



SAINT AUGUSTINE'S HOUSE

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NEWSLETTER

Lent, A.D. 2025

✠ PAX

The Congregation of the Servants of Christ, St. Augustine's House, is an ecumenical Christian community whose life of discipleship is inspired and shaped by the Holy Rule of St. Benedict. We identify with the Lutheran tradition, understood as a movement within and for the one holy catholic and apostolic Church of Jesus Christ.

We are committed to the growth of the permanent resident community, to the pursuit of ecumenical understanding, and to the provision of retreats for members of the Fellowship of St. Augustine and others. We seek to serve the whole Church by our life of prayer and by the use of our facilities.

Here at St. Augustine's House our day begins with the prayer office of Vigils. This takes place in the darkness before the break of day, in the "womb of the morning." The service is introduced with the Invitatory, which serves also as an introduction to the whole day of liturgical prayer. The psalm verse "O Lord open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise" (Ps 51:15) is chanted and is repeated three times. Then an invitatory psalm is chanted with a seasonal antiphon or response that always ends with the words: "O come, let us worship him." Different psalms are used on the weekdays, but on Sundays and festivals it is always Psalm 95 which begins: "O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!" It goes on to express the salutary exhortation: "O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts."

Although the Invitatory at the beginning of Vigils serves as an introduction to the whole day, all the other prayers offices still begin with a short introduction. This consists of the first verse from Psalm 70: "Be pleased, O God, to deliver me! O Lord, make haste to help me!" This is followed by the Gloria Patri and, except in Lent, by the acclamation "Alleluia!"

This verse is a general, all-purpose invocation for divine deliverance and assistance. In recommending its use in his Rule St. Benedict was probably influenced by the Conferences of John Cassian. In the Tenth Conference, Abba Isaac recommends repeating and meditating upon this verse while going about all the activities of the day and night. This brief prayer he says, "takes up all the emotions that can be applied to human nature and with great correctness and accuracy it adjusts itself to every condition and every attack. It contains an invocation of God in the face of any crisis, the humility of a devout confession, the watchfulness of concern and of constant fear, a consciousness of one's own frailty, the assurance of being heard, and confidence in protection that is always present and at hand." (X.3).



Used at the beginning of an office of prayer, the immediate object of the invocation is the grace to pray the office with attention and devotion; in the words of St. Benedict, to “stand to sing the psalms in such a way that our minds are in harmony with our voices.” Be pleased, O God, to deliver me from inattention and distracting thoughts, from mouthing words with my lips that do not come from my heart. O Lord, make haste to help me by illumining my intellect and understanding to comprehend the psalms your ancient people uttered in joyful procession into the temple or in lament as the temple lay in ruins, in victory or after defeat, in sickness or in recovery, while spending the night in weeping or when awakening with joy in the morning, on the battle field or in peaceful green pastures, on Mt. Zion or in exile from Jerusalem in a foreign land. Help me to pray enflamed with love for you and in union with the prayer of your Son and with his Body, the Church, that is, your people of every time and place who have prayed or are now praying these psalms with me.

This verse also speaks to us in the broader context of human life in a contingent and unpredictable world. As Abba Isaac suggests in his conference, it is a prayer for every condition and activity of life. It instills a consciousness of our own frailty and vulnerability as well as confidence in God’s protection that is always at hand. I reflected on this earlier this year when I heard the news of the collision of a passenger plane and helicopter in Washington D.C. The passengers were on the glide path preparing to land within moments; perhaps their thoughts were on greeting loved ones or going about other business. And then everything changed.

Our life in this world is not stable and secure; we are always walking on water. I think of the scene in the Gospel when Peter steps out of his boat and begins to walk on the water toward the Lord (Mat. 14:28ff). He takes his first steps but then becomes afraid and

begins to sink and cries out, “Lord, save me.” The Lord reaches out his hand and catches him. This is an image of us all as we attempt to walk through the fluid uncertainty of this life. We navigate the unexpected storms only through faith in God; and we have the courage to take the next step only through hope in Him.

℣ Be pleased, O God, to deliver me.

℟ O Lord, make haste to help me.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in
the beginning, is now, and will be
forever. Amen. (Alleluia.)**

St. Peter’s prayer on the water was simple and generic: “Lord, save me.” It is not dissimilar to the brief introduction that opens the prayer hours of our day: “Be pleased O God to deliver me; O Lord, make haste to help me.” It is like

that other all-purpose prayer that occurs frequently in the liturgy: *Kyrie eleison*, Lord, have mercy. It is also like the last petition of the Lord’s Prayer: “Deliver us from evil.”

