfred Dubila, oad

LEO XIV ON THE THRONE OF PETER

The Solemn Mass of the beginning of the Pontificate



Abstract: *on May 18, 2025, in St. Peter's Square, the Mass marking the beginning of the pontificate of Pope Leo XIV was celebrated, expressing the deep bond between the new Pontiff, the mission of the Church, and the figure of the Apostle Peter.*

In significant moments such as the visit to Peter's tomb, the handing over of the Pallium, and the Fisherman's Ring, the

continuity of the Petrine ministry and the Pope's commitment as a good shepherd were renewed.

During the celebration, the presence of the professed religious from our International College in Rome, including the deacon Fra Wilfred, represented a visible sign of communion with the new Pope, who is also a son of Saint Augustine.

On Sunday, **May 18, 2025**, the Mass marking the beginning of the pontificate of Pope Leo XIV was celebrated in St. Peter's Square. This celebration has a fundamental connection with the assumption of his Petrine ministry as Bishop of Rome and successor of the Apostle Saint Peter.

The Pope was elected during the Easter season, when the Church celebrates the resurrection of Christ, and in his first address, the Pope took the Lord's greeting to his disciples as his first words to the faithful, "*Peace be with you all*" expressing his desire for peace in the world. This was the spirit that animated

the entire celebration of the Holy Mass. The large presence of the faithful in the Square showed a strong desire to collaborate with the Holy Father to build peace in the world.

1. Presence of the Discalced Augustinians

During the Mass marking the beginning of the pontificate, the professed religious of our International Studentate in Rome, together with me, deacon Fra Wilfred Shyghan Dubila, had the honor of serving at the altar.

Our participation was a sign of the presence and communion of our religious family with the new Pontiff, who is also Augustinian. A simple gesture but full of meaning, intended to emphasize our shared belonging to the spirituality of Saint Augustine and the **fraternal bond** that unites the Discalced Augustinians to the universal Church.

2. Tomb of Saint Peter

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The Mass marking the beginning of the Pontificate takes place in the basilica where the tomb of Peter is located, deeply expressing the **bond between the Pope and the Apostle**.

Before the celebration, Pope Leo XIV visited the Petrine tomb beneath the main altar of the basilica. With this gesture, the Supreme Pontiff began his ministry in communion with the first Vicar of the Church. The Church's choice to celebrate the Mass inaugurating the Pontificate highlights the succession in the Petrine ministry and the unity of the Church.

3. Presentation of the Pallium

Pope Leo XIV received the Pallium from Cardinal Deacon Mario Zenari, while the prayer was recited by Cardinal Priest Fridolin Ambongo Besungu.



Discalced Augustinian Religious at Mass

The Pope wore the Pallium over his shoulders, which holds great significance in the Church, as with this gesture the Pope takes on the role of the **Good Shepherd** who carries the lost sheep on his shoulders. Simeon of Thessalonica wrote in *De Sacris Ordinationibus*:

“

The Pallium symbolizes the Savior who, upon encountering us like the lost sheep, carries us on His shoulders. By assuming our human nature in the Incarnation, He divinized it; through His death on the cross, He offered Himself to the Father; and with the Resurrection, He exalted us!

”

4. Fisherman's Ring

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle handed the Fisherman's Ring to the Holy Father. This is an ancient tradition of the Catholic Church that began in the 3rd century.

The name Fisherman's Ring is linked to Peter, a fisherman by profession who was called by Jesus to become a fisher of men: *“You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven”* (Matt. 16:18-19).

The Ring represents the papal authority in the Church and the mission entrusted to the successors of Peter. The Fisherman's Ring is unique for each Pope and is destroyed at the end of his pontificate. In the past, this Ring also served as the seal for papal documents and correspondence; therefore, its destruction after the death or resignation of a pope was intended to prevent the risk of forgery of official acts.

5. Personal Testimony

Every sincere encounter with our neighbors takes place in our hearts. This kind of meeting is not superficial but it is always full of empathy, love, and genuine intention.



Confreres during the Mass of Inauguration of the Pontificate (Photo Daniel Ibanez)



Mass for the Inauguration of the Pontificate (Photo Lapresse)

Serving as Deacon at the Mass marking the beginning of the Pontificate of Pope Leo XIV was an experience I lived with great emotion and joy. **I thank God for the opportunity** to have been invited to provide this service.

