

AUGUSTINIAN SECONDARY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



HANDBOOK

NOVEMBER, 2012

Augustinian Secondary Education Association

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Augustinian Secondary Education Association

Directory

Provincials are Ex Officio Members:

Prior Provincial: Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel
Prior Provincial: Province of St. Augustine
Prior Provincial: Province of St. Thomas of Villanova

HIGH SCHOOLS

Headmaster, Principal
Cascia Hall Preparatory School
Cascia Middle School
2520 S. Yorktown Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74114
918-746-2600

President, Head of School
Malvern Preparatory School
418 S. Warren Ave.
Malvern, PA 19355-2707
484-595-1100

President, Principal
Providence Catholic High School
1800 W. Lincoln Hwy.
New Lenox, IL 60451
815-485-2136

President, Headmaster
St. Augustine Preparatory School
611 Cedar Ave.
Richland, NJ 08350
856-697-2600

President, Principal
St. Rita of Cascia High School
7740 S. Western Ave.
Chicago, IL 60620
773-925-6600

President, Headmaster
Villanova Preparatory School
12096 Ventura Ave.
Ojai, CA 93023
805-646-1464

President, Principal
St. Augustine High School
3266 Nutmeg St.
San Diego, CA 92104-5199
619-282-2184

Head of School, Principal
St. Thomas of Villanova College
2480 15th Sideroad
P.O. Box 133
King City, Ontario, L7B 1A4
905-833-1909

Educational Representatives of Provinces:

Counselor
Director
Secretary
Superintendent

Augustinian Secondary Educational Association

Mission Statement

The Augustinian Secondary Education Association was established by the North American Conference of Augustinian Provincials and continues under the auspices of the Federation of Augustinians of North America to foster unity, efficiency, and continued development within the Augustinian ministry of secondary education. The Association is a forum and vehicle for the sharing of resources, for the advancement of the Augustinian charism and values, for the promotion of secondary education as a vital and proper ministry of the Order, and for assuring authentic Augustinian identity in the schools under the care of the Order of St. Augustine. The Association is composed of all secondary schools which are apostolic commitments of the North American provinces.

Purposes

1. To provide a forum to promote a sense of unity and common purpose among the secondary schools through the sharing of resources, ideas, achievements, and experiences proper to our Augustinian secondary school ministries.
2. To provide ideas and suggestions for the Prior and Council of the Federation of Augustinians of North America concerning ways of more effectively sustaining the Augustinian schools ministry.
3. To promote secondary education as a vital element of our provincial and federation ministries to the membership of the provinces of the Federation, the clients and families we serve, and the public at large.
4. To encourage a networking of ideas about the Catholic and Augustinian nature of our school ministries.
5. To plan, oversee, and implement the Augustinian Values Institute to instruct faculty, staff, and stakeholders in Augustinian values, charism and method of operation.
6. To provide training to students in leadership, core values, service, charism, and the style of Augustinian schools.
7. To support and encourage ASEA members in their ministry, and to support the administrators, teachers and staff by means of semi-annual meetings, in-services, etc.
8. To identify the common characteristics of Augustinian secondary schools and to promote consulting resources to assist individual schools in evaluating their Augustinian identities/mission.

Augustinian Secondary Education Association

OFFICERS

- Chair: Elected by the representatives of each member school for a two year term at a semi-annual meeting. Chair may serve only two consecutive terms. Chair conducts meetings and maintains association correspondence. Chair shares information with all member schools.
- Recording Secretary: Appointed by Chair and responsible for keeping minutes and distributing them and other relevant documents to the member schools and Provincial officials.

STRUCTURE

- Members: All secondary schools which are apostolic commitments of the Provinces of the United States and Canada and those other schools accepted for membership.
- Associate Members: Any Catholic secondary school which desires to share our values and charism and participate in the Augustinian Values Institute and/or the Student Augustinian Values Institute may apply.
- Authority: Derived from the Federation of Augustinians of North America.
- Representatives: Officers of each member school (Heads of School, Presidents, Headmasters, Principals) plus one or more appointed or elected representatives from each member school depending on local custom, and representatives appointed by Provincials.
- Committees: Committees may be appointed as necessary by the membership and given an agenda.
- Semi-Annual Meetings: Semi-annual meetings should include the following:
1. A report on the current status of each member school.
 2. A shared common Liturgy.
 3. A shared celebration and dinner for all members and guests attending the meeting.
 4. Pertinent agenda issues addressed.

- Funding: Individual schools and/or Provinces are asked to assume responsibility for funding representatives sent to the meetings and paying the expenses of the association in proportion to their membership.
- Voting: Each Member school will have one vote. A majority in voting carries the issue.
- Quorum: A quorum of three-fourths of the Member schools is necessary to take action.
- Note: Member schools are encouraged to meet more frequently by Province.

Vision Statement

Introduction

This is the Vision Statement of the member Provinces of the Federation of Augustinians of North America: the Augustinian Provinces of St. Thomas of Villanova, Our Mother of Good Counsel, and St. Augustine. This statement of Philosophy derives from two sources: the writings of St. Augustine and the Augustinian experience of life and education today.

