



SAINT AUGUSTINE'S HOUSE

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NEWSLETTER

Fall, A.D. 2026

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.

✠ PAX

"... the Gospel... is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith" (Rom 1:16 RSV)

This summer I had the privilege once again of preaching through St. Paul's Letter to the Romans. I appreciate the three-year lectionary developed soon after Vatican II. I have quite a bit of trouble making decisions, and the lectionary saves me precious time that otherwise would be spent agonizing each week over what text to proclaim. So, many years ago I developed a scheme of preaching the Gospel reading through a three-year cycle, then the second reading through the next three-year cycle, then the first reading, beginning again with the Gospel reading when Year A rolled around again in nine years. By this scheme, I have preached through Romans three times in the last 18 years, in addition to all the other times texts from Romans show up on various Sundays. Each time Romans has come around, I have found that I have a much deeper awareness and understanding of St. Paul's revelation of the Gospel, having been more fully formed and informed by the study and preaching of all the other biblical texts studied and preached over the previous nine years. Aside from not having to decide what text to preach from, this is one of my favorite perks of lectionary preaching. I and the those who hear what God has given me to speak can come around to the same text nine years older and, hopefully, nine years wiser in the ways of the Lord, to hear anew the same Gospel proclaimed over and over.

What has struck me most this time around is the truth most fully expressed in chapter eight, that there is nothing at all that could ever "separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8:39). Nothing at all. Nothing inside of us, nothing outside of us. Nothing that has or has not happened to us. Nothing that is or is not happening to us or ever will happen or not happen to us. Nothing. Nothing at all. Nothing we have or have not done, nothing we are or are not doing, nothing we ever will or will not do. Nothing we are or have been or ever will be. Nothing is able to separate us, no person, no power, no authority, even no sin, for God is the



persons above all persons, the power above all powers, the authority above all authorities, and the One who in Christ Jesus has “condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom 8:3).

We seem to be better able to accept this truth when considering what is outside of us. In our individualistic culture we have a rather false sense of stability, that what is outside of us has little to no power to affect what is inside. Gandhi, Mandela, Bhutto, and many others imprisoned for acting against unjust worldly authority, including Christians imprisoned for faith in the Gospel, even St.

Paul himself, have spoken of imprisonment of the body not only not stopping the flow of ideas and activity against unjust and ungodly powers and principalities, but even serving to further the just cause for which the person is imprisoned.

The same can be said for tragedies large and small that come upon us—we usually can confidently say that God is with us through these times, even if the hard times lead us to think that God is against us somehow. “Sticks and stones...”, “What doesn’t kill you...”, and other such nonsense.

Nonsense, I say, for what about what is inside? What about when we are our own worst enemy? What about all that happens inside us, what we are loath to admit to others, to God, and even to ourselves? What about the conscience and heart which continually accuse and betray us? This was Martin Luther’s personal struggle. How could he ever be good enough for God, for even when his outward behavior was at best, his conscience still condemned him. Even when his outward behavior was impeccable, his heart was not always in it, and sometimes was dead set against it. Therefore, he concluded, even our most righteous behaviors are filthy rags before the throne of God (Is 64:6), and if salvation, freedom from the law of sin and death, depends on behavior and/or the state of the heart, then we are truly lost and forever separated from God, condemned to eternal death.



Similarly, John Wesley describes in his Journal the same internal struggle 200 years later. This should not be surprising, for the struggle with the goodness of the heart is a struggle we all experience. By the working of the Holy Spirit, when John Wesley was trying so hard to be good for God and others and found his heart was just not in it and he was failing miserably on all accounts, he “happened” to attend a home Bible study, rather unwillingly, by the way, where he heard from Luther’s Preface to the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans words that flowed from the same struggle he himself had been experiencing. Glory be

to God, he also heard the solution to that struggle, faith/belief that Christ alone is the One who makes our hearts pure and pleasing to God, not ourselves or anyone or anything else.

Therefore, our salvation, our “peace with God”, depends not at all on the condition of our heart or the good and evil behavior that proceed from our heart. Not even our greatest sin is able to separate us from the Love of God in Christ Jesus. Not the most egregious

thing we have done or left undone can separate us from the Love of God in Christ Jesus. How? Why? For the reason that what we do or do not do is not of ultimate significance. What we do and do not do is, of course, of significance, but it is not of ultimate significance. If it were, we would be forever under the law of sin and death. If there were something we could do or not do that would draw us closer to God or take us away from God, then our union with God would not depend on God, but upon our behaviors and the condition of our heart which produces those behaviors.

This is the core of the Gospel that brings us all together even in our sin. Sin separates; that is the nature of sin. However, God uses what separates us from Him and each other to bring us more fully with each other, and together with Him. No matter the severity of our sin, God uses all of it to draw us more deeply

together in Him. This is the wonderful message of the Gospel, through which all which divides us is used by God to unite us. All it takes is for us to accept, to believe this Truth of the Gospel, and we are saved, at Peace with God and with each other now and forever.

Thanks be to God!

Peace,
✠ Jeffrey

News and Notes

On the Feast of St. Benedict in July Br. Andy Chang renewed his temporary vow for another three years. He first visited us for a retreat in 2018 and a year later returned to begin the discernment process as a resident member. Since then, he has become a reliable participant in the prayers and work of our community and a familiar face to our guests.

In July Bp. Jeffrey attended the annual synod of the Lutheran Church-International held in Lyons, New York. He also serves as secretary on the Executive Board of the LC-I.

Our librarian, Dennis Erard, recently came across a box of documents and photographs from Fr. Arthur and the early days of St. Augustine's House. We plan to display some of these photographs at the upcoming Fellowship Day, October 10th.

www.StAugustinesHouse.org

Find us on Facebook.



Librarian Dennis Erard and Fr. Shaun LaDuc



Br. Andy and Br. Richard

Fellowship Day

Saturday, October 10th

Holy Eucharist, 9:30 am

Lecture & discussion, 11:00 am

Luncheon, 12:45 (RSVP)

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



Let my spirit re- joice in the Lord God my Savior.

Fellowship Day

The annual Fellowship Day will be held this year on Saturday, October 10th. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Fellowship of St. Augustine by Fr. Arthur in 1956. The day will begin with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at 9:30 in the morning. This will be followed by a time for coffee and visiting. The formal presentation will begin at 11:00. The lecturer is the Rev. Rev. Dr. Julian A. Davies. His topic is entitled "The Influence of Martin Luther on John Wesley and the Methodist Movement."

When John Wesley was born on June 17, 1703, according to the Julian calendar (June 28, 1703, according to the Gregorian calendar), the protestant reformation was already nearly 200 years underway. Yet it seems that knowledge of the important elements of the reformation only reached Wesley's ears slowly, over time. It appears that May 24, 1738, the day upon which Wesley found his heart strangely warmed while listening to Luther's Preface to the Epistle to



the Romans, marks the time when the reformation message launched John Wesley into the world to initiate the Methodist movement. Just as Luther sought to reform the Catholic Church, so Wesley sought to reform the Anglican Church. Neither, it seems, intended to create a new denomination. And yet, here we are, with Lutherans and Methodists of various flavors scattered across the globe.

In this presentation, we will consider the ways in which Luther and Wesley each sought to develop and grow intentional communities of faith that shared identity and values, such that those separated by geography might be united in love.

A luncheon will follow the lecture and discussion at approximately 12:45. The event and luncheon are free and open to all, but please let us know if you are coming so we can prepare accordingly.



Gifts are gratefully acknowledged in memory of

ERNIE and MARY LOU BAKER
JOHN R. COCHRAN
MARY LOU KELLER
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JOAN W. MILLER
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