



# AMICI

Volume 23 Issue 3

Friends of St Augustine Newsletter

## “Walking Together”

Autumn 2024

Dear Friends of St. Augustine,

*Symbols of Leadership arrive in South Yarra*

### The Jug and Bowl

*“It is envisaged that in whatever state the National Executive is located, then the jug and bowl will be kept in their care. It is their sign of office and gives them the authority to act and to speak on behalf of all the communities of Friends of St. Augustine across Australia.” (Symbols of the call to serve, Amici 2004)*

Our pre-Christmas Gathering in South Yarra had a special significance when the Symbols of Leadership, the jug and bowl, were officially blessed and presented into our care by Fr. Brian Buckley OSA

(see details inside). These symbols of the call to serve are potent reminders of how we may serve one another as we journey to God, not as solo travellers, but *walking together*, showing friendship and supporting one another as meaningfully as possible. The very name of our Friends of St. Augustine newsletter – *Amici* – may challenge us to consider the nature of friendship.

For Augustine, friendship is "mutual acceptance of all the human and divine in each other" (*Against the Academics*, 3, 6, 13) According to him, friendship is an image of the love of God for us, since authentic and generous friendship mirrors the love that Christ showed for us on the Cross. How timely to reflect on this now, with the grace and blessings of the Easter season still present for us. We know from his letters that he discussed issues of faith and life with so many people - men and women, young and old - with sincere affection. May we mirror this in our Gatherings throughout the year, looking out for our friends, with care and affection, keeping our friendship in repair.

As we walk together, each group of Friends has a Chaplain as a guide. In early March a Zoom meeting was held to discuss the role of the Chaplain in supporting each group, according to their needs. Additionally, Leaders will communicate regularly, with the next meeting taking place via Zoom in April. Our thanks are again due to Maureen Atkins, our National Formation Coordinator, who has continued her work on adapting

*The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Augustine: Fr. Andrés Niño.* Fr Niño invites us to learn about Augustine's life, to reflect on the tensions he experienced in coming to God, and to encourage us to review our own journeys, in dialogue with the self, as we come to God in our times. Copies of the Study Guide for 2024 have now been made available to all group Leaders.

Looking ahead, in July the International Laity Congress of 2024 will take place in Rome, under the motto, *“Walking together in communion, participation and mission”*. The sessions will focus on the path of Synodality for the Augustinian lay faithful. Australia will be represented there, with attendees from St. Clair in Sydney, Villanova College in Brisbane and St. Joseph's in South Yarra. So, we will continue walking together as *Friends of St. Augustine*.



### Friendship

We may never reject the friendship of anyone who wishes to be our friend. Certainly we are not obliged to accept everyone immediately in friendship, but it should be our wish to accept everybody as a friend. Our attitude towards others should be such that the possibility of taking them into our friendship remains open.

*Aug. div. qu 93,q.71.6*

*Mary McCormick*

*Judith Duncan*

**Walking Together – Introducing our Leaders**

**MAREEBA**

land of the Muluridji people

*Jeanette Hartley had this to say,*

For thirty years now I have been a person with a great love for St Augustine.

Coming to Mareeba was a catalyst in my life.

For many years now I have had the honour of leading the *Friends of St Augustine* in this town. As time progresses, I hope my knowledge and understanding of Augustine has deepened.



**COORPAROO**

land of the Turrbal and Jagera people

Parish of St James

*Introducing Brent Cornford*

I began my journey of learning about St Augustine at St James Coorparoo in early 2022.

This year I have taken on the role as the leader of *Friends of St Augustine* adding this to my existing role as leader of the Children and Families Ministry.

I want our parish community to discover the rich history and teachings of St Augustine and to make his influence one of the building blocks which support each of our ministries in the church.



**GOLD COAST**

land of the Kombumerri people

Surfers Paradise Parish – Sacred Heart

From the Gold Coast we learn that Mary Ann is a Business and community leader, Coordinator of Catholic Filipino – Australian Gold Coast, mother and grand-mother, and blessed to be part of *Friends of St. Augustine*.



*Mary Ann Boehme*

**ST CLAIR**

land of the Darug people

Parish of Holy Spirit

We are truly blessed to be part of Holy Spirit Parish St Clair, under the Pastoral Care of the Augustinians, which has enabled us to increase our own spirituality through the *Friends of St Augustine* formation programs.

**CAIRNS**

land of the Yirrganydji people

Gina tells us, I am a working mother of two boys and my motto in life is *Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much!* (Helen Keller)



*Gina Rossbach*



*Sylvia & Lorenz Herft*

**NORTH HARBOUR**

land of the Gayamagal and Canalgal people  
Church of St Kieran's



**Jacky Worthington** understands *Friends* well, having been local leader for a number of years plus National Leader for more than two terms. Jacky wrote, "For the past 20 years *Friends* has sought to bring together those who desire to learn about Augustinian spirituality and more importantly explore ways to live as authentic Christians in a secular society".