By means of a vowed life and the educational apostolate, Augustinians are engaged in the search for God through the pursuit of truth. They seek union with God through love and union with God and others in the school faith community. This Vision of Education unites Augustinians as they fulfill their educational ministry and demonstrate their core values.

1. The Search for God through the Pursuit of Truth.

“You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you” (Confessions, 1, 1). God the Creator of all is pure spirit, but we are spirit and flesh living in a material world. Our life in this world is a journey homeward to our Creator, who alone can give us the fulfillment for which we yearn. Lasting fulfillment cannot be found in the incomplete, sometimes confusing, and shifting circumstances of the material world. It can only be found in communion with the infinite, all-perfect good. We hunger for that union; God is our whole and perfect good. We search for God with mind and heart. None of us searches for God alone. On the contrary, we search as members of a community. *“These are the chief commandments given to us: Love God and then your neighbor”* (Rule 1, 1). We are called *“to be one in mind and heart, on our way to God”* (Rule 1, 3).

This community of mind and heart among ourselves and with God is made possible through the mediation of Christ. Christ enlightens and Christ is the way, truth, and life. Christ is the bond of unity among Christian people and the way to unity with God.

Given our goal of union with God who is perfect truth, the role of our mind is essential. Our mind strains to find the truth. The content of the Divine Mind is truth, and wisdom is the contemplation of truth. Our knowing is a means of achieving union with the unchanging object of the mind's quest.

However, composed of flesh and spirit, living in a material world, we begin to know truth in our study of the things of the material world. We move from the material to the more important spiritual realities that undergird the material. We struggle to come to the realization that underneath the changing material realities is to be found an unchanging truth. *“In this mortal life we are not journeying far from the Lord. But if we wish to make our way back home to where we will be happy, this world ought not to be viewed as end but means. When this is the case, the invisible things of God manifest in creation are so grasped as to lead us from what is bodily and temporal to what is eternal and spiritual”* (On Christian Doctrine 1, 4).

This pursuit of truth must be motivated from within. The search not only involves the discovery of truths external to us, but indeed the discovery of truths within, even the Truth within. *“Late have I loved you, beauty ever old and ever new, late have I loved you. You were within me and I was outside myself. There I sought you, and in my unloveliness, I plunged into the lovely things you created. You were with me, but I was not with you”* (Confessions 10, 27).

In our role as teachers, we attempt to free our students from excessive preoccupation with the material world, to challenge them through questioning, to help them pursue the greater complexities of truth within themselves, and to offer our own insights to truth learned through our own experience and contemplation.

Since the goal of education is advancement toward union with God, who is truth, the school is not simply a place for practical training. Rather, its primary purpose is for exchange between students and teachers which leads to wisdom and spiritual truth.

2. Union with God through Love.

Our goal of seeking union with God involves not only the intellect’s pursuit of truth, but also the heart’s pursuit of God through love. *“Like the mind before unchanging truth, the will must make an entire surrender to love; forsaking itself, the soul is possessed by God and starts afresh in charity”* (D’Arcy, “The Philosophy of St. Augustine,” in St. Augustine: His Age, Life and Thought, 1969).

The pursuit and practice of love, love of God and love of neighbor are intimately united. The God we love is not an abstraction; rather God is a person. The experience of love for this personal God is certainly related to our experience of other persons who are made in God’s image. *“When we love our neighbor in a holy and spiritual way, what do we love in our neighbor but God?”* (On John’s Gospel 65, 2). In fact the love of neighbor, indeed, is the measure of progress in pursuing the love of God. *“To the extent that you prefer the common good to your own good, you will know how far you are advancing in the way of charity”* (Rule 5, 31).

Because of our fallenness it would be impossible for us to reach the love of the spiritual and infinite God unless God graced us with Christ. Christ incarnated is the presence of God in this world, so that through Christ we can unite in love with one another and God. *“The One who was God became human, taking on what he was not, not giving up what he was . . . Let Christ lift you up by his being man, lead you on by his being God-man, and bring you to his Godliness”* (On John’s Gospel 65, 2).

3. Union with God and Others in the School Faith Community.

The practical conclusion is that an Augustinian school constitutes a Christian faith community in which everyone – staff, faculty, parents, students, alumni – is nurtured by and encouraged to share in a common faith and grace-life in Christ. The image of Christ is recognized in each individual; the love of Christ is learned and, in turn, infuses the relationships among all the members in the manner of a family. The school faith community is characterized by mutual love and respect rooted in the awareness that each person is a temple of the living God and a co-servant of God in Christ. In this way we seek union with God and others in the school faith community. *“Let all of you then live together in oneness of mind and heart mutually honoring God in yourselves whose temples you have become”* (Rule 1, 9).

The Augustinian school community lives with the full realization that our search for the God of truth and our journey of the heart toward the God of love are not easily accomplished. *“By means of temporary devices, the (divine) Architect builds a lasting home” (Sermon 362, 7). “There we shall rest and see, we shall see and love, we shall love and praise. That is what we shall find at the end, and find without end. Do we have any other end than to reach the Kingdom that is without end?” (City of God 22, 30, 5).*

Accepted by American Augustinian Provincials, February 5, 1999. Revised and ratified by the Prior and Council of the Federation of Augustinians of North America, November 2, 2012.

