

IN MEMORIAM THOMAS F. MARTIN, OSA

Thomas Frank Martin was born in Chicago, Illinois on December 28, 1943. After finishing elementary school at Saint Symphorosa School, he went to Saint Rita High School, his first contact with the Augustinian Friars. A few months after graduation he joined the Chicago Province of the Order of Saint Augustine (September 3, 1961).

Sixty-five years later, when he returned to his Father's house (February 20, 2009), barely seven months after beginning treatment for cancer, the memory of what he had become in the intervening years – a faithful Augustinian, a delightful teacher, an avid reader, a recognized scholar, a good friend – made us happy to have known him and sad that his stay with us was so short. That quiet intensity and loving outreach to others was still there, even in the last days. The warm, human presence that we had come to know welcomed the many who came to visit.

Restlessly curious, Tom was often into some new adventure of spirit. His theological studies, which began at Tolentine College (1966-1968) and continued at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago (1968-1971) led to a Masters in Theology that was granted by DePaul University. He was ordained an Augustinian priest on December 20, 1969 and began his teaching career at Mendel Catholic High School (1969-1978). Even though teaching in a high school is usually more than enough for most, Tom wanted something more; so he earned a Masters in Religious Education at Loyola University, Chicago (1975).

In 1978, he was asked to participate in the theological formation of the newest members of the Augustinian Province of Chicago (1978-1982). Once again, he stretched his spirit by following the Creighton University program in Spirituality, obtaining a Masters degree (1982). Chosen as secretary of his Province in 1983, he was asked only a year later to move to Rome as sub-secretary the the Order (1984-1990). To his experience of teaching and his interest in spirituality was thus added a time to see Augustinian life in an international way. He edited the newsletter of the Order and participated in various international commissions. Once again, his experience was not a matter of limited service. In the years that followed, he would be invited to address Augustinians throughout the world.

Returning to Chicago in 1990, he returned to the theological formation of young Augustinians. He again saw his work as an occasion to expand his horizons, beginning doctoral studies that year at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary-Northwestern University in Chicago.

He completed his doctoral thesis in 1994, obtaining a PhD in Early Christian Studies. Published with the title, '*Rhetoric and Exegesis in Augustine's Interpretation of Romans 7:24-25A*' that work gave clear focus to the rest of his academic life, the study of Augustine and especially on Augustine's reading of Paul. In 2003, he was named the founding Director of the Augustinian Institute at Villanova University.

As an assistant professor in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Villanova University (1995-2009), he specialized in teaching Early Christianity and Saint Augustine. But a good teacher never limits his efforts to the classroom, and Tom was a good teacher – even in teaching the one class he never wanted to teach: how to live one's dying. That seven-month course had no list of students and required only that one be present. The final grade, however, will be assigned later – by the real teacher.

While at Villanova University, Thomas made a significant contribution to the university as a center for Augustine studies. He oversaw the continuation of the annual Saint Augustine Lecture which will celebrate its 50th anniversary this year. In 1997 he began an annual intensive summer seminar entitled 'In Dialogue with Augustine,' in which two scholars present and discuss particular aspects of Augustine's thought and writings. As director of the Augustinian Institute, he inaugurated a triennial series of conferences entitled 'Reconsiderations' (in 2003 and 2006) in which eminent scholars from various countries present papers on St. Augustine in a way that fostered exchange among them. The third 'Reconsiderations' that he planned will be held in September, 2009.

He also initiated a lecture series on the Augustinian Tradition which dealt with topics related to the Augustinian Order. He was also involved in an effort to make the Augustine bibliography, begun and overseen by Fr. Tarsicius van Bavel, freely accessible on the web. That project involved the cooperation of the Augustinian Historical Institute of Louvain, the Patristic Institute in Rome and Villanova University.

His book on Augustinian Spirituality (*Our Restless Heart: The Augustinian Tradition*, 2003) was another indicator of his ever-expanding interest and competency. Spirituality became more than the movement of the heart alone; as an Augustinian he was able to show how important the intellectual dimension of spirituality was to Augustine and to Augustinians. Between 2002 and 2006, he gave workshops on Augustinian spirituality and on interiority all over the world: Durban, South Africa; Rome, Italy; Jos, Nigeria; Manila, Philippines; Inchon, South Korea and Kochi, India.

His contribution to a more formal study of Augustine can be found in the many articles in journals, encyclopedias, or other special

studies. His work tended to focus on the spirituality of Augustine and Augustine's interpretation of St. Paul. Fascinated by the way that Augustine read Paul, he was at work on more than one article until late into January. The manuscript for a brief biography of St. Augustine was being revised at the time of his death. That revision process will be completed and published in the near future.

Thomas' congenial and welcoming demeanor continued, even to the day before the Lord welcomed him home. May he rest in the peace of Christ and may the conversation with Saint Augustine – a conversation begun some 50 years ago – continue.

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Only a few Augustinian sermons comment upon one or more verses of Phil. 3, 3-16 because they were preceded by a reading of the pericope (or a part of it), viz. sermon 130 A, which P. M. Humbert has dated to 413,¹ and sermons 169-170. Numbers 130 A and 170 were probably preached during a celebration of the Eucharist. Both sermons were preceded not only by an apostolic reading taken from Phil. 3, but also by the *lectio* of a psalm and an almost identical pericope taken from chapter 6 of the Gospel of John.²

serm. 130 A:	Phil. 3, 3-9	Ps. 84	Jn. 6, 27-36...
serm. 170:	Phil. 3, 6-16	Ps. 142	Jn. 6, 37...

The difference between Augustine's treatment of the Pauline passage in these sermons is that the former sermon primarily focuses on the preceding Johannine reading and only deals with Phil. 3, 9 in

¹ We thank prof. dr. Luc De Coninck (KU Leuven) for his correction of a first version of the critical edition.

² See P.-M. HUMBERT, *Nouvelles recherches de chronologie augustiniennes* (Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité 163, Paris 2000) 517-540.

³ According to liturgists, the North African Church reserved the gospel reading for communities including the celebration of the Eucharist. See M. KLICKHOFF, *Evangelium 3, 3-9 dans la proclamation liturgique*, in *Augustinus-Lexikon* 2 (Basel 1996-2002) 4148-1150 (esp. 1149 n. 20: "Il n'existe pas de témoignages pour la proclamation de l'évangélisme dans la liturgie des heures africaine").

⁴ For further details, see *Augustin d'Hippone. Vingt-six sermons au peuple d'Afrique*, ed. F. Dolbeau (Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Antiquité 167, Paris 1996) 151-152.