



**T**he arrival of the first Augustinian community in Vietnam later this month (August, 2019) marks an important moment for the Order and, in particular, our Augustinian brothers of Vietnamese birth. Since the Australian Augustinian Province accepted an invitation from then Prior General in Robert Prevost over 13 years ago, the Province has supported the formation of candidates for the Order from Vietnam.

And now the time has come for a community of the Order to live and serve in Vietnam. At the conclusion of the Augustinian Province Retreat in early July, the three Augustinians appointed for the first community in Vietnam were formally commissioned by Fr Anthony Banks OSA, Assistant

General. In late August, Frs Kim Phú Trần (Prior of the Local Community), Minh-Tan Hoang (Coordinator of the Augustinians in Vietnam) and Michael Sullivan leave for Vietnam. Their primary purpose will be to witness to Augustinian religious life. It is hoped that soon they will be able to welcome those interested into the initial stages of a formation programme in Vietnam.

I commend Frs Phú, Tan and Michael to your prayers and thank all who have been generous in their support of this endeavour. Information on how to support the mission is on the final page of this issue.

✉ Fr Peter Jones OSA

*Provincial*



No one is a stranger to an **AUGUSTINIAN**



**T**he Augustinians are members of the Order of Saint Augustine, a community of brothers and priests present in over 40 countries around the world. Inspired by the spirituality of Saint Augustine, we profess to “live together in harmony, being of one mind and one heart on the way to God.” Community, friendship and hospitality are at the heart of our way of life. Saint Augustine believed that God could be best discovered in the company of friends, and that is how we have chosen to serve God. In our communities and places of ministries, we seek to foster St. Augustine’s ideal of uniting people in the communion of mind and heart for the glory of God and the service of God’s people.

In Australia, we serve in various ministries in North Queensland, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. Our ministries include parishes, schools, Indigenous Connections, and ministry to Youth and Young Adults. We also have missions in Korea and Vietnam. Our communities reflect great diversity leading us to deeper commitment to fraternal communion.

In our witness of the common life, we journey together in search of the truth that is God, we hold all things in common, and we support one another as brothers and friends united in charity.

Whatever form our work takes, we bring with us our personality as Augustinians. Among those we serve, we try to create what we seek in our Order’s

own houses: a community of love and respect, where the presence of God can be recognized in each member.

In the past few years, we have been blessed with several significant celebrations such as Professions of Religious Vows and Ordinations. Just recently, we shared the joy of two of our brothers as they celebrated momentous occasions in their Augustinian journey. Brother Van Tu Nguyen OSA made his first profession of vows on the 26<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 in Cebu Philippines after a year in the novitiate. He has since returned to our Formation Community in Sydney. Brother Tuan Anh Le OSA made his solemn professions of vows on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 in the presence of his friends and many of his Augustinian brothers. We are also looking forward with great anticipation to the diaconal ordination of Brother Quang Tuyen Pham OSA on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 2019. These celebrations not only provide us with a revitalized hope but also bring renewed enthusiasm for the Order and the Church.

If you feel God is calling you to religious life, we invite you to join in our service to God and His Church as consecrated religious brothers and priests. Please call us at 9938-0200 or email Fr. Percival OSA at [psevere@osa.org.au](mailto:psevere@osa.org.au).

*Vocations Promotion Team*

# AUGUSTINIAN VOLUNTEERS AUSTRALIA 2019

## The Journey with Aboriginal People Continues



**I**n this photo on a cold wintry day in May, the three Volunteers pictured on the steps of the Opera House have just made their regular weekly contribution to the life of the Redfern Aboriginal community at 7am on a Friday. Despite what looks might tell you, most of this photo is taken up with the young people, adults and especially the mentors of the Redfern Aboriginal community. Our three Volunteers, Peter, Annabella and Bridget are third row at the left of the photo about half way up the steps. Annabella is in blue, Peter is to her left and Bridget to the right. The group has just spent one hour in their regular boxing exercise for community members with, as you can see at the rear, the Police also in attendance.

