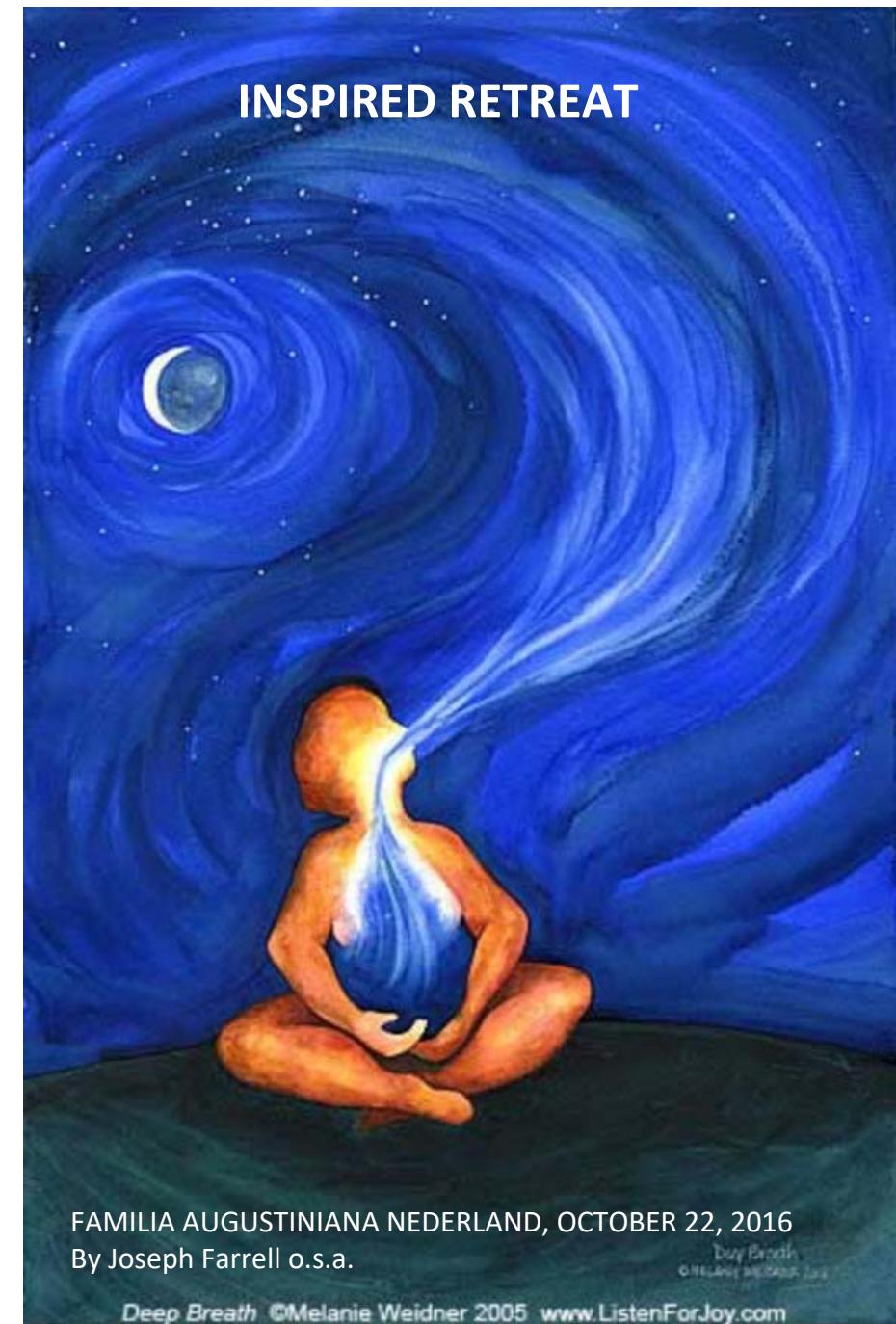


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## INSPIRED RETREAT

Joseph Farrell (1963) doorliep als student de Villanova University in Pennsylvania (U.S.) en trad toe tot de Augustijnen in 1985. In 1991 werd hij tot priester gewijd. Hij behaalde in 2007 zijn doctoraat aan de Gregoriana in Rome. Terug in Villanova doceerde hij aan de Villanova University en bekleedde verschillende functies daar tot hij in september 2013 gekozen werd tot vicaris generaal van de OSA. Sindsdien woont hij in Rome.