I found before me a Pope who was very welcoming, open, and humble. I clearly remember his words during the homily: *“I have been chosen without any merit and, with fear and trembling, I come to you as a brother who wants to*

be a servant of your faith and your joy, walking with you on the path of God’s love, who wants us all united as one family.”

I was able to perceive the Good Shepherd who wants to know his sheep and walk beside them. My happiness was doubled since the new Pope is also Augustinian! I stood beside him and saw a man of great availability and trust in God, ready to carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth.



Pope Leo XIV greets Fra Wilfred Shyghan Dubila

I had the joy of being in Rome and experiencing an ecclesial event of extraordinary importance—the celebration of the conclave. At the announcement of the white smoke, I immediately ran to St. Peter’s Square to witness live the announcement of “Habemus Papam” and to receive in person the first blessing of the new Pope.

The joy surged even more when I heard the announcement that the new Pope was Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, an Augustinian; and I listened to the Pope’s own voice in his first greeting from the external balcony of St. Peter’s: *“I am a son of Saint Augustine, an Augustinian.”* For me, a young professed Discalced Augustinian, these words from the Pope were more than a balm.

But the surprises of joy were not over. A few days later, our Professorship received the invitation to serve at the solemn Mass of the Pope on the day he began his Petrine ministry. I had the honor of carrying the thurible. What a grace! And what an emotion when I was able to shake the Holy Father’s hand and greet him personally. A shower of blessings for my vocational journey!

Fra Etienne Ofon Mendi



In a context of particular divine privilege, marked by the election of an Augustinian Pope, raised in the cradle of the American continent and a Spanish speaker, the news arrived of our invitation to serve at the Mass inaugurating his Petrine ministry.

When I received the news, I was overwhelmed by immense joy and a deep sense of privilege, but at the same time, I immediately felt the great pressure

that such a responsibility entailed. Images came to mind of the entrance procession of a Mass he had presided over at Santa Maria del Popolo, near our house, at the beginning of his cardinal ministry: his gestures and bearing already seemed those of a Pope. On that occasion, I also had the honor of serving at the liturgy.

The day before the Mass, before beginning the rehearsal, the various tasks were assigned. I received a call from the master of ceremonies who, after a brief interaction, informed me that my responsibility would be to present the Missal to the Pope. A moment of great joy, but accompanied by the weight of the responsibility this role entailed.

Overall, I can say that the most moving aspect of the service was observing how human strength and the power of the Spirit come together in the liturgy and in the unity of all present. It was a privilege to come into contact with the living heart of the Catholic Church. Being there, one could perceive the human effort of every person involved in the event: the cardinals, the ministers, the guards, the cameramen, and, very close to me, the Pope himself. Everything seemed to be orchestrated by the Holy Spirit.

It was a very tiring day for me, as we had to remain standing for the entire duration of the Mass. However, the awareness that this human and spiritual effort was converging with that of the other confreres and the faithful, forming the initial strength of a new historic chapter for the Church, still fills me with peace and hope.

Fra Arnaldo Paiva





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





SUNDAY LITURGY WITH SAINT AUGUSTINE

July / August 2025

July 6

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Luke 10:1-12.17-20: Jesus sends the disciples on a mission

The Earth completes its full rotation in 24 hours, and this is something we observe as well. Something similar happened when the task was given to preach the Gospel of the Trinity to the 72 disciples: 72 is indeed the product of 3 x 24. Moreover, the fact that they were sent out two by two is a mystical reference to charity, both because the two commandments are of the same charity, and because no charity can exist unless there are at least two people (Quaest. Ev., lib. 2, q. 14).

July 13

15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Luke 10:25-37: Parable of the Good Samaritan

Jericho, etymologically identical to “moon”, represents our mortal condition

since the moon is born, grows, ages, and sets. The brigands symbolize the devil and his angels, who stripped man of the garment of immortality and, by inflicting wounds that led him to sin, left him half dead. Indeed, man is alive in the part that is given to him to understand and know God, while he is dead in the part that corrupts under the weight of sins. For this reason, it is said that he was left half dead (Quaest. Ev., lib. 2, q. 19).