Augustinian Secondary Education Association

Augustinian Schools: Organization, Mission & Vision John Keller, OSA

Like most schools and other organizations, Augustinian schools developed a structure for mission over time. On one hand, an organizational structure is developed: Board of Directors, Head of School with assistants, departments and various clusters of people to carry on the school's functions.

In addition to the organizational structure, with variations in each school, is the philosophy and culture of the school community which takes a larger view of the school's purpose, identifies sometimes unique characteristics and values, and clarifies its mission and site specific opportunities and challenges.

In Augustinian schools this set of underlying purposes came with the establishment of the school by the Order of St. Augustine. Its members, operating from their religious value base brought meaning and purpose to the enterprise. There were often some philosophical statements and frequent descriptors of what the school was about, but, de facto, the Augustinians who in earlier years made up 50 to 80% of the Faculty and Administration embodied the living expression of what the school was called to be.

Times have changed - as Augustinian schools grew in size, the number of professed Augustinians in them has diminished. Today well over 90% of the Faculty and Administration in Augustinian schools are lay women and men (as is the case, on average, in all Catholic schools in the U.S.). The governing bodies of the schools, as well, are made up in large majority of lay women and men.

The Augustinians have welcomed these collaborators. They are not substitutes to fill the gap but have become valued co-agents of the mission.

Augustinian schools have attempted to share the mission and vision with greater clarity. They have used processes and documents that are similar to those of other organizations: these are outlined below. The reader is invited to determine how some of them have been used in their Augustinian school.

Some Processes and Reflections for Shaping an Organization

For some time, writers on organizations have developed analyses of important aspects of successful and dynamic organizations. They have noted the importance of foundational understandings that establish common purpose and shared mission.

Highlighted elements include -

A clearly defined **statement of mission** - it clearly and succinctly tells everyone what the group is dedicated to.

An elaboration of the **philosophy** - it is often a more lengthy statement of purpose and motivation and describes what stands behind and supports the mission.

A **vision** statement - this visionary effort describes how the organization sees itself when it is at its very best and the outcomes for which it strives.

A clear expression of **core values** - these are several guiding values, aspirations, or standards that shape the daily expression of the mission.

A **strategic plan** - a practical road map of short and long term goals and activities that guide the unfolding of the mission into the future.

Development and expression of these various statements and documents evolve over the life of the organization. Some elements are taken for granted, some are teased out of the experience of the group, others are carefully crafted tactical plans.

All are subject to review and re-statement, but some substantial elements are non-negotiable in view of the group's mission and self-understanding, while others, especially with regard to strategic planning, need frequent review, assessment, and possibly change.

Often the formulation of these statements involves widespread participation of members in both their development and validation.

New members of the organization deserve orientation to them and all members need frequent refreshment of their understanding of them.

While documents are not substitutes for deeds and words are not stand-ins for work, nonetheless, these corporate understandings provide great opportunities for developing unity of purpose. They offer members of the Augustinian school community language and substance to share their understanding of what they are doing, why they are doing what they are doing, and how they strive to do it.

The Significance of “Core Values”

Among the elements of successful organizations highlighted above, the Core Values are a critical element of the day to day life of the organization. While others of the highlighted items are often developed by groups within the organization (sometimes long before the individual member has joined it) and are “received” and endorsed by members, the Core Values have impact on every member. They can shape, inform, and inspire the daily activities and culture of the organization.

An expression of “core values” often comes from the organization’s history or purpose. They are not uniform, even for a common activity (e.g., in retail sales, Nordstrom’s is “service to the customer,” while WalMart’s is “good quality at a low price”). And they are not necessarily unique to the organization.

To be effective, however, the core values, whatever they are, must be –

1. True – what we truly strive to do and be.
2. Easy to express – short, memorable, understandable.
3. Have multiple layers of expression – significant for shaping both small and large, individual and corporate activities and behaviors.

To “value” something is to hold it dear, give it priority, and look for ways to enhance it. “Good” values enhance our human experience and contribute to the common good. In moral life, they represent our best strivings and aspirations. In professional life they are expressed in standards of excellence and service.

Alignment – from paper to practice

The development of statements (mission, vision, philosophy, etc.) and a clear expression of values are essential parts of building the Augustinian nature of the school. But congruence between practice and foundational positions is what brings words to dynamic life. Values become “real” only as they are put into practice.

The word “alignment” is used to suggest the ways the ordinary and essential school activities may be done with greater intentionality and how everyone contributes to making a rich Augustinian high school experience.

A frequent review of small and large activities in light of the core values helps to shape them to the purpose and spirit of the values, and weaves a fabric of experience which is coherent and powerful. The core values help us –

1. To speak the same language with a growing understanding of its meaning and implications.
2. To be a community on the same page more consistently.
3. To shoot many arrows at the same targets.
4. To be more deeply inspired to contribute creatively to the common good.
5. To see our singular efforts contributing to the success of the common mission.

The effect of alignment of the values with large and small activities contributes to an integrated experience of the values, and forms the Augustinian school experience.