FAMILIA AUGUSTINIANA NEDERLAND, OCTOBER 22, 2016  
By Joseph Farrell o.s.a.

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<sup>xxxvii</sup> s. 165.3 (PL 38:904). “habet et profundum, hoc est quod in terra figitur, et non videtur. Videte magnum sacramentum. Ab illo profundo quod non vides, surgit totum quod vides.”

<sup>xxxviii</sup> R. Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society*, 160-61.

<sup>xxxix</sup> J. Ratzinger, *Das neue Volk Gottes: Entwürfe zur ekklesiologie*, (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1969), 48.

<sup>xl</sup> See T. Martin, *Our Restless Heart*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2003), “It is precisely because of this emphasis on love which in turn shaped its understanding of grace that the Augustinian School can be understood to have integrated theology and spirituality into a singular vision of the Christian life. The affective assertion of the primacy of love and grace did not remain within the confines of the theological lecture hall.”, 110-111.

<sup>xli</sup> S. 112A, *Tam levis est, sarcina Christi, ut non solum non premat, sed etiam allevet. Neque enim quemadmodum leves dicuntur sarcinae, quae minus onerosae sunt, habent tamen aliquod pondus suum; et aliud est portare sarcinam gravem, aliud est portare sarcinam levem, aliud est portare sarcinam nullam. Premi videtur, qui portat sarcinam gravem; minus premitur, qui portat sarcinam levem, sed tamen premitur; expeditissimis autem videtur humeris ambulare, qui nullam sarcinam portat. Non est talis sarcina Christi: expedit enim eam portare, ut subleveris; si illam deponas, magis premeris. Nec hoc vobis, fratres, tamquam impossibile videatur. Forte invenitur aliquod exemplum, unde etiam corporaliter quod dico videatis; et mirum est etiam, et omnino incredibile. Advertite hoc in avibus. Omnis avis portat pennas suas: attendite, et videte quemadmodum complacent alas suas, cum descendunt in terram, ut requiescant, et imponant eas quodam modo lateribus suis. Oneratas putas? detrahant onus, et cadent; quanto minus sarcinam illam avis portavit, tanto minus volavit. Ergo deponis eis sarcinam illam quasi misericors; si vis esse misericors, parce; aut, si iam demptae sunt pennae, nutri, ut crescat onus, et volet de terra. Tale quippe onus desiderabat ille, qui dicebat: Quis dabit mihi pennas sicut columbae, et volabo, et requiescam?*<sup>25</sup> *Quod ergo incubuit pater super collum filii, sublevavit, non pressit; honoravit, non oneravit. Quomodo est enim homo idoneus ad portandum Deum, nisi quia portat portatus Deus?*

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1\*-29\*, *The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, II/1-4, trans. Roland Teske, S.J., (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2001). Unless noted otherwise, all English references to *Epistulae* are here cited from this translation. All Latin citations will come from the critical editions found in CSEL 34/1 (1-123); CSEL 44 (124-184); CSEL 57 (185-270); CSEL 88 (1\*-29\*).

<sup>xxv</sup> R. Dodaro, "Sacramentum Caritatis: Foundation of Augustine's Spirituality," in *Augustinian Spirituality and the Charism of the Augustinians*, ed. John Rotelle, (Villanova, PA: Augustinian Press, 1995), 46-58.