July 20

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Luke 10:38-42: Martha and Mary

These two women symbolize two lives: the present and the future; one lived in toil, the other in rest; one troubled, the other blessed; one temporary, the other eternal (Serm. 104,4).

July 27

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Luke 11:1-13: Ask and it will be given to you

We know that many ask and do not receive, seek and do not find, knock and the door is not opened to them. So how is it that whoever asks, receives? Indeed, although all this seems said three times with three verbs, it reduces to a single petition. Ask, seek, knock; all of this means: ask (Serm. 61/A,2).

August 3

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Luke 12:13-21: Parable of the Rich Fool

Material wealth is superfluous, since our body needs little to sustain life. Spiritual wealth, however, is not superfluous. Whatever God gives you, whatever He grants you in the spirit of faith, charity,

justice, chastity, everything

He gives you of Himself,

cannot be superfluous. Your inner wealth is very important. What is it called? It is called God (Serm. 107/A,3).

August 10

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Luke 12:32-40: Parable of the Faithful and Wise Steward

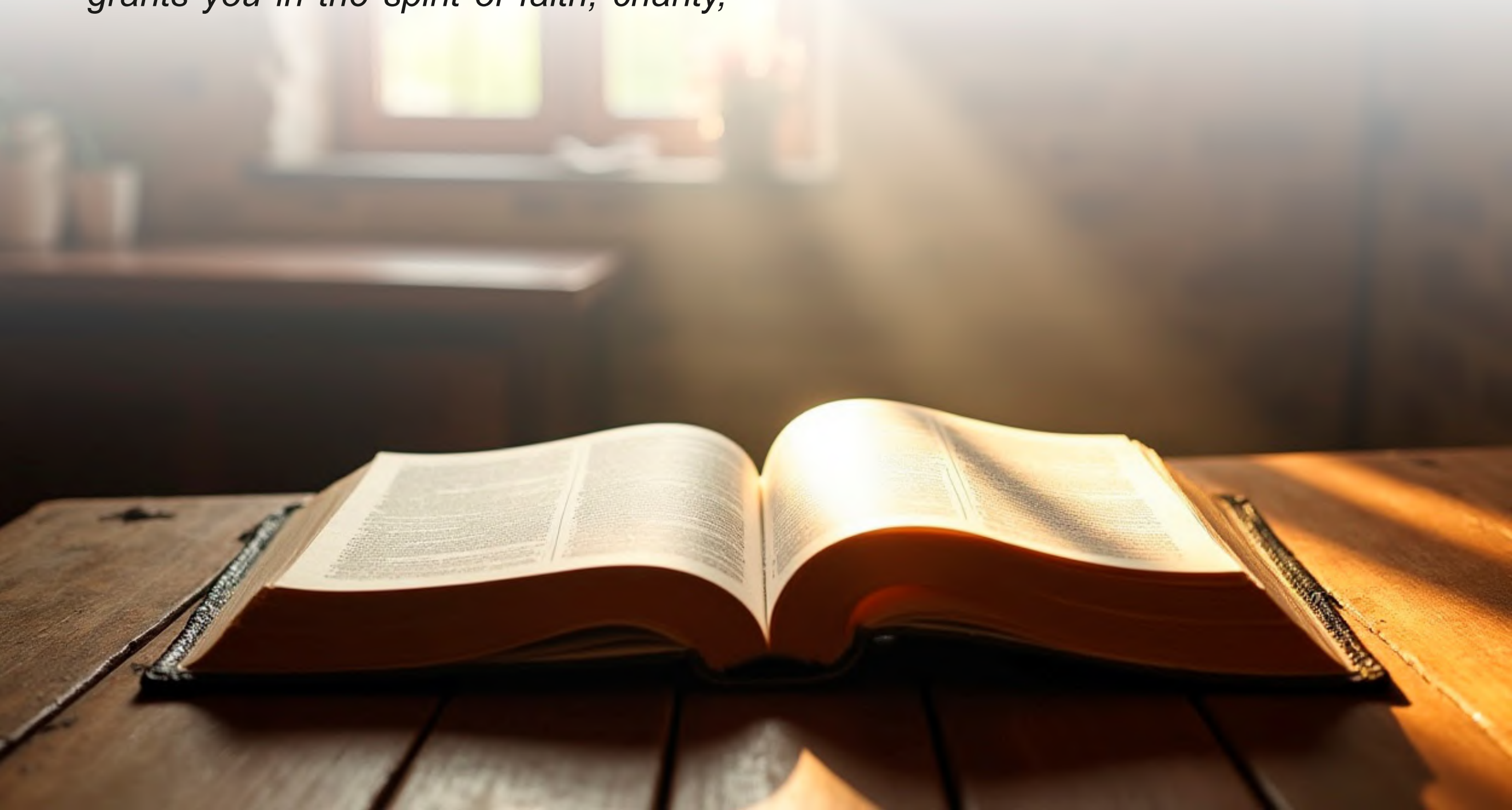
Think of someone who says within themselves: "God has promised forgiveness to all who turn away from sin; on whichever day they convert, He will forget all their iniquities. So I can do whatever I want now. Later, when the time is right, I will convert, and what I have done will be erased." What can we say? Is it not true that God heals the penitent when they convert? It is indeed true: God forgives all the past. If we denied this, we would contradict divine goodness, declare the prophet's words false, and oppose the word of God. And that is not fitting for a faithful steward (Serm. 20,3).