Augustinian Core Values in the Schools

In the mid-1980s Augustinians in North America began to develop more carefully their understanding of the Augustinian school. John Sanders, OSA, writing a paper at USC in 1985 writes: "While the Augustinians were aware of a discernable philosophy of education in the writings of St. Augustine, they were not always able to underscore his approach or the Order's unique presence in official documents or in the administration of their schools...There was a reality of Augustinian presence which was more experimental and descriptive, than codifiable in nature."

He adds: "It is from a sober consideration of the vocation crisis that a search for a philosophy of Augustinian presence has been initiated; a search for principles which many Augustinians consider self-evident, yet still too intangible to articulate."

Reflection on the values and Augustinian philosophy of education continued on many fronts including the use of organizational practices mentioned earlier. Insights of Augustinians in other parts of the world, especially Spain, were helpful. The search for greater clarity and accessibility was spurred on by the need to share foundational insights with the great number of collaborators joining Augustinian educational endeavors.

In 1993 the Augustinian Prior General, Miguel Angel Orcasitas, OSA, addressed a letter on education to all the friars of the Order entitled "The Augustinian School and the New Evangelization," and in 1999 the U.S. Augustinian Provincials published their "Augustinian Vision of Education" paper.

St. Augustine and Augustinian Core Values in Education

In the vast writings of St. Augustine (some five million of his words are indexed in computers at Germany's Wurzburg University), we find no systematic and clear presentation of a scheme for Christian education, what we might call, in the manner of Cardinal Newman, Augustine's "Idea of a University." Augustine did write three treatises which explicitly move toward and sometimes circle the subject of teaching and education, but he does not speak of core values that might inform his view of education, he offers no handbook. These works and some salient elements of Augustine's approach to education are:

De Magistro (The Teacher)

Written in 389, cast in the form of a dialogue, it is a report of an actual conversation with his son Adeodatus when he was 16 years old.

The bulk of the book is an extensive analysis of signs and emphasizes the necessity of using signs, and, at the same time, their inadequacy. It demonstrates the problems regarding the meaning and value of language and stress that words point to reality.

It is a good example of Socratic pedagogy and the exercise of logic.

It offers the most explicit presentation of Augustine's doctrine of "the Interior Teacher," which is also called by Augustine "internal light."

Words cannot make us "see" intelligible realities within the mind. "Regarding. . .all those things which we understand, it is not a speaker who utters sounds exteriorly whom we consult, but it is truth that presides within, over the mind itself; though it may have been words that prompted us to make such consultation. And He who is consulted, He who is said to 'dwell in the inner man,' he it is who teaches - Christ - that is, 'the unchangeable Power of God and everlasting Wisdom.'" (11,38)

Concluding the dialogue, the 16 year old Adeodatus says: "...as to whether what is said is true, He alone teaches, who, when He spoke externally, reminded us that He dwells within us. I shall now, with His help, love Him the more ardently the more progress I make in learning." (14,46)

De Doctrina Christiana (Teaching Christianity)

Begun in 396, Augustine wrote the first three books at this time, and added the fourth book when he was doing his "Retractationes" in 426-427. Augustine describes its contents: "The first three books help us in understanding scripture; the fourth shows how one who has understood it should express himself."

The work is largely a book on norms for exegesis of scripture followed by a review of classical rhetorical skill in the service of Christian preaching.

Of interest is Augustine's development of Cicero's "to be eloquent you should speak 'so as to teach, to delight, to sway.'" Augustine highlights with Cicero the importance of what we teach as well as the "how" and to what purpose.

De Catechizandis Rudibus (Instructing Beginners in the Faith)

Written in 403 in response to a request of Augustine from Deacon Deogratias of Carthage to send him "something in writing which might be of use to him on the instructing beginners ('rudes') in faith" (1.1) He sought help in composition of the introductory instruction that newcomers received, an instruction that was delivered in a single session to those who were approaching the Church to make their first formal inquiries about becoming Christians.

Deogratias also asked for help in overcoming discouragement when repeatedly giving this initial instruction.

- 1) The clear preference of Augustine for the historical narrative, with love as the pervasive theme, purpose, and conclusion of the instruction.
- 2) The contemporary feel of Deogratias' discouragements in teaching - what chills the teacher, and the practical response of Augustine to each of the challenges. (This whole section would be a very interesting instruction for school faculties.)

Before moving on to the justification of the selection of the three core Augustinian values, appropriate for any Augustine-inspired community or venture, we note that only once in the

vast writings of Augustine do we find the “line-up” in one place of the three words and concepts. In Sermon 276.4:

“Si ergo vultis vivere in Spiritu Sancto, tenete caritatem, amate veritatem, desiderate unitatem, ut perveniatis ad aeternitatem.”

(“If then you wish to live in the Holy Spirit, hold on to love, love truth, long for unity so that you may reach eternity.”)

.....

Identification of three values or unifying virtue is the result of reflection on the life and teachings of Augustine and the experience of those who have been touched by their experience with him and with them. The Orcasitas letter and U.S. Provincials’ vision paper offer the synthesis of that reflection and put them in the context of cited writings by Augustine.