Members of Opera House staff had requested this visit from the community. AVA usually teaches Language classes of the Reconstructed Sydney Language of the Wangal, Gadigal, Gamarayagal and Wallamadagal clans of the Eora nation after the hour's boxing. So Peter, Annabella and Bridget, together with the Aboriginal Mentors, have just led the group through the Welcomes, songs and sentences we have been learning and teaching for the

past four years. Perhaps the 'mobs' here might think their ancestors have been stirred by their strong renditions of a language that was thought dead before AVA and our friends commenced work. It is somewhat eerie to think that Bennelong and the other members of the Eora people used our words constantly up until the white sails entered the Harbour on that fateful day in 1788.

And while these events occur so early in the morning, our other Volunteers in western Sydney, in northern Brisbane and in Adelaide are ministering in their own important ways at other times and on other days in similar manner. Not all are invited to such big gatherings in such wonderful sites. But for all the 100 plus volunteers of the last ten years, there have been numerous significant mornings like this. Augustinian Volunteers like to think that the organisation exists as much for the transformation of our members (the Volunteers themselves), as it is for the assistance we can give to communities on the edges of our society which is a privilege as is shown in this photo.

✍ *Paul Wilson*

*Augustinian Volunteers Co-ordinator*



## FRIENDS OF ST AUGUSTINE SEEKING GOD TOGETHER

This is a busy and exciting year for Friends of St Augustine. In June the IV International Congress of Lay Augustinians was held in Sacrofano, Rome and in August and September we will be holding our own series of gatherings in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne.

I attended the International Congress along with Sylvia Phillips and Fr Dave Austin, both representatives for Asia Pacific on the Laity Commission, and Fr Paul Maloney Friends' Chaplain.

The Congress was attended by around 130 delegates representing regions in South America, USA, Europe and Asia Pacific.

Whilst it could be said there were aspects of the organization of the Congress that were challenging, the highlight for me, and I believe many others present, was the rare opportunity to meet with others from the international Augustinian community and share information, experiences and our hopes and desires for the future.

The Congress followed the format of a guest speaker followed by group discussion, then the opportunity to share the fruits of the discussions with the delegates and speaker. The speaker that resonated with me was Ms Paola Bignardi, an Italian educationalist active in the lay community. Paola's talk was titled *Is this still a time for the laity? Christians in a secular world*. She astutely articulated the issues faced by the laity past, present and future and challenged the laity to be well formed, to take risks, to have a vision for the future, embrace their

life experience, not be afraid to speak up and dare to dream.

Whilst I was initially disappointed that the Congress was not held in the city of Rome, I think the isolation of the country setting helped to forge bonds of friendship and excluded the many enticing distractions of a place such as Rome. We weren't entirely deprived of culture, making visits to Roccaporena and St Rita's Basilica in Cascia where we attended Mass and visited the tomb and home of St Rita. We also had a wonderful excursion into Rome on the Sunday, gaining special "side door" entry to St Peter's Basilica where we attended Mass under the magnificent Chair of St Peter surrounded by bronze statues of Doctors of the Church including St Augustine and St Ambrose. The Mass was concelebrated by the many Augustinian Priests attending the Congress. A truly wonderful and memorable experience.

We now look forward to our own series of local gatherings in Sydney (24 August), Brisbane (31 August) & Melbourne (7 Sept) where we welcome our keynote speaker Fr Kieran O'Mahony OSA, visiting from Ireland. He will explore the theme *Joy In Believing*. We plan for these days to be a joyful celebration of our faith, an opportunity to explore how we can live the Gospel in today's complex world as we look to the future of our Church and our role as laity.

✉ *Jacky Worthington*

*National President, Friends of Augustine*



## OFFICIAL EPISCOPAL PASTORAL VISITATION at St. James Parish

**A**uxiliary Bishop Ken Howell, on behalf of Archbishop Mark Coleridge, made an official Pastoral Visitation at St James Parish on 17-19 May 2019.

