

Arianism called the Vandals, invaded Roman Africa. They besieged Hippo in the spring of 430, when Augustine entered his final illness. According to Possidius, one of the few miracles attributed to Augustine, the healing of an ill man, took place during the siege.

Bishop Augustine spent his final days in prayer and repentance, requesting that the penitential Psalms of David be hung on his walls so that he could read them. He directed that the library of the church in Hippo and all the books therein should be carefully preserved. He died on August 28, 430. Shortly after, the Vandals lifted the siege of Hippo. They returned not long after, and burned the city, destroying all but Augustine's cathedral and library—which were left untouched.

Communities of men adopted Augustine's *Rule*, eventually uniting as the Order of St. Augustine. (Leo XIV is the first Augustinian to be pope.)

According to Bede's *True Martyrology*, Augustine's body was moved to Cagliari, Sardinia, by the Catholic bishops expelled from North Africa. His remains were transferred again to save them from frequent coastal raids. In 1327, Pope John XXII issued a papal bull in which he appointed the Augustinians guardians of Augustine's tome. The tomb was remade in 1362, elaborately carved with bas-reliefs of scenes from Augustine's life. By that time, however, the actual remains could not be authenticated. The Augustinians were expelled from Pavia in 1700, taking refuge in Milan with the relics and the disassembled tomb. The relics and shrine were reinstalled in Pavia in 1896.

Augustine was canonized by popular acclaim. His writings (around 110 to 132 distinct canonical works), more than 200 letters, and hundreds of surviving sermons, are considered some of the most influential in history. In 1298, Pope Boniface VIII named Augustine a Doctor of the Church, recognizing his insights and writings as essential contributions to Church teachings—such as original sin, free will, and the Trinity. His writings have solidified Church teaching in the face of many heresies.

Sources include Vatican.va, Order of St. Augustine, St. Augustine's College, Encyclopedia Britannica, and "'Late have I loved you ...'" by Susan Bailey



Bring Socials with the Saints to your parish, listen to our podcast, and more! Visit: PilgrimCenterOfHope.org/Socials

PILGRIM CENTER of HOPE – Guiding people to Christ

PilgrimCenterOfHope.org | 210-521-3377

←Please donate to continue our mission of hope! Every bit helps.



St. Augustine of Hippo *Bishop & Doctor of the Church*

Born: 13 Nov. 354 at Thagaste, Numidia Cirtensis, Roman Empire (present-day Souk Ahras, Algeria)

Died: 28 Aug. 430 at Hippo Regius, Numidia Cirtensis, Western Roman Empire (present-day Annaba, Algeria)

Feast Day: August 28

Patronage: Brewers, Printers, Theologians, Philosophers, Those who suffer from sore eyes

Augustine was born into a Roman community at a river valley 40 miles from the African Mediterranean coast. He was one of at least three children born to Monica, a devout Christian, and Patricius Aurelius, an ill-tempered pagan who converted to Christianity on his deathbed. His siblings—older brother, Navigius, and sister, Perpetua—seemed to remain close to him throughout his life.

Scholars believe his ancestors included Amazighs (indigenous Berbers), Latins, and Phoenicians. He considered himself Punic (of ancient Semitic Phoenician people who migrated to the western Mediterranean coast). The family name Aurelius suggests that his father's ancestors were freedmen of the Aurelia family, given full Roman citizenship by the Edict of Caracalla in 212. As Augustine's family were *honestiores*—an upper class of citizens known as *honorable men*—his first language was likely Latin. In this social class, Augustine's parents were free to live on the work of others, but occasionally faced cash shortages or debt when faced with large expenses. They managed, sometimes on borrowed money, to acquire a first-class education for Augustine.

At the age of 11, he was sent to a small, Numidian university town about 19 miles south of Thagaste. There, he became familiar with Latin literature, as well as pagan beliefs and practices. His first insight into the nature of sin occurred when he and his friends stole fruit they did not even want from a garden. During a period spent at home, he read Cicero's *Hortensius* (which is now lost to history). It left a deep impression on him, and sparked his interest in philosophy.

Through the generosity of a fellow citizen, Augustine went to Carthage to continue his education in rhetoric. He left Christianity, to his mother's despair, for the Manichaean religion (essentially a dualistic form of eclectic esoterism). A lively, witty and exuberant teenager, Augustine showed enormous promise in rhetoric. He enjoyed life and its pleasures, displayed a profound gift for friendship, experienced passionate love, adored the theater, and sought out entertainment.

His companions at this time were young men who boasted of sexual exploits and urged inexperienced boys, like Augustine, to seek out experiences or to make up stories to gain acceptance. It was during this period that he uttered his famous prayer, "Grant me chastity and continence, but not yet."