August 15

Assumption of Mary

Luke 1:39-56: Visit to Elizabeth

A barren woman becomes a mother, though old, she becomes a mother; a



twofold impediment to fertility, the sterility and advanced age. What he will be is told by the angel: in him what has been spoken will be fulfilled; and, as a great marvel, he is filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. Therefore, at the arrival of holy Mary, he rejoices in the maternal womb; and, unable to speak, he stirs to greet Christ (Serm. 291,1).

August 17

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Luke 12:49-53: Jesus, the Fire on the Earth

That something like this happens even after this life is not incredible, and one can ask whether things stand in these terms, and whether it is possible or not to discover that some believers, through a purifying fire, are saved in a more or less long time, depending on how great their love for fleeting goods has been; however, they will not be like those who "will not possess the kingdom of God" if, after adequate penance, the same crimes are not forgiven to them (De octo Dulc. q. 1,1,13).

August 24

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Luke 13:22-30: Parable of the Narrow Door

Listen to the one who guides you, to know the right path on which He has placed you: How wide is the gate and spacious the way that leads to perdition... but narrow is the gate and constricted the way that leads to life. Every straight path is brief and advantageous. The way that God has commanded you to walk to reach the kingdom of heaven does not pass through delights, riches of gold and silver, jeweled ornaments and precious garments, honors of worldly

nobility, or the pride of all the wisdom of philosophers. All these things and other similar earthly goods, which are misused by those who receive them for good use, constitute for them that wide, spacious way, traveled with only the hope of visible things, which, when they are deprived of this life, leads them not to the fulfillment of that hope which they did not nurture in life, but to perdition (Serm. 366,4).

August 31

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lk 14,1.7-14: Parable of the First Places

To Christ, dear Dioscoro, I wish that you submit yourself with the deepest reverence, and that in striving for the truth and reaching it, you open no other path than the one opened to us by Him who, being God, saw the weakness of our steps. The first way is humility, the second is humility, and the third is still humility: and whenever you ask me again, I would always answer you the same (Ep. 118,3,22).





SOME PICTURES

Sharing a bit of our Life



Spring Camp in Spoleto



The Rangers Group GRSP Spoleto and the MilleMani inSiemeVOLA Association celebrated 25 years of activity with the Spring Camp: **May 1-4**. The event involved all groups, offering four days of games, music, reflection, walks, and local tastings. The celebration concluded with a solemn Mass celebrated by the Archbishop in the church of Santa Rita, during which he was presented with a commemorative booklet and a souvenir T-shirt.



1st Assembly of the OAD Fraternities in Cebu City



May 1-4: the 1st Assembly of the OAD Fraternities took place, bringing together 270 members from 20 communities of the Third Order, Laypeople, and the Priestly Fraternity. The event, organized by Fr. Dennis Ruiz and Fr. Marlon Apat in collaboration with representatives, was attended by the Prior General, Fr. Nei Márcio Simon, and several confreres of the Order. Under the theme *“Pilgrims of Hope in the OAD Style,”* the assembly offered moments of formation, rites of admission and consecration, recreation, and a pilgrimage to the Jubilee Churches of Cebu. It was a historic event that strengthened unity among the expanding fraternities, especially in the Philippines, and concluded with the announcement of the next assembly scheduled in Bulacan in two years.