Bishop Ken kicked off the three-day visitation by going to St James Primary School for the Prep Classroom Blessing Ceremony. This occasion coincided with the visitation to St James School of Brisbane Catholic Education Executive Director Ms Pam Betts. The Bishop toured the school and had an ample opportunity during the first day to dialogue with the P&F Executive, school staff, students, and the school principal, Mr John Bates.

On the evening of the Friday, the Augustinian Community at Villanova Priory hosted a dinner with Bishop Ken and the Villanova College Leadership Team.

The second day of the Pastoral Visitation consisted mostly of a dialogue between the Bishop and key leaders and volunteers who serve at St James Parish. Bishop Ken's approach to the visitation was observably that of a listening pastor. He allowed the leaders and volunteers of the parish to speak and convey what the parish is up to, how the parish community is travelling, and hear out what challenges they currently face in their different roles of service in the parish.

Bishop Ken presided and delivered the homily in three out of the four masses that weekend, and was very generous in spending time to speak with



whomever wished to converse with him after each mass.

All in all, the three-day pastoral visitation was a great opportunity for Bishop Ken Howell, in the name of Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Brisbane, to get to know better the parish community at St James Coorparoo.

✠ *Fr Francis Belciña OSA, Pastor*

# Profile

## FR. DAVE AUSTIN, OSA



Vocation can be a frightening word, particularly when we associate it with answering the personal call to follow Christ. Our fear may be of having to do something extra when for many of us our lives seem already too full. As I reflect back on my decision to join the Augustinians, I am very grateful to men like Frs John Barry, Gerry Dullard and others for their example of a common sense approach to life and vocation as Augustinians. Somewhere I must have thought, *'I could do that!'*

In my childhood, Mass was in Latin and, while I knew all the responses, I was never invited to be an altar server in my home parish - perhaps I went to the wrong school! In any event the seed of faith and vocation was sown in my family where religion was natural and normal. Life as a Catholic was relatively simple though families where members belonged to different religions faced difficulties. Demands by the Church that children in mixed marriages be raised Catholic could be very divisive. My Dad, a twin born of an Anglican father and Catholic mother, was baptised Anglican at the insistence of his father. He was married twice, having lost his first wife in childbirth; thankfully, the baby survived and in later life we became the closest of brothers and friends.

My mother had been baptised Anglican too but when her mother became Catholic, my Mum followed suit. A truly remarkable woman, she endured a long battle with cancer and died in 1959 - a saint of the Church to those who knew her. Fortunately, I was attending Villanova College during these years and my faith was nourished and my vocation allowed to grow. I am grateful to have come from a 'religiously complex' family and, yes, there's still quite a bit of Anglican blood coursing through my veins! Some years ago, I met the Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane Philip Aspinall at a St Patrick's Day Dinner and I mentioned my origins to him. *'Perhaps you'd like to come across...'* he quipped. Needless to say, I declined!

Prior to the Second Vatican Council none of us knew what was ahead. From my first year as a novice in Rochester, Victoria, followed by studies in philosophy, theology and other disciplines in Philadelphia and Washington DC until now, I am often in awe at the opportunities and rich variety that Augustinian life offers, not only in study but in ministry too. The '60s was an eventful time in the US with the Civil Rights Movement gathering momentum and the nation deeply involved in the war in Vietnam. It was the era of Woodstock, Black Power, *Humanae Vitae*, and a changing Church as the impact of the Second Vatican Council began to emerge.

My class numbered 8 men and we were ordained in a few different places at different times, according to a new Rite of Ordination, for the first time without Latin! On 6 September 1969, Bishop Gerald McDevitt, Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia, ordained me to the priesthood in St Denis' Chapel, Havertown, in



suburban Philadelphia, at the tender age of 24. I celebrated my First Mass at St Mary's Hall Chapel on the campus of Villanova University. Early ministry experiences included parish supply and a placement with the Catholic chaplain at American University in Washington DC.