These values are the signature set of over-arching and integrative aspects of Augustine’s life and teaching. They represent life-long characteristics of Augustine’s life and represent his window on the Gospel realized in his words, experience, and practice.

While the life of Augustine is unique in its history and challenges and resulting response, his prevailing values offer a unifying Christian pathway for others in their lives and ministry – in the present as it has been for many others in the past.

The Augustinian Core Values

Augustinian educators are engaged in the search for God through the pursuit of truth. They seek union with God through love and union with God and others in the school faith community.

We regard our purpose in the Christian formation and education of students as an essentially pastoral activity. We teach the truth with love, and our students acquire, along with a human and scientific culture, a knowledge of the world, of life, and of humanity that is enlightened by faith. We see education as being about the whole person and done in a community context.

Unitas (Unity, Community)

Union with God and Others in the School Faith Community

The Christian understanding of being one with one another is based on our common origin in creation by God and re-creation in Christ.

In the words of Paul, we are one body. With the Church we attempt to renew the experience of the early Christian community where “the community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common.” (Acts 5:32)

The relationships within the community are nourished by the oneness of Christ with each of us and His presence in the community.

Markers of the presence of the value, what does “Unitas” look like?:

- +Eagerness to serve the common good.
- +Respect for one another, our diversity, and our talents.
- +Shared identity and membership.
- +Welcoming and lasting friendships.
- +Expressions of unity in community gatherings (e.g., Mass, assemblies, rallies).
- +Realization of the universality of the Church and awareness of being members of a global community.
- +Shared common experiences in sport, studies, and service.

Veritas (Truth)

The Search for God through the Pursuit of Truth

We are rooted in the truth about ourselves (cf. above), we are aware that God is the source of all truth. With faith and reason, like two great wings, we fly to Truth.

Augustine insists that we are to “teach the truth in love.”

Markers of the presence of the value, what does “Veritas” look like?:

- +To tell the truth.

- +To search for truth in relationships.
- +To be serious about the hard work, self discipline, and self-awareness that honest study requires.
- +To know Him who is Truth Incarnate, Jesus Christ, and His saving message.
- +To know one's worth as a child of God and the transcendent dignity of every human person.
- +To explore energetically the physical world and the world of ideas with an openness to the goodness and beauty of reality.
- +To be able to think in an orderly and critical fashion and to express one's thoughts clearly and with grace.

Caritas (Love)
Union with God through Love

The great commandment of Christ is to love God and to love neighbor. God is love. The school community and relationships within it are a special place where this love finds expression.

More than any one word can express (be it love, concern, devotion, compassion, caring), "caritas" is that impulse of the Spirit of Jesus that is expressed in hundreds of kind and gracious ways.

It is "active friendship" that encompasses both love of God and neighbor. It is when the head and heart move into action, often with sacrifice.

Markers of the presence of the value, what does "Caritas" look like?:

- +Being a friend.
- +Loving deeds.
- +Service to the community.
- +Care for the common good.
- +Sharing of goods (information, resources talents).
- +Personal interest and support of one another.
- +Bearing shared burdens and responsibilities.

We can see that these three values support and express one another. Truth acquired through both faith and reason is the basis for our understanding of reality. Truth about God as creator and source of life along with the coming of Jesus to be one with us supports our love for one another. This union with God and one another is evidenced in Christian community.

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Worthy of reading...

Fr. Peter Donohue, OSA, President of Villanova University, anchored his inaugural address (09/08/06) in the Augustinian core values. His presentation is a good example of contemporary application of the values to the shaping of a school's vision and mission. The text is in the **Villanova Magazine**, Fall, 2006.

The core values and organizational models are clearly described in an article by James Collins and Jerry Porras in the Harvard Business Review (Sept-Oct., 1994), "Building Your Company's Vision."

The Augustinian Values Institute

Forge ahead, my brothers and sisters; always examine yourselves without self deception, without flattery, without buttering yourselves up. Always be dissatisfied with what you are, if you want to arrive at what you are not yet. Because whenever you are satisfied with yourself, there you have stuck. If, though, you say, “that’s enough, that’s the lot,” then you even perished. Always add some more, always keep on walking, always forge ahead.

St. Augustine; *Sermon 169*

The Augustinian Values Institute (AVI) is a directed three-day retreat-like experience based on the Augustinian core values of Truth, Unity and Love. It is sponsored and conducted by the Augustinian Secondary Education Association of the Federation of Augustinians of North America. Groups of faculty, staff, board members, and other stakeholders representing each of the Augustinian high schools of North America, and guests from around the world, are invited to meet at a rotating host school site. During their time together they hear presentations on St. Augustine and learn an understanding of the Augustinian core values of Truth, Unity and Love which are foundational to an Augustinian education. They pray together, share reflections with other school communities, participate in activities that promote the formation of community among the high schools, and develop particular strategies to implement the values at the participant’s home school. The goal of the AVI is to gain and deepen an appreciation of the Augustinian charism and style. The Institute creates a sense of community, appreciation, solidarity and mutual support for the Augustinian school mission.