Visit to the Archbishop of Cebu City



On **May 5**, the Prior General and some members of the Religious Communities of Cebu City were guests of the Archbishop of Cebu, Msgr. José Palma, for a dinner and a fraternal meeting. The occasion provided a valuable moment of sharing, dialogue, and strengthening of bonds among the religious communities, in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual respect.



4th Provincial Chapter in Cebu City



May 6-14: the 4th Provincial Chapter of the Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino was held, with the presence of the Prior General. During the Chapter, the current situation of the Province was discussed, the *Programmatic Document* was drafted, and the Prior Provincial along with his Council were elected to lead the Province for the upcoming three-year term (2025–2028).

Prior Provincial and Councilors



The last two days of the Provincial Chapter were dedicated to the elections. The Chapter members elected Fr. Luigi Kerschbamer as Prior Provincial, along with the four members of the Provincial Council:

Fr. Myzon Camay (Provincial Vicar)

Fr. Alex Rubio (Second Councilor)

Fr. Joel Sumooc (Third Councilor)

Fr. Aristotle Batoto (Fourth Councilor)

50th Priesthood Anniversary of Fr. Dorian in Rio de Janeiro



On **May 15**, the Parish of Santo Antônio joyfully celebrated the conclusion of the fifteen Thursdays of Saint Rita, made even more meaningful by the celebration of the 50th anniversary of priesthood of Fr. Dorian Ceteroni.

The confrere gratefully recalled his service in the historic Community of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, where between 2010 and 2011 he served as master of the Professed theology students and as Parish Vicar.





Priestly Ordination of Fr. Milciades in Villa Elisa



On **May 17**, at the Parish of the Holy Archangels, the priestly ordination of Fr. Milciades Gauto was celebrated in an atmosphere of joy, prayer, and community participation. The ceremony, held during the 7:00 p.m. Mass, was attended by Discalced Augustinian confreres, family members, and numerous faithful. The ordination was preceded by a week of spiritual preparation including visits, prayers, and blessings. Fr. Milciades was assigned to the Community of Colíder to begin his priestly ministry, collaborating in the Parish of Papa São João XXIII.

Confreres at the Mass in the Vatican



On **May 18**, Pope Leo XIV presided over the solemn Mass inaugurating his Pontificate, officially marking the start of his ministry as Successor of Peter. The event held special significance for our religious family, as Pope Leo XIV is an Augustinian. Some of our professed confreres from the International College Fra Luigi Chmel, including deacon Fra Wilfred Dubila, had the joy and honor of serving during the liturgy.

The Mass featured several meaningful moments: the visit to the tomb of Peter, the imposition of the Pallium, the handing over of the Fisherman's Ring, and after the Eucharistic celebration, the Pope imparted the apostolic blessing to the faithful present and to the whole world.





Assembly of Major Superiors in Sacrofano



May 21-23: the Prior General attended the 103rd Assembly of the Union of Major Superiors, held at the Fraterna Domus in Sacrofano. With around 120 participants, the assembly reflected on biblical texts about hope, welcomed the testimony of four young consecrated persons, shared experiences in working groups, and listened to Cardinal Mario Grech's reflection titled: *"Consecrated Life, Engine of Hope in a Synodal Church"*.



New Members of the Mothers Monica Group in Rio de Janeiro



On **May 26**, the Parish of Santo Antônio experienced a moment of deep spirituality with the welcoming of five new mothers into the Mothers Monica Group, an association inspired by Augustinian spirituality. During the Mass celebrated by Fr. Gustavo Tubiana, a welcoming rite took place, marked by gratitude and communion, emphasizing the mothers' commitment to support each other in prayer and on their spiritual journey following the footsteps of Saint Monica.

Prior General and Procurator at the Pope's Audience



On **June 12**, the Prior General and the Procurator General attended the Holy Father's audience with the clergy of the Diocese of Rome. The Pope encouraged all



participants to walk together and to rediscover the flame of their vocation, especially during a time marked by widespread violence and, in the Roman context, serious challenges related to poverty and the housing emergency. After the meeting, the two confreres were welcomed at the Augustinian General Curia for a moment of fraternity shared over lunch.

