

Daily Homily  
St. Augustine; bishop and Doctor of the Church  
Memorial  
Twenty-First Week in Ordinary Time, Friday  
28 August 2020  
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Augustine. Much could be said about Augustine – sinner turned saint.

In our cancel culture of today, he would have been canceled out and disregarding and thrown away: disrespectful of his parents, immoral lifestyle, selfish and self-seeking, he wrecked lives as he tried to progress in his own life and in his own pleasures. All of this was the case until, the natural course of things began to settle in when it comes to lies and dishonesty. It all creates a feeling of emptiness and waywardness that cannot be explained away or even medicated. The Catholic faith, given to him in his youth, began to fill in the holes and wounds as a soothing balm.

Baptized at thirty-three... ordained a priest at thirty-six... ordained a bishop at forty-four, through the tears of his mother, Monica, through the instruction of his bishop and priest, Ambrose, and through God speaking inspiration to him through Sacred Scripture it all helped to redirect Augustine from loving life to having a life of love.

His times were truly decedent – politically, socially, and morally. His culture and times had a loud mouth and voice that was hard to dial down. It is no surprise that he gravitated toward the noise of his times. A noise that had no room for the “superstitions” of faith, for the “backwardness” of religion, for the “lack of intelligence” required by the spiritual life. However, Augustine could not escape the quiet, whispering sound of God’s gentle, mighty roar. God kept calling to him through the example and prayers of his mother, through the passionate homilies and talks of his parish priest, through the words of Scripture that cut to the heart.

His turning point came when he heard from somewhere – he does not know where – “take and read.” He took up Scripture and read, “Walk honestly as in the day.” Our culture would hypocritically cancel him because of his past transgressions – as if anyone in our times could so arrogantly cast the first stone. Our God, however, in six words redeemed him, and gave him a new life, a hopeful future.

Augustine stands in the Church and with us today as a man who took up the culture of his times and found it wanting. He sought not his own truth, but the truth. He wanted to go his own way, but found the way. He wanted to make of his life what would advance his plans and pleasures, but he found the life. In Jesus, the truth, the way, the life, all things make sense and bring about deep peace and purpose. May this saint help us to find it all in Christ as well.