<sup>xxvi</sup> s. 165.3 (PL 38:904). "Et nos in illa gloriemur, vel quia super illam incumbimus. In illa gloriemur omnes, o boni fratres, in illa gloriemur. Ibi forte inveniemus et latitudinem, et longitudinem, et altitudinem, et profundum. His enim Apostoli verbis crux quodammodo nobis ante oculos constituta est. Habet enim latitudinem, in qua manus figuntur; habet longitudinem, quod inde usque ad terram ducitur lignum; habet et altitudinem, quod ab ipso transverso, in quo figuntur manus, excedit aliquantum, ubi caput crucifixi ponitur; habet et profundum, hoc est quod in terra figitur, et non videtur. Videte magnum sacramentum. Ab illo profundo quod non vides, surgit totum quod vides."; ep. 55.25 (CSEL 34/2:196-197). "Haec sunt etiam bona opera quidem, tamen adhuc laboriosa, quorum merces requies est. Sed ideo dicitur: *Spe gaudentes*, ut cogitantes requiem futuram, cum hilaritate in laboribus operemur. Hanc hilaritatem significat crucis latitudo in transverso ligno, ubi figuntur manus. Per manus enim opera intellegimus; per latitudinem, hilaritatem operantis, quia tristitia facit angustias; per altitudinem vero cui caput adiungitur, exspectationem retributionis de sublimi iustitia Dei, qui reddet unicuique secundum opera sua, iis quidem qui secundum tolerantiam boni operis gloriam, et honorem, et incorruptionem querentibus vitam aeternam. Itaque longitudine, qua totum corpus extenditur, ipsam tolerantiam significat, unde longanimes dicuntur qui tolerant. Profundum autem quod terrae infixum est, secretum sacramenti praefigurat."; Cf. ep. 140.62-63 (CSEL 44:207-211); lo. eu. tr. 118.5 (CCL 36:657).

**INSPIRED RETREAT  
FAMILIA AUGUSTINIANA NEDERLAND  
OCTOBER 22, 2016**

**FAN FAMILIA AUGUSTINIANA NEDERLAND  
October 22, 2016  
Eindhoven**

**INSPIRATION** Let us take a moment to be attentive to our breathing. It is something to which I usually do not pay much attention. I don't usually give it a second thought. That is, until there is something to remind me of this necessary part of life. The times I have a head cold are times I become most aware of my breathing. Perhaps if you have asthma or breathing difficulties with your lungs, you are more mindful of your breathing than others. We sometimes take it for granted. I used to play games with my siblings and friends as a child in the swimming pool. We would see who could hold their breath for the longest period of time. Taking that first breath after holding it for so long was an experience that included the whole body. It was like a breath that brings new life.

During our time together, I am going to ask us to pay particular attention to our breathing. I will introduce words from our scriptural tradition to get us to a point of understanding what it is we are talking about when we say breath. Is it wind, air, spirit, or more.

As I mentioned the theme of this reflection will be Inspiration. I invite us to focus on being mindful of our breathing during our time together. There are mindfulness workshops to help groups and individuals be more aware of their surroundings and the world. These workshops teach techniques on how to focus one's mind on the senses and the experiences the senses communicate to us with each reality.

The Rule of St. Augustine encourages us to live together with *one mind and one heart intent upon God*. Because of the directive to be of one mind and one heart... one soul.. I would like us not only to be *mind-full* but also *heart-full*. Let us invite our heart to be with us on this journey of inspiration.

Augustine's Rule was written around the year 400 and has endured throughout the centuries. It is a simple little book. with not complicated direction on how Augustine viewed those who live together in community should and could live their common life. We have today, an opportunity to journey together one in mind and heart as we reflect on the theme of inspiration. We will have an opportunity to listen and to share our thoughts on various aspects of what it means to be inspired. It is a word loaded with meaning. We have related words such as conspire, expire, and perspire. And so I want us to be attentive, mind and heart, on how we use this term and how we hear it used in our lives.

### Inspiration in Sacred Scripture

We often we hear our Sacred Scriptures referred to as the *Inspired Word of God*. What does that mean? What is an inspired word? Do words have breath?