Religious Investiture and Simple Profession in Bafut



On June 12, at the Saint Joseph Community Formation House, Fr. Etienne Atanga presided over the Mass during which three young men (Mbembe Galduo Moise, Bongui Rounaet Chituh, and Muh Peter Paul Ngong) received our religious habit, officially beginning their year of Novitiate. In the same celebration, Fra Azinwi Emmanuel made his Simple Profession for a duration of four years, publicly confirming his desire to follow Christ according to the evangelical counsels in the Discalced Augustinian religious life. The community gathered around these brothers, supporting them with prayer and fraternity, in an atmosphere of celebration, gratitude, and hope for the future of the Order.



Decree on the Servant of God Fr. Angelo Possidio Carú

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On **June 17**, the Postulator General, Fr. Dennis Ruiz, received the *Decree* dated February 26, 2025, by which the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints recognized the validity of the diocesan inquiry into the life, virtues, reputation for holiness, and the signs of the Servant of God Fr. Angelo Possidio Carú, our missionary confrere in Brazil.

With this decree, the so-called Roman phase of the Cause for beatification and canonization officially begins, promoted by the Santa Rita de Cássia Province and entrusted to the General Postulation for the preparation of the

Positio super vita, virtutibus et fama sanctitatis of the Servant of God.



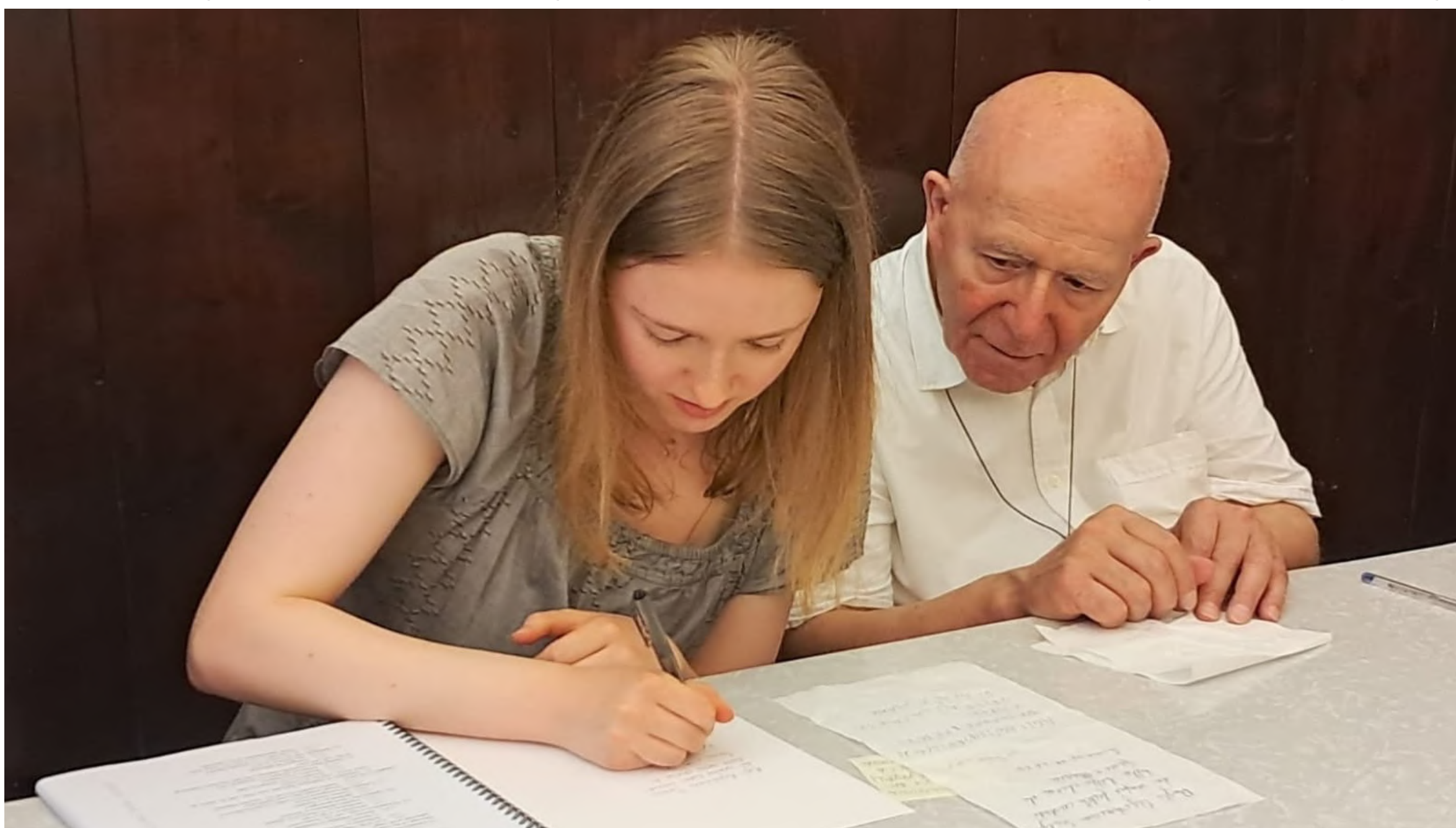
The Prior General and Fr. Eugenio meet the Pope