Goals of the Augustinian Values Institute

Immediate:

- To establish clarity of mission
- To understand the Augustinian underpinnings of our mission
- To state and clarify Augustinian values
- To develop language which expresses these values
- To see, explore, and apply their implications and expectations
- To develop enthusiasm, dedication, and common purpose in our schools

Long-Term:

- To gather a group of faculty, staff, and board members of Augustinian high schools (from North America and throughout the world) to continue the investigation as a platform for development.
- To provide an opportunity to develop curriculum “for further information (for example: reading is, affinity groupings, regional groupings, support groups within schools, etc).”
- To establish a series of opportunities for ASEA sponsored events to continue the process and response to needs and insights.

The Student Augustinian Values Institute

The Student Augustinian Values Institute is an outgrowth of the AVI. It is a directed three-day retreat-like experience for students at Augustinian high schools based on the core values of Truth, Unity, and Love. It is sponsored and conducted by the ASEA, bringing together groups of students from all ASEA member high schools. Students should be either sophomores or juniors in high school, so that a longer term commitment and the ability to impact the whole school may be present in the students who participate in the institute. Students meet together under the direction of Augustinian school leaders to hear presentations on the Augustinian core values, enjoy each others' company and time together, and participate in service opportunities which are directed at showing the connection between Augustinian and Gospel Values and the society in which students live. Service projects should be designed to show that service is the outgrowth of values in a directed, organized, and measurable fashion. Students who complete the SAVI should be expected to assist in promoting the formation of Augustinian Christian community at their home school and in providing ideas, suggestions, and leadership to help actualize both the values and the practical lessons they have learned from the SAVI, and from other schools and students.

Goals of the Student Augustinian Values Institute

Immediate:

- To establish clarity of mission
- To understand the Augustinian underpinnings of our mission
- To state and clarify Augustinian values
- To develop language which expresses these values
- To see, explore, and apply their implications and expectations
- To develop enthusiasm, dedication, and common purpose in our schools

Long Term:

- To gather students with leadership qualities from all schools to foster awareness of a nationwide and worldwide Augustinian school network.
- To enable students to meet and appreciate others and their customs from different regions.
- To provide a common learning experience building a community of diverse students sharing the same values, experiences and heritage.
- To prepare students to return to their home school energized and insightful about our values and enthusiastic about implementing helpful changes in their schools.

The Augustinian School & the New Evangelization

Miguel Angel Orcasitas, OSA

Our purpose in the world of education

“The specific purpose of our schools is the Christian formation and education of the students. It follows that this apostolate should always be regarded as an essentially pastoral activity, so that we teach the truth with love, and the students acquire, along with a humanistic and scientific culture, a knowledge of the world, of life, and of humanity that is illuminated by faith.” (Const.n.179).

In using the term education, we are speaking of a global reality that embraces the whole person and involves the entire educational community. As a global reality it contributes to the development of the multiple dimensions of the human personality. In other words, an education which transmits culture in an honest way, does not neglect the substance of the faith and, as well as that, awakens social responsibility.

In order to make clear the Augustinian purpose in the educational field, it is necessary to have a community that radiates our spirit with its whole heart. Thus education is imparted by the activity of a community which professes and proclaims certain specific values. This community has as its inspiration the bountiful wellspring of Augustine. This is the nourishing source and, at the same time, the ultimate horizon of our education.

In contrast to a directive pedagogy, which would foster passivity and dependence, St. Augustine imagined the human being as a seed capable of development. “God would like to sow in every soul the seeds of intelligence, of wisdom” (Serm.117,11). The function of the external master (parents, educators...) must be to channel the release of this hidden potential. That intimate place, which is made up of feelings, restlessness, and search, is precisely where St. Augustine locates the encounter with God (Ena.74,9).

As Augustinians, we must offer to society the characteristic features of the Augustinian School, its inspiration and its pedagogy. Teaching communities in different countries are involved in this task today. It would be an enrichment to have a fraternal exchange of those texts which are used as material for study, as well as of the experiences which are born of their application in the classrooms.

The main lines of Augustinian education

The process of humanization operates through LOVE, the most profound power of human nature (In Epist.Jo.2,141). St. Augustine describes it in metaphorical language: “God has built a stairway in your heart for you to climb. The more you love, the higher you climb” (Ena.83,10). To train in and for LOVE brings us to other central ideas of Augustinian thought. One trains in love by bringing the human person to identify with his own self - INTERIORITY - so that from its depths “one withdraws into oneself and remains apart in the embrace of one’s own being” (De ordine I,1,3). To train for LOVE leads to COMMUNITY and SOLIDARITY. A love which does not result in sharing freely is a vitiated love.

Whoever carries in the centre of his life the supports of love and of sharing, changes his personal history into a RESTLESS SEARCH (“We walk behind that which we seek and our search goes in pursuit of our love”: In Epist.ad Gal.54). Love, in the graphic phrase of St. Augustine, is “a restless flame” (Ena. 31,2,5).

Another central idea in Augustinian thought is TRUTH. Far from St. Augustine, however, is any cold or static concept of truth. He understands it as a sharing (Ena.103,2,11), dwelling in the depths (“springing up from the humble sources in the valley” Serm.104,2,3) and includes INTERIORITY (“One rejects truth when one lives in distraction or dispersal”. De beata vita,2,9).

