

A Note from Fr. Keith, Our Pastor

Long before he was a canonized saint, Augustine of Hippo lived a life of worldly dissipation. He fathered a child out of wedlock. He experienced an intellectual conversion before a deeper conformity to faith. His mother, Monica, is also canonized as a saint. Many people pray for her intercession for their wayward children and grandchildren. Saint Augustine is best known as the author of his *Confessions, the autobiography of his conversion from a life of sin to grace.*

He describes the human condition in beautiful terms, “Trust the past to God's mercy, the present to God's love, and the future to God's providence.” Augustine recognized that God was present at every stage of life: past, present, and future. We become distracted from the Divine Presence by the lower, lesser pursuits of wealth, pleasure, power, and honor. These worldly distractions are fine, usually, in and of themselves; however, they become problematic when we pursue them more than God. Saint Augustine expressed this tension in his autobiography.

Late have I loved you, O Beauty ever ancient, ever new, late have I loved you! You were within me, but I was outside, and it was there that I searched for you. In my unloveliness I plunged into the lovely things which you created. You were with me, but I was not with you. Created things kept me from you; yet if they had not been in you they would have not been at all. You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness. You flashed, you shone, and you dispelled my blindness. You breathed your fragrance on me; I drew in breath and now I pant for you. I have tasted you, now I hunger and thirst for more. You touched me, and I burned for your peace.

Hopefully, with enough self-awareness, any of us could have written these words ourselves about our own lives. The less we distract ourselves with these lower and lesser pursuits, then the more open we become to recognizing the great and many gifts God is already giving to us. The higher and greater things of God find their superlative expression in the Eucharist.

God gives us the very gift of himself. He asks for nothing from us for this gift aside from an interior disposition that is welcoming, free from sin, and hospitable to his grace. During the three years of the Eucharistic Revival, we are invited to match our interior receptivity with our external focus by a renewed emphasis on belief in the True Presence, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and reverence in the celebration of Mass.

We are encouraged to align our actions and choices as a parish with the Eucharistic Revival, so that what we do may reflect what we profess to believe. Therefore, with this imperative in mind, we will suspend live-streaming of the Mass beginning next weekend as an invitation and encouragement to resume in-person participation at Mass. This alignment was made in consultation and collaboration with the Parish Advisory Council, Finance Council, and Staff. We are grateful to those who assisted with live-streaming, especially Phil Mueller, as we look ahead to a reunited congregation in the future.