John the Evangelist reminds us that:

*In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.*<sup>i</sup>

This morning and this afternoon we will be able to experiment with our use of words to discover the inspiration that guided our sacred scriptures. For example, we have these inspired words to guide our reflection today:

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not found in these editions will be cited as they are employed throughout this study.

<sup>xxv</sup> Jn 3:16.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Heb 4:13.

<sup>xxvii</sup> One of Augustine's first *Dialogues* in Cassiciacum is entitled *De beata vita* (CSEL 63); See also *conf.* X, 20, (29) (CSEL 33:248). "Quomodo ergo te quaero, domine? Cum enim te, deum meum, quaero, vitam beatam quaero. Quaeram te, ut vivat anima mea. Vivit enim corpus meum de anima mea et vivit anima mea de te. Quomodo ergo quaero vitam beatam?" See *Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding, OSB, (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1997). Unless noted otherwise, all English references to *Confessions* are here cited from this translation. All Latin citations will come from the critical edition found in CSEL 33.

<sup>xxviii</sup> 1Cor 10:33.

<sup>xxix</sup> Acts 4:32.

<sup>xxx</sup> Mt 22:37, 39; Mk 12:30-33; Lk 10:27. Cf. Dt 6:5.

<sup>xxxi</sup> We find it important here to note the emphasis that Dodaro makes of the comparison of Augustine's use of example and sacrament with the "outer" and "inner" man. He argues that, "Augustine understands the relationship between the outer and inner man in terms of a radical unity that retains their essential difference." Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society*, 149.

<sup>xxxii</sup> *Exposition of the Psalms 1-150*, The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, vols. III/15-20, trans. Maria Boulding, O.S.B. (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2000-2005). Unless noted otherwise, all English references to *Enarrationes in Psalmos* are here cited from this translation. All Latin citations will come from the critical edition found in CCL 38-40. *en. Ps.* 32(3), 2 (CCL 38:258). "Exigit enim rationem: redditia ratione, donat aeternitatem."

<sup>xxxiii</sup> *ciu. X, 5* (CSEL 40/1:452). *City of God*, trans. Henry Bettenson, (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1984). Unless noted otherwise, all references to English translations will be taken from this edition. All Latin citations will come from CSEL 40/1&2.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> *ep.* 55.2 (CSEL 34.2:170). "Sacramentum est autem in aliqua celebratione, cum rei gestae commemoratio ita fit, ut aliquid etiam significare intellegatur, quod sancte accipendum est." Cf. *Letters 1- 269*, 21

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<sup>xxii</sup> Rom 5:5.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Col 2:2. Throughout our investigation, by using the words *example*, *sacrament* and *mystery* as they pertain to Jesus Christ in the thought of Augustine of Hippo, we are aware of the fullness and complexity which each term represents for this Doctor of the Church. We remain grateful to Fr. Robert Dodaro, OSA for his study of these terms as Augustine uses them in *De Trinitate*. See: R. Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society in the Thought of Augustine*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 147-181. In our investigation, we shall attempt to remain faithful to Dodaro's conclusion that "For Augustine, 'sacraments' are like 'mysteries' in that they are visible images, whose surface relationships to religious truths are easily perceived by the mind, but whose deeper meanings are only partially knowable. Understanding and loving God and his attributes through sacraments or mysteries require faith and humility, Augustine argues. He indicates that these virtues are ascetical dispositions in the soul: faith because it requires belief in the difficult, because unseen, aspects of mysteries such as the incarnation; humility because it requires renunciation of the pretence of one's own virtue. For Augustine, understanding the scriptural word, in which God communicates precepts and examples concerning the just life, requires this kind of asceticism." 180.