Fidelity to the TRUTH - which includes God, man himself, life, history in a process of change - the understanding of reality demands new analyses and new syntheses. Fundamentally, TRUTH appears as an existential solution: “It is of little value to speak the truth with the lips and not with the heart” (Ena.14,3).

In this time of pessimism, the best service that the Augustinian School can render to the new evangelization is a crystal-clear statement of values. The immediate and reflex effect of this effort will be a renewed Augustinian School, a healthy ferment in the midst of the human family.

At the heart of the Augustinian School is located the COMMUNITY. No ministry eliminates the basic equality of all the baptized. “All of you form only one family and we, in the end, are only the providers who belong to that same family” (Serm.101,39). The only Lord and Master of the community is Jesus Christ. Perhaps there are still some of our Centers that need to take that first step: to turn themselves into genuine educational communities. A school of this kind can be brought about only if teachers, parents, and students, are united in one and the same plan of education.

We have a large number of qualified lay people in the teaching staffs of our schools, in parents’ associations, and as catechists. But our acceptance of them may, at times, be only as deputies or substitutes. Without the clear and active participation of the laity, the Church of Jesus Christ and the Augustinian School will not present a complete picture. In this context, participation and shared responsibility are crucial.

An essential goal is the transformation of the teaching community into a Christian community. The witness of harmony between the life and the teaching of an educator is his most eloquent lecture (De doc. Christ. 4,29,61). As well as this personal evangelization, the Augustinian School must offer specific ways for the development of religious experience. There is a whole range of youth associations, as well as a variety of group activities, liturgical, charitable, and other out-of-school undertakings that can be channels for personal development as well as for the imparting of the Christian message. All of these instruments must be combined in a pastoral plan, where the students themselves become actively involved in their own growth.

The Augustinian School needs to be evangelized

Like the Church, which is always in need of evangelization, and “needs to maintain its freshness, its vigour and its strength for proclaiming the Gospel” (Evangelii Nuntiandi,15), so also the Augustinian School needs to look back, calmly, at its past, and to judge it objectively. Especially it needs to examine itself critically in the context of this present time – which is a time of grace – and to accept the need for the restless search, for CONVERSION.

We must implant the evangelizing and pastoral dimension within our educating-teaching activity. This obligation to renew and examine critically the *raison d’être* of our School has today the mark of urgency. Rather than theoretical statements about identity, we need practical translations, plans for action.

The evangelization of our school calls for the abandoning of all defensiveness, weariness, and evasion. In times past, society itself provided many examples of religious values for children and young people. Today, on the contrary, it is possible that for a considerable number of our students the Catholic School is the only agent of evangelization. Accordingly, the Augustinian School is called on to fulfill an important missionary function.

Today’s culture shows itself to be oblivious of questions of meaning and value. It is the school that has the entire task of integrating culture and faith, and as such it has a clear evangelizing character. That character will afterwards be modified by many other factors within the framework of education. Attention to the transcendent dimension of the human being is demanded by the very concept of integral formation. A school which disregards these attitudes, these ultimate values and questions, does not fulfill its function and is reduced to the mechanical transmission of knowledge. The good of the person and of society itself requires that the school incorporate into humanistic and scientific knowledge the search for meaning. The Augustinian School, being Catholic, is called upon to respond to this need and must include in its search the moral, spiritual, and religious dimension, evaluating the conquests of science and technology within the total perspective of the human person (cfr. John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities, 15.08.90,n.7).

Public recognition of teachers

One of the sectors which is making a major effort in renewal is that of education. The ill-disguised hostility towards the Catholic School, which exists in some social and political contexts, has brought about a re-evaluation of its evangelizing results, as was recently vindicated once more by the Conference of Latin American Bishops at Santo Domingo. The effect of this process in the Catholic school is the enthusiastic determination of many men and women, who display an undoubted professionalism in the classroom. They arouse interest among their students in the ways of justice and peace, without allowing their hopes to be dimmed by difficulties and, supported by their Christian faith, build up the miracle of fraternity.

Yours is a hidden work, little acknowledged, living water which does not always flow on the surface. But it is a necessary ministry for the Church and for society.

To all of you, my dear friars who are engaged in education, and to all the lay people who share in that same ministry, I offer these words of encouragement. Both the anthropology and the spirituality of St. Augustine call for a presence that is close and tangible. Accordingly, I would like my last word to be a warm invitation to you towards renewal, in a personal sense as well as in terms of your teaching and cultural roles. The nucleus of evangelization is the inescapable call to CONVERSION. It was an event which filled the life of St. Augustine from the time when he opened himself unconditionally to the action of God. An ongoing renewal is a process of constant conversion.

*I salute you cordially in St. Augustine,
Miguel Angel Orcasitas OSA
Prior General
Rome, 22 October 1993*

Institutional Identity & Expression of the Core Values

A SUMMARY

Individuals and groups within the school live out the values. There is another level (“institutional”) where the values can also be expressed. These expressions are on a more systemic, operational, institutional, and public level. They are often expressed in school policy and operational style and procedures.