After a short time teaching grammar at Thagaste, he moved to Carthage to conduct a school of rhetoric, and remained there for nine years. In Carthage, he fell in love with a lower-class girl. Here we should note that by law, some groups such as slaves were not allowed to marry, and so became concubines. It was not uncommon for men to have long-term, monogamous relationships with a concubine. Marriages, on the other hand, were entered into for sociopolitical reasons, not romantic interest. Augustine remained her partner for about fifteen years, and they had a son, Adeodatus (meaning "Given by God"), who was viewed as extremely intelligent by his contemporaries. Augustine, a father at 16, remained faithful and took responsibility for his little family. Happiness, Cicero had taught him, consists of things that do not perish: wisdom, truth, virtue. Augustine dedicated himself to these.

Disturbed by the unruly behavior of local students, he moved with his partner and son to establish a school in Rome, without informing his mother. However, Augustine was disappointed with the local schools, which met him with apathy. When it was time for his students to pay their fees, they vanished. Friends introduced him to the Roman Prefect, who sought a professor of rhetoric for the imperial court at Milan.

Aged thirty, Augustine won this most visible academic position in the Latin world, when such posts gave ready access to political careers. Monica followed him to Milan. There, Augustine allowed her to arrange a lawful marriage to a lady of their own class, for which he separated from his longtime partner. In his *Confessions*, he admitted this painful experience eventually produced a decreased sensitivity to pain in him

over time. Having to wait two years until his new fiancée came of age, he took a concubine. He eventually broke off his engagement to the eleven-year-old fiancée, and never renewed any of his concubine relationships.

He'd moved away from Manichaeism and embraced skepticism, but his studies, combined with the influence of a friend and of Monica, led him to Christianity. He often listened to the bishop's (St. Ambrose) sermons. He enrolled as a catechumen, but wavered. In 386, he was deeply inspired by the story of St. Anthony of the Desert. Finally, his conversion was prompted by a childlike voice repeating: "Take up and read." He opened the Bible, and read from Romans chapters 12–15, wherein St. Paul outlines how the Gospel transforms believers and their behavior; specifically, "let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh..." (The art in this pamphlet depicts this moment of conversion.)

Bishop Ambrose baptized Augustine and his son at the Easter Vigil of 387 in Milan. A year later, the family returned to Africa. Monica died on the way. Upon their arrival, Augustine and Adeodatus began a life of aristocratic leisure at the family property. However, Adeodatus, too, soon passed away. Augustine then sold his patrimony and gave the money to the poor. The only thing he kept was the family house, which he converted into a monastic foundation for himself and a group of friends.

In 391, Valerius, the local bishop, preached about the shortage of priests. The crowd shouted, "Let Augustine be our priest!" He was ordained in Hippo Regius (now Annaba), Algeria. Father Augustine became a famous preacher known for combating the Manichaean religion. In 395, he was made coadjutor Bishop of Hippo, and became full Bishop upon Valerius' death. He gave his property to the Church of Thagaste.

Augustine worked tirelessly in converting the locals. Though he had left his monastery, he continued to lead a monastic life at his residence. His later life was recorded by his friend Possidius, Bishop of Calama (present-day Guelma, Algeria) who admired Augustine as a man of powerful intellect and a stirring orator who took every opportunity to defend Christianity against its detractors. Possidius described him as a man who ate sparingly, worked tirelessly, despised gossip, shunned the temptations of the flesh, and exercised prudence in financial stewardship.

Shortly before Augustine's death, a Germanic tribe that had converted to

Famous Quotations by St. Augustine of Hippo

“With you I am a Christian, and for you I am a bishop.” (Sermon 340) This quotation was adapted by Pope Leo XIV in his first public address after his election: “I am an Augustinian, a son of St. Augustine, who once said, ‘With you I am a Christian, and for you I am a bishop.’”

“Great art Thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised... Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it repose in Thee.” *Confessions*

“Most hidden and most present [...] standing firm and elusive, unchangeable and all-changing; never new, never old; [...] ever working, ever at rest; [...] seeking and yet having all things [...] And what have I now said, my God, my life, my holy joy?” *Confessions*

“Let us live well and the times will be good. We are the times.” (*Discourse*, 80.8)

“The church consists of all those who are in harmony with their brothers and sisters and who love their neighbor.” (Sermon 359)

“Go not outside. Return into yourself. In the interior of man the truth abides.” *Of True Religion* 39.72

“No one may safely cross the sea of this world, unless he be carried by the Cross of Christ ... abandon not the Cross, and it shall carry you safely.” *Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*, 2.2

“Late have I love you, O beauty so ancient yet ever new! Late have I loved you! Behold, you were within and I was out abroad, searching there for you. Deformed, I plunged into the fair forms that you had made. You were with me, but I was not with you. I was held back far from you by things, which would not themselves be if they were not in you. You called, you shouted, and you burst open my deafness. You flashed, you shone in radiance, and you drove away my blindness. You breathed forth your fragrance, and I drew my breath and sighed for you. I tasted, and now I hunger and thirst. You touched me, and I burned for your peace.” *Confessions*

“Even the tiniest insect cannot be considered attentively without astonishment and without praising the Creator.” *City of God*

Famous Quotations by St. Augustine of Hippo

“With you I am a Christian, and for you I am a bishop.” (Sermon 340) This quotation was adapted by Pope Leo XIV in his first address following his election: “I am an Augustinian, a son of St. Augustine, who once said, ‘With you I am a Christian, and for you I am a bishop.’”