Fifty years on, I look back with deep gratitude on 23 years in our schools, my strong passion for Catholic Education, pastoring of 5 different parishes here in Australia, and a host of other leadership and ministry opportunities in the local Church, promotion of Augustinian 'saintly and ordinary' spirituality, liturgical renewal, and participation in Augustinian cooperation in the Asia-Pacific. Study/renewal programs have been part of the journey too and I retain my unwavering love for the Church and enthusiasm for the fresh message of Pope Francis who teaches, models and lives the Joy of the Gospel in our age where our many failures as Church have tarnished Jesus' message.

Our Church has an important Mission in our World and we must remain hopeful and confident. I conclude with 3 quotes, one from Cardinal Marc Ouellet to the Australian Bishops in Rome in June, **'Don't lose faith in your ministry!'** Our Holy Father St Augustine speaks of the lasting beauty of the Eucharist in the Church, **'It is your own reality that you receive.... Be what you see and receive what you are!'** His words from Sermon 272 are echoed in the beautiful prayer of the late, inspirational Fr Pat Negri SSS, a prayer we need to live and pray often:

**'May the Body of Christ become more so!'**

✠ Fr Dave Austin, OSA

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# AFA

## AUGUSTINIAN FORMATION ASSOCIATION

The Augustinian Formation Association (AFA) supports and helps raise funds for the Augustinian seminarians who are located in Brookvale, Sydney and are studying to become priests. As a committee with currently 14 members we provide our Augustinian seminarians with opportunities for them to be immersed within the community by organising movie days, Multicultural dinners, Shows, Fun Walks at Manly, Christmas in July dinners, and our annual end of Year dinner get togethers. These fundraisers not only raise funds for the Augustinian Seminarians but is a wonderful opportunity for the community to meet these young men, hear their stories and get to know them. The students also love and appreciate this opportunity to spend time with some of the community members who are supporting them on their journey both financially and spiritually.

As the President of AFA I encourage you to help our Augustinian seminarians by contributing to the Appeal. Your generosity would be greatly appreciated and will go a long way in funding them.

✠ Adriana Bowyer  
AFA President

This year's Annual Appeal to support our Seminary Trust Fund and other ministries is being held in August, around the time of St Augustine's Day. There are various ways you can contribute to the Order and receive a tax deduction:

### AUGUSTINIAN SEMINARY TRUST FUND

Donations are used exclusively for the ongoing provision for our seminarians. Envelopes are available in our parishes and you can make a donation by cash, credit card or direct deposit.

**Account Name:** Augustinian Seminary Trust Fund

**BSB:** 082 146      **Account Number** 13 610 4220

**Reference:** Please include your name

### AUGUSTINIAN VOLUNTEERS AUSTRALIA TRUST FUND

If you would like to know more about what we do, please visit our website. You can also donate via our website or by direct deposit

**Website:** [www.augustinianvolunteersaustralia.org](http://www.augustinianvolunteersaustralia.org)

**Account Name:** Augustinian Volunteers Australia Trust Fund

**BSB:** 062 287      **Account Number:** 1043 4293

**Reference:** Please include your name

### AUGUSTINIAN VIETNAM MISSION FUND *(not tax deductible)*

Donations will be used to assist the new Augustinian Community in Saigon with their setup costs which include preparation to invite young Vietnamese to test their vocation in the Augustinian *Come and See Program*. You can make a donation by cash or direct deposit.

**Account Name:** Augustinian Vietnam Mission Fund

**BSB:** 082 146      **Account Number:** 7359 03067

**Reference:** Please include your name

### BEQUESTS

Please contact the Province Office for information on how you can leave a bequest to the Province.

For donations made by direct deposit, please contact our office for a tax deductible receipt.

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