On **June 18**, the Prior General accompanied Fr. Eugenio Cavallari to the Vatican, where the confreres met Pope Leo XIV. On this occasion, a copy of the book *The Diamonds of Augustine*, a comprehensive anthology of texts by Saint Augustine, was presented to the Holy Father, dedicated by Fr. Eugenio to the Pontiff.

Thesis on the works of art in the sacristy of Gesù e Maria in Rome

On **June 21**, Renske de Vries presented her bachelor's thesis titled *Works of Art in the Sacristy, Choir and Gallery of Gesù e Maria: A New Study of Iconography*,



Attribution and Dating to Fr. Gabriele Ferlisi, Fr. Ghylain Lwanga, and the community of Gesù e Maria. This thesis, which concludes her BA in Art History at Radboud University Nijmegen, offers a detailed catalogue-like study of over thirty artworks located in these spaces of the Roman church of Gesù e Maria on the Via del Corso. By analyzing iconography, attribution, dating, and stylistic elements, the research sheds new light on the artistic and historical significance of these works, particularly in relation to the Discalced Augustinians. The study draws on both primary archival sources in Rome and secondary literature from the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence, and includes original photographic documentation.

Annual Retreat in Toledo



From **June 23 to 27**, the first week of the Annual Retreat for the confreres of the Santa Rita de Cássia Province took place, led by Msgr. Adenis Roberto de Oliveira, Auxiliary Bishop of Curitiba. The reflections offered were inspired by the book *Shepherds and Fishermen* by Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa, providing the participants with profound moments of spirituality, silence, and vocational renewal. In keeping with the Province's tradition, the Retreat is always divided into two groups to ensure the continuity of pastoral care in the Communities.



Prior Provincial Visiting the Philippines



In **June**, following the First Provincial Council held in the Province of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, the Prior Provincial, Fr. Luigi Kerschbamer, began a series of visits to several religious Communities where he presided over the official moments of the Profession of Faith of the new Local Priors, renewing with each the commitment to spiritual leadership and the promotion of community life according to the charism of the Discalced Augustinians. These meetings were also an opportunity to engage in dialogue with the confreres regarding the formation of new Communities. Additionally, Fr. Luigi visited Daet, where a feasibility study is currently underway for the establishment of a new religious Community, responding to the decisions made during the last Provincial Chapter.



Fr. Nei Márcio Simon, oad
@freineisimon

Prot. Reg. V; fol. 254/01 (May 9, 2025)

Subject: Congratulations on behalf of the entire Order of Discalced Augustinians on Your election as Bishop of Rome and Successor of Saint Peter.

Dear Holy Father,
together with all the members of the Order of Discalced Augustinians, I rejoice in the choice made by the Holy Spirit and the College of Cardinals, who have entrusted Your Holiness with the ministry of Bishop of Rome and Universal Pastor. We thank you for your generous “yes” to the divine call and we ask the Most High not to let grace be lacking upon You and upon Your Magisterium.

As members of the great Augustinian Family, we renew our willingness to walk

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIOR GENERAL

Best Wishes to the new Pope Leo XIV

together in the footsteps of the Holy Father Augustine. We reaffirm our commitment to contribute to building bridges that promote unity in Christ, for the good of the Church and for peace in the world.

We assure you of our humble prayers and ask for Your blessing.