<sup>xxiv</sup> *trin.* 4.6 (CCL 50:167). "ea sola nobis ad utrumque concinuit cum in ea fieret interioris hominis sacramentum, exterioris exemplum." See *The Trinity*, trans. E. Hill, O.P., (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1991). Unless noted otherwise, all English references to *The Trinity* are here cited from this translation. All Latin citations will come from the critical edition found in CSEL 50. See also Augustine's use of the terms *sacrament* and *example* in a sermon he delivered refuting the Donatists: *s.* 169.3 (PL 38:1236). "Induistis Christum forma sacramenti; induite imitatione exempli. *Quoniam Christus pro nobis passus est, relinquens nobis exemplum, ut sequamur vestigia ejus* (1 Pt. 2:21)." See *Sermons*, The Works of St. Augustine: A translation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, vols. III/ 1-11, trans. Edmund Hill, O.P. (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1990-1997). Unless noted otherwise, all English references to *Sermones* are here cited from this translation. All Latin citations will come from the following editions: CCL 41 (1-50) PL 38 (1-340) PL 39 (341-396). Sermons

*In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth and the earth was without form or shape, with darkness over the abyss and a mighty wind(ruah) sweeping over the waters.*<sup>ii</sup>

*Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath (nishmat) of life, and the man became a living being.*<sup>iii</sup>

*And when he had said this, he breathed(enephysēsen (Greek) same as Nishmat) on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit"*<sup>iv</sup>

*When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, (pneuma) and it filled the entire house in which they were.*<sup>v</sup>

Playwrights and Artists often refer to their inspiration? What inspires them to create? Many times when artists are asked what *inspired* them, they refer to what has *influenced* them. I guess that word could also be used... if we see influence as being an in-flowing of something.. and that something being breath, *nishmat*, spirit .. *ruach*, breath. With regard to Inspiration.....let us always think of breathing in .....receiving the gift of God's spirit as we breathe... each breath we take is an opportunity to recognize that we are living in God and that when we breathe, we are breathing in the very life that created us and sustains us and inspires us to be who we were created to be.

Sometimes when children are young and they want to show their disapproval at something we will hear of them holding their breath in defiance... I like this imagery, holding our breath, when we decide that we are going to live in defiance of the God who calls us to love,

to love God, ourselves and our sisters and brothers with whom we share our world. When we hold our breath, in defiance, we are blocking out that which surrounds us. When we hold our breath, we are defiantly refusing that which gives us life. Perhaps during our time together we will have the opportunity to reflect on those times when we may be reminded of our sinfulness.. our missing the mark, we can also see it as a type of holding our breath, as defiant and immature children do. We are refusing the life that is given to us.

Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* writes the following:

*I never tire of repeating those words of Benedict XVI which take us to the very heart of the Gospel: "Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction".<sup>vi</sup>*

*Thanks solely to this encounter – or renewed encounter – with God's love, which blossoms into an enriching friendship, we are liberated from our narrowness and self-absorption. We become fully human when we become more than human, when we let God bring us beyond ourselves in order to attain the fullest truth of our being.*

**Here we find the source and inspiration of all our efforts at evangelization.** For if we have received the love which restores meaning to our lives, how can we fail to share that love with others?<sup>vii</sup>

So we can see that the action of evangelization involves first being inspired, **by an encounter....** The encounter is what provides the condition for the possibility of inspiration. Let us pray this day that we may encounter the one who gives our lives **new horizon** and **decisive direction.**

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<sup>i</sup> *John* 1.

<sup>ii</sup> *Genesis* 1.1.

<sup>iii</sup> *Genesis* 2.7.

<sup>iv</sup> *John* 20:22

<sup>v</sup> *Acts* 2:1.

<sup>vi</sup> *Evangelii Gaudium* 7. Cf: *Deus Caritas Est* 1.

<sup>vii</sup> *Evangelii Gaudium* 8.

<sup>viii</sup> *Laudato Si* (LS) 118.

<sup>ix</sup> *Acts* 17: 24-28

<sup>x</sup> *Conf.* I, 1. *Tu excitas, ut laudare te delectet, quia fecisti nos ad te et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te.*

<sup>xi</sup> *Exodus* 3:1-12.

<sup>xii</sup> *ep. Io. tr.* 7.8.