Here there is an opportunity to show consistency of practice – the school itself stands under the judgment of the values. A failure to have the values at work in the school’s operation and corporate behavior misses an important opportunity and can lead to a cynicism that may undermine the values in other aspects of its mission.

These areas are beyond the control of individuals and are within the competence of the leadership and officers of the school.

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Signs, symbols, reminders that establish the identity of the group (like the flag, national colors, and the pledge of allegiance strengthen the identity of a nation) are very important and influential.

The symbols and signs and colors turn inward to identify the group for itself, they face outward to show that group’s identity to others.

The institutional identity is also expressed in the way the community or institution carries on its business or acts corporately – as “the School.” We often find our schools identified as “that school,” it does have a public image and perception.

When at our best the “the school” will reflect our values in action as an institution. Things that come to mind which may reflect the values as the school lives its life.....

1) LEADERSHIP

- Leaders are signs and examples of service.
- Leaders act in a collegial manner, inclusive and respectful of all in the community.
- Leaders are a source of unity.
- Leaders know they are often the public voice of the community – reflecting its values.
- Leaders enable others by sharing resources and information.
- Leaders can expand the horizons of the group and express additional aspirations of the community.

2) A COMMUNITY AMONG COMMUNITIES

- The school knows that it is an important element of a local civic community and religious/faith communities with opportunities for good and considerable corporate influence.
- It becomes a force, when possible, for the common good in the civic community.
- It is respectful of its neighbors.
- It shares resources with others.
- It is seen as a community of faculty and students in service to others.

3) THE VALUES IN ACTION WITHIN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- These are internal operational activities which are shaped by policies formed sometimes by the Board of Directors, sometimes by the school's Administration. They are usually beyond the competence of the individual member of the community to establish. They, too, have an opportunity for expressing the values of the school.

Some examples . . .

With Colleagues

The School hires for mission – the right fit for the right job inspired by the values – hires those who not only accept the values, but have proven their investment and ability to promote them.

The School acknowledges achievement in promoting the values in all evaluation processes.

The School shows respect for teachers and staff by being fair in employment and compensation issues.

It offers opportunities for personal and professional growth as an expression of our search for truth and love of learning. .

As evidence of our search for unity in the mission, there is participation, as appropriate, in decision making.

With Students

It offers respect to students and welcomes the truth of differing gifts and challenges that each student brings with him/her.

The School is open to the participation of all reflected in the admissions process and financial aid opportunities.

The School's administration and culture shows a willingness to forgive and reconcile its members, and offers compassion for weakness.

There is fairness in grading and discipline matters.

There are many opportunities for the community to acknowledge the growth and accomplishments of students.

With parents and alumni

The School welcomes parents and offers opportunities for collaboration in the school community (e.g., service, education, financial support, etc.).

The School nurtures friendship and community with its graduates.

John Keller, OSA

Augustinian Secondary Education Association

Outstanding Faculty Awards

The Augustinian Secondary Education Association established a national award to recognize teachers and staff in Augustinian schools who contribute significant time and effort to the advancement of Augustinian education.

Criteria

Individuals recognized should exemplify the Augustinian values of truth, unity, and love in building the school community, encouraging students in their search for God, encouraging friendships among faculty, staff, and students, and are recognized for their longevity and loyalty to the Augustinians and the Augustinian educational ministry.

Nominations

1. Each school may annually nominate up to three individuals for the award. All members of the school community; Augustinians, lay teachers, administrators, and school support staff are eligible to receive the award.
2. The criteria for selection should include:
 - a. Longevity – at least 10 years of service to the school.
 - b. Service to the school community over and above classroom teaching.
 - c. A strong contribution to the building up of the school community.
3. Nominations should be submitted to the executive secretary of the association in writing with care as to the exact spelling of the individuals name and the school of nomination.
4. At the winter ASEA meeting, certificates will be given to the head of the school for the award recipients. Certificates should be presented at the local school site to the recipients on a suitable occasion near the end of the school year. Individual schools may choose to augment recognition in addition to the certificate.

Seal of the Augustinian Order

The ***flaming heart*** is the human heart. It symbolizes Augustine's love of God and his fellow brothers and sisters. The Augustinian heart is passionately alive, with the desire to know God and experience divine love in our lives.

The ***open book*** represents St. Augustine's own conversion to Christianity and the Scriptures. It also symbolizes the Word of God, source of light and truth, and the quest for wisdom.

The ***arrow*** which pierces the heart represents the Spirit of God piercing our hearts, calling us to continued growth in faith, hope and love. This is the basis of that great restlessness, so typical of St. Augustine, which led him to seek God in all things and above all things.



This insignia is also a graphic symbol of Augustinian teaching practice. "Teaching to think and to love," or put another way, "learning to be and to share," is seen as a masterly synthesis of Augustinian education. The book and the heart are combined in a single logo. Loving rationally and thinking as persons who are facing up to reality with their intelligence, and their heart. The noble capacity of thought is combined with the human exercise of conscious love. It is a call to "intelligent love." (Santiago Inzunza, OSA)