Living in humble dependency upon God in the midst of the unknown and unknowable contingencies of life paradoxically leads us to a state of confidence. This is how St. Paul expresses it: “I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:38f).

May these holy days of Lent bring you to a joyous celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. As he was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, may you too walk in newness of life.

In Jesu Christo,
Br. Richard

News and Notes

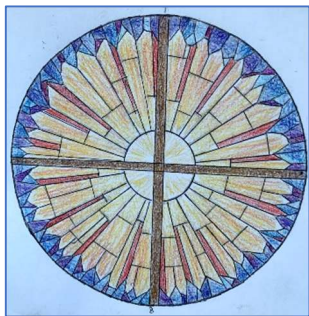
During the Christmas Octave at the end of December we hosted six members of the Detroit area Servants of the Word. This is an ecumenical semi-monastic community for celibate men who in various occupations

seek to live as disciples of and witnesses to the Word of God, Jesus Christ. servantsoftheword.org

We are happy to have Christian Dubose with us as a long-term guest for six months. He arrived here the beginning of February from his home in Navasota, Texas near Houston and is 21 years old. We are grateful for his faithful participation in the prayer offices of our community and for his assistance with various chores. While here he is also taking several courses via zoom from Houston Christian University.

The Society of the Holy Trinity is a ministerium for Lutheran Pastors. We were happy to again welcome members of the Indiana chapter here for their retreat in February. societyholytrinity.org

Eugene C. Snooks an early member of the Fellowship of St. Augustine and acquaintance of Fr. Arthur, died February 17th at the age of 95. After moving to Michigan six years ago he lived with us for a brief time before a fall and other health issues necessitated his move to a nearby nursing facility. Various members of our community visited him regularly and served as his patient advocate.



Last fall we began to explore the possibility of adding stained glass to the large round window on the east wall of the church. Earlier this year we settled on a sunburst concept and work has now begun on it. We look

forward to its installation sometime this spring. We are thankful to a local artist, Robert Kane of Sunsmith Stained Glassworks, for guiding us through this process. www.sunsmithglass.com

Another in the ongoing Fifth Sunday at Five organ recitals will be given March 30th at 5:00 p.m. Rob Edwards is the featured organist. The program will last about 45 minutes and a reception will follow. All are invited.

www.StAugustinesHouse.org

Find us on Facebook.



Br. Andy with Christian Dubose



Cutting the Glass for Sunburst Window

Schedule Holy Week

Palm Sunday, April 13th	10:00 a.m.
<i>Palm Procession, St. Luke's Passion Narrative</i>	
Maundy Thursday, April 17th	6:00 p.m.
<i>Mass of the Lord's Supper, Washing of Feet</i>	
Good Friday, April 18th	4:30 p.m.
<i>Solemn Liturgy; St. John's Passion Narrative</i>	
Holy Saturday, April 19th	8:30 p.m.
<i>Vigil and First Mass of Easter</i>	
Easter Sunday, April 20th	10:00 a.m.
<i>Mass of Easter Day</i>	



Society of the Holy Trinity with guests

Daily Prayer Schedule

Vigils	5:10
Lauds	6:00
Terce	8:15
On Sundays at 9:30	
Holy Eucharist	8:30
On Sundays at 10:00	
Sext	12:00
None	2:30
Vespers	6:00
Compline	8:30



You shall worship * the Lord your God and him



only shall you serve.

The Good Zeal

Wisdom from the Rule of St. Benedict

Just as there is a wicked zeal of bitterness which separates from God and leads to hell, so there is a good zeal which separates from evil and leads to God and everlasting life. This, then, is the good zeal which monks must foster with fervent love: "They should each try to be the first to show respect to the other" (Rom 12:10), supporting with the greatest patience on another 's weaknesses of

body or behavior, and earnestly competing in obedience to one another. No one is to pursue what he judges better for himself, but instead, what he judges better for someone else. To their fellow monks they show the pure love of brothers; to God loving fear; to their abbot unfeigned and humble love. Let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ, and may he bring us all together to everlasting life. (RB 72)

Gifts are gratefully acknowledged in memory of

DEL & MARDELLE BAIER
 ERNIE & MARY LOU BAKER
 ELEANORE BUCZEK
 JOHN R. COCHRAN
 HANS GOEBEL
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 BRIAN L. OLSON
 ANNA MYKOLA PAWLUK
 DOLPH & LUCILLE RACHON
 CARL & BETTY STEPHAN

and from the estate of
 THOMAS A. SMITH



Fifth Sunday at Five
Organ Recital

March 30th at 5:00 p.m.