“Great art Thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised... Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it repose in Thee.” *Confessions*

“Most hidden and most present [...] standing firm and elusive, unchangeable and all-changing; never new, never old; [...] ever working, ever at rest; [...] seeking and yet having all things [...] And what have I now said, my God, my life, my holy joy?” *Confessions*

“Let us live well and the times will be good. We are the times.” (*Discourse*, 80.8)

“The church consists of all those who are in harmony with their brothers and sisters and who love their neighbor.” (Sermon 359)

“Go not outside. Return into yourself. In the interior of man the truth abides.” *De vera religione / Of True Religion* - 39.72

“No one may safely cross the sea of this world, unless he be carried by the Cross of Christ ... abandon not the Cross, and it shall carry you safely.” *Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*, 2.2

“Late have I love you, O beauty so ancient yet ever new! Late have I loved you! Behold, you were within and I was out abroad, searching there for you. Deformed, I plunged into the fair forms that you had made. You were with me, but I was not with you. I was held back far from you by things, which would not themselves be if they were not in you. You called, you shouted, and you burst open my deafness. You flashed, you shone in radiance, and you drove away my blindness. You breathed forth your fragrance, and I drew my breath and sighed for you. I tasted, and now I hunger and thirst. You touched me, and I burned for your peace.” *Confessions*

“Even the tiniest insect cannot be considered attentively without astonishment and without praising the Creator.” *City of God*

“My greatest comfort and relief is in the consolation of friends,” Augustine wrote. “Friendship has joys that captivate my heart—the charms of talking and laughing together and kindly giving way to each other’s wishes, reading elegantly written books together, sharing jokes and delighting to honor one another. If we disagree with each other occasionally, it is without malice, as a person might disagree with himself, and the rare occasions of dispute lend spice to season our much more frequent accord. We teach and learn from each other, sadly missing any who are absent and gladly welcoming them when they come home. Such signs of friendship spring from the hearts of friends who love and know they are loved in return, signs to be read in smiles, words, glances and a thousand gracious gestures. These are sparks that kindle a blaze to melt our hearts and fuse them inseparably into one.” *Confessions IV, 8*

Prayer to the Holy Spirit – attr. St. Augustine of Hippo

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit,
That my thoughts may all be holy.
Act in me, O Holy Spirit,
That my work, too, may be holy.
Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit,
That I love but what is holy.
Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit,
To defend all that is holy.
Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit,
That I always may be holy.

Act of Faith – attr. St. Augustine of Hippo

O Lord my God, I believe in you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Insofar as I can, insofar as you have given me the power, I have sought you. I became weary and I labored. O Lord my God, my sole hope, help me to believe and never to cease seeking you. Grant that I may always and ardently seek out your countenance. Give me the strength to seek you, for you help me to find you and you have more and more given me the hope of finding you.

Here I am before you with my firmness and my infirmity. Preserve the first and heal the second. Here I am before you with my strength and my ignorance. Where you have opened the door to me, welcome me at the entrance; where you have closed the door to me, open to my cry; enable me to remember you, to understand you, and to love you. Amen.

“My greatest comfort and relief is in the consolation of friends,” Augustine wrote. “Friendship has joys that captivate my heart—the charms of talking and laughing together and kindly giving way to each other’s wishes, reading elegantly written books together, sharing jokes and delighting to honor one another. If we disagree with each other occasionally, it is without malice, as a person might disagree with himself, and the rare occasions of dispute lend spice to season our much more frequent accord. We teach and learn from each other, sadly missing any who are absent and gladly welcoming them when they come home. Such signs of friendship spring from the hearts of friends who love and know they are loved in return, signs to be read in smiles, words, glances and a thousand gracious gestures. These are sparks that kindle a blaze to melt our hearts and fuse them inseparably into one.” *Confessions IV, 8*

Prayer to the Holy Spirit – attr. St. Augustine of Hippo

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit,
That my thoughts may all be holy.
Act in me, O Holy Spirit,
That my work, too, may be holy.
Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit,
That I love but what is holy.
Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit,
To defend all that is holy.
Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit,
That I always may be holy.

Act of Faith – attr. St. Augustine of Hippo

O Lord my God, I believe in you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Insofar as I can, insofar as you have given me the power, I have sought you. I became weary and I labored. O Lord my God, my sole hope, help me to believe and never to cease seeking you. Grant that I may always and ardently seek out your countenance. Give me the strength to seek you, for you help me to find you and you have more and more given me the hope of finding you.

Here I am before you with my firmness and my infirmity. Preserve the first and heal the second. Here I am before you with my strength and my ignorance. Where you have opened the door to me, welcome me at the entrance; where you have closed the door to me, open to my cry; enable me to remember you, to understand you, and to love you. Amen.