**SOUTH YARRA**

land of the Wurundjeri & Boonwurrung people  
Parish of St Joseph



**Judith Duncan tells us**, I feel privileged and blessed to be a member of an Augustinian Parish, which enriched me as a parishioner, then gave me the opportunity to join the *Friends of St. Augustine*. This has helped me to not just be a Sunday Catholic, but to seek to deepen my spiritual life through the formation programs and friendship experienced.

Augustine wrote, "When many rejoice together, there is a richer joy in each individual since they enkindle themselves and inflame each other." Confessions Bk.V111 4.9

**SYMBOLS OF LEADERSHIP FOR FRIENDS**

At the South Yarra pre-Christmas gathering for 2023 *Friends* were witness to the Presentation of Leadership symbols when Brian Buckley OSA gave blessing to Judith and Mary in their new role as Co-Leaders of *Friends of St. Augustine* (FOSA). Local groups were named as part of the ceremony, and Badges were presented to the local members.

**NEWS FROM ST CLAIR — Walking Together on our Advent Journey**

Sue Oram (St Clair) would like to thank *Friends of Saint Augustine* for organising the amazing day we had on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, as some of us attended the Advent Retreat. We were blessed to have Fr Peter Jones OSA and Fr Dave Austin OSA walking us through the day. We began our day listening to St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit.

The first session was sharing in groups our own experience as to the reality by which the Lord comes. The questions were: As you come to Advent, what key parts of your experience are uppermost in your heart? Is there anything that speaks to you, whether it is difficult or happy? Who am I that awaits the Lord?

The second part of our day was about the longing of Mary of Nazareth, listening to Luke's Gospel 1:26-38 about The Annunciation. Also the arrangement of Advent Sunday readings and arrangement of weekday readings and what they are about.

The third part of our day was about a Christmas Homily by Saint Augustine, Sermon 192.

In a spirit of reconciliation *Friends of St. Augustine* acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we gather.

**TO ROME**

Australian Delegates - Judith Duncan, Co-Leader FOSA,  
 Kate Garrone, Head of Mission, Villanova College, Coorparoo,  
 Sylvia & Lorenz Herft, Leaders FOSA St Clair,  
 Peter & Margaret Moriarty, FOSA St Clair,  
 Sivi and Rachael Kama, FOSA St Clair -



will attend the International Congress for Augustinian Laity  
 which will take place at the Augustinian College of St. Monica, at Via Paolo VI, 25, 00193 Rome, Italy.

Under the motto *“Walking together in communion, participation and mission”*

the sessions will focus on the path of Synodality for Augustinian lay faithful.

**Meanwhile in Australia we continue our focus on Augustinian Spirituality**

While our delegates represent us on the International scene we invite *Friends*, whether you attend a group gathering or enjoy reading *Amici & the Prayer Resource*, to take time to explore some of the questions from the Australian Lay Congress held in Brisbane 2023.

**Questions posed there were:**

**Where to next?** What stands out for me? What can I put into practice? What do I feel I’m capable of doing? What have I heard? What difference does it make? What happens tomorrow and into the future? What can we do for each other? Questions for all to ponder!

**Interestingly, notes taken at the 2004 Sydney Congress, continue to challenge us:**

**Where to from here?** The following points of convergence came out of that discussion.

The importance of ‘getting together’ was highlighted.

The dynamic and simple structures for Friends groups that already exists should be encouraged across the organisation in Australia.

The Augustinian charism is alive in peoples’ daily experiences therefore we should not create a group that is an end in itself.

The following point was put forward for further exploration - there is a need to develop further formation opportunities (possibly add more formation material into *Amici*)

**Readers and members are invited to enter into conversation re the above questions/issues. Leaders are particularly interested to hear from members who are no longer part of a group but receive *Amici* each quarter. We are all the time seeking new ways to share Augustinian spirituality.**

*Remember in your prayer those who are sad, unwell or anxious at this time. Rejoice with those who know good news, are new members, newly ordained, or have come from afar. Lenore Girard of Coorparoo is remembered as a ‘Friend’ of long standing.*

**Be sure of your Membership!**

For 4 local Gatherings & to receive a Quarterly Newsletter plus the Prayer Resource  
 To all who have responded and paid their 2023 Membership we say **THANK YOU.**

**THANK YOU**

- Dave Austin osa
- Murielle Wroblewski
- Jeanette Hartley
- Gina Rossbach
- Mary Ann Boehme
- Brent Cornford
- Lorenz & Sylvia Herft
- Jacky Worthington
- Sue Oram

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