<sup>xiii</sup> See J. Selner, *Teaching of St. Augustine on Fear as a Religious Motive*, 48-49. For examples of the second and more useful type of fear see s. 270.4 (PL 38:1241); *ep. Io. tr.* 9.2.2 (SC 75:378-80).

<sup>xiv</sup> s. 13.9.

<sup>xv</sup> s. 32.8, Cf. 1Jn 4:18 "Love has no room for fear; and indeed, love drives out fear when it is perfect love, since fear only serves for correction. The man who is still afraid has not yet reached the full measure of love."

<sup>xvi</sup> *div. qu.*

<sup>xvii</sup> s. 159.6.

<sup>xviii</sup> See 1John 4:18 "Fear only serves for correction."

<sup>xix</sup> Augustine calls this type of fear - *utilem timorem*. In response to those who may say that because scripture assures us that "Christ cleanses us of all iniquity," we can live our lives in sin and free of anxiety, Augustine reminds his listeners that John takes away the evil sense of security and replaces it with a useful fear -*utilem timorem*- leading the human person to perfection. "tollit tibi malam securitatem, et inserit utilem timorem. Male vis esse securus, sollicitus esto. Fidelis enim est et justus, ut dimittat nobis delicta nostra, si semper tibi displiceas, et muteris donec perficiaris." *ep. Io. tr.* 1.7 (SC 75:128).

<sup>xx</sup> s. 156.14, Cf. *Io. eu. tr.* 41.10.3; *Io. eu. tr.* 43.7.

<sup>xxi</sup> Eph 3:18.

*That, of course, is the sort of burden which was desired by the one who said, Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly away and take my rest? (Ps 55:6). So the fact that the father pressed on his son's neck means that he raised him up, not that he weighed him down, he gave him a guerdon, not a burden. I mean, how can you be capable of carrying God, unless God, being carried, carries you?*<sup>xli</sup>

The son was received as the image of God.. .the creation loved by the creator. In the encounter, in the embrace... all four pillars of Christian Anthropology were gathered into the one action. Creation, Sin, Grace and Redemption. In this parable, the Father is placing the merciful Christ on the shoulders of the returning son. Placing Christ, Mercy incarnate, on the shoulders does not add weight to the burden which the son carries... in fact, in a paradoxical way, it lightens the burden that the son was carrying. Merciful love is shared in forgiveness and asking for forgiveness... This inspiration of merciful love is *ruah, nishmat, pneuma, YAHW*, in total it is a sacrament of love. The finite capable of the infinite....it is *sacramentum caritatis*.

### **Inspired to be HUMAN (ANTHROPOLOGY)**

*The glory of God is the Human person fully alive. (Irenaeus)*

Soon after I finished my doctoral work in Rome and began to teach at Villanova University, I was asked to take on a course that one of our Augustinian Friars was teaching. He was going to take a year sabbatical and they were looking for someone to take his place for the year. The Friar's name is Michael Scanlon and the course was Christian Anthropology. Michael was my professor for Christian Anthropology and he was one of the best, and hardest, teachers I had. He has a brilliant mind and systematic way of presenting Theology. To be honest I was intimidated and terrified and was certainly praying for inspiration. After I got the courage to make an appointment with Michael to ask him about any tips he could give me about teaching Christian Anthropology. The first advice he gave me was to say to the students, *You are the Paradigm of Christian Anthropology!* I remembered that from the days when he taught us in graduate school in Washington, DC. But I then asked him, and then?????? His response was a classic Michael Scanlon response....."UNPACK IT!!!"

So now, let's UNPACK IT! I will use many of the notes I took in my class with Michael Scanlon...

**Christian Anthropology:** *The articulation of the Christian understanding of human existence.*

**CREATION:** Imago Dei Augustine's Confessions (1,1,1) You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our **heart is** restless (unquiet) until it rests in you.

**SIN:** Missing the Mark

**GRACE : Romans 5:5** Hope does not disappoint, For the Love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

### Cooperating and Operating Grace

**REDEMPTION:** To possess grace is to be possessed by it.  
(Bonaventure.)

When we hear the word “anthropology” we usually think of that empirical type of anthropology which is a study of “man”, his/her culture, artifacts, etc....

Perhaps because of the use of the term “anthropology: as an empirical study, theology uses this term. Theologians, such as Karl Rahner, use the term anthropology because theology too has something to say about human beings. By theological/Christian anthropology we mean the study of the human person from the theological perspective and more precisely from the perspective of the Judeo-Christian tradition. We can look at the human person (*anthropos*) from many angles: philosophical, psychological, economic, cultural, sociological and *THEOlogical*

A major concern of Christian Anthropology is **GRACE**. When we use the term “Grace” we are looking at the human person/ situation as it is ADDRESSED AND LOVINGLY EMBRACED BY GOD or IS IN COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. It is the ENCOUNTER, the point of INSPIRATION that Pope Benedict and Pope Francis emphasize in their understanding of what it means to be Christian. Of course, for the Christian, the clue to what the human person embraced by God is, is Jesus of Nazareth, the human person who is Grace Incarnate, i.e. so embraced by God that he, precisely as human is also divine. Jesus Christ as the enfleshment of God Jesus Christ is the DIVINE LOGOS. IN him we see God’s plan for creation and for humans fulfilled. He is the “eschatological person”. In our

Let us conclude with one of Augustine’s sermons on the Prodigal Son. (Sermon 112A) Here Augustine recognizes the dynamic relationship between the Father and the son. I like to imagine that as the father embraced the returning son, he exhaled as if he was holding his breath for the ultimate return. It was a sigh of relief... but it was a life giving sigh. The father then puts his arms around the Son and places his arms on his shoulders. Augustine says of this action.....

*So light is the load of Christ, that not only does it not weigh down, but it even lifts up, and lightens. This isn't, either, just in the way that loads are said to be light which are less burdensome, but still weigh something; and it's one thing to carry a heavy load, another to carry a light load, another to carry no load at all. The man carrying a heavy load appears to be weighed down; the one carrying a light load is less weighed down, but still he feels some weight; but the man who carries no load at all is evidently walking along with his shoulders completely free.*

*Well, Christ's load is not like that at all; it's a relief, you see, to carry it, so that you can be lifted up and lightened; if you put it down, you find yourself more weighed down than ever. And don't let this strike you, brothers and sisters, as impossible. Perhaps we can find an example, to help you see what I mean, from the natural world; it too, as a matter of fact, is marvelous, not to say unbelievable. Observe it in the case of birds. Every bird carries its wings; notice and see how they fold their wings when they come down to earth to rest, and how after a certain fashion they place them on their sides. Do you consider they are burdened by them? Let them remove the burden, and they will fall. The less a bird has carried that load, so much the less has it flown. So you come along and remove that load, as though taking pity on it; if you really want to take pity, forbear; or if the feathers have already been plucked out, nurse the bird, so that its burden can grow again, and it can fly from the ground.*

response, in fact, is the *sacramentum caritatis* in which Augustinian spirituality finds its root.<sup>xxxv</sup>

For Augustine, the physical dimensions of Christ's cross signify the breadth, height, length, and depth of the love that Christ has for his people, the members of his body.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Augustine's explanation of the dimensions of the breadth, height and length of the cross are outward signs and examples which Christ offers to the faithful for imitation and he rightly distinguishes them from the depth of the cross, that is the part of the cross that is hidden beneath the ground, but without which the cross cannot stand. That depth is the part that Augustine calls the *sacramentum*, it is the place from which grace comes to us gratuitously according to God's secret plan.<sup>xxxvii</sup> The faithful person's imitation of Christ's sacrifice on the cross through good works (breadth), patient endurance in times of suffering (length), and hopeful perseverance (height) are the external manifestations of the mystery of the sacramental salvific act of Christ.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Christian piety, for Augustine, necessarily includes both the vertical and horizontal parts of the cross of Christ, realizing that unity which exists between God the Father and with the human community, the Church of Jesus Christ.<sup>xxxix</sup>

Christ is the *Sacramentum Caritatis* given to the world so that the sacred mystery of his life, death and resurrection become the only possibility for the ultimate desire of God's faithful people to be realized. Our investigation touches upon one aspect of that *sacramentum caritatis* in the way it relates to the account to be rendered. An Augustinian spirituality which fails to acknowledge the critical inclusion of love in the process of rendering an account also fails to recognize the sacramental role it has in that spirituality and therefore offers an incomplete picture of how Augustine of Hippo responded to the example God offered to the world through Jesus Christ.<sup>xl</sup>

relationship with the Divine Logos, we come to know who we are, fully alive, as a human. And in this we give Glory to God.

These days, we are becoming more and more aware of the relationship we have with the environment around us. We are being reminded each day of the fragility of creation and the natural resources of this earth we call home. In the papal Encyclical, *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis reminds us of our responsibility to care for the creation that has been entrusted to us. He insists, however, on the necessity of including the human in our care of creation. He writes:

*There can be no renewal of our relationship with nature without a renewal of humanity itself. There can be no ecology without an adequate anthropology. When the human person is considered as simply one being among others, the product of chance or physical determinism, then "our overall sense of responsibility wanes". A misguided anthropocentrism need not necessarily yield to "biocentrism", for that would entail adding yet another imbalance, failing to solve present problems and adding new ones. Human beings cannot be expected to feel responsibility for the world unless, at the same time, their unique capacities of knowledge, will, freedom and responsibility are recognized and valued.*<sup>viii</sup>

In looking at the human person as graced, we must include in our examination the pillars of Creation, Sin and Redemption. All four pillars make up the Human/Christian Anthropological view of who we are. From the initial inspiration of the life giving breath we receive as the Image of God, we are in constant relationship and in motion. Breathing in and out the *Ruah* of God. Our dynamic relationship with God allows us to be in that relationship even when we are not aware... like our breathing, we are breathing even when we are unaware of the fact that we are breathing.

St. Paul in Chapter 17 of the Acts of the Apostles, as he was speaking at the *Areopagus*.

*The God who made the world and all that is in it, the Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in sanctuaries made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands because he needs anything. Rather it is he who gives to everyone life and breath and everything. He made from one\* the whole human race to dwell on the entire surface of the earth, and he fixed the ordered seasons and the boundaries of their regions, so that people might seek God, even perhaps grope for him and find him, though indeed he is not far from any one of us. For 'In him we live and move and have our being'.*<sup>ix</sup>

Now if we are to talk about the human person as graced, we can ask the questions: How is it possible for the human person to be addressed or embraced by God, to be an image of God? Is not the human person a finite being? How can a finite being have relationship, an encounter, or dialogue with an infinite God? We are *Finitum capax infiniti*. We are capable of the infinite! In our conscious and unconscious inspiration we are capable of being in that intimate relationship with the God who made us. God is not some far away observer... God is as close to us as the water is to the fish of the sea.

If the human person is the image (expression) of God and called to covenant-dialogue relationship with God, if the human person is an "addressee" of God, a "hearer of the Word" (according to RAHNER), then there must be a structural (*or a priori*) feature (=s existential in Rahner) which makes possible such a relationship with God, which makes it possible that the human, creaturely person can be an addressee of God's revelatory address and an "expression" of the infinite God. There must be some openness in the human person for God, a gateway within the human person to the infinite, a point of departure in the creature to make possible this relationship with

called to imitate in their lives and is ultimately what will count on the Day of Judgment, the day when all people will be called to render an account to God.<sup>xxvi</sup>

As a response to the desire for the happy life<sup>xxvii</sup>, God's faithful people are called to live in unity and love so as to achieve the salvation which Christ's sacrifice gained. Of utmost importance is that the members of Christ's body on earth are called to perform these good works not for their own salvation, but rather for the salvation of the other.<sup>xxviii</sup> The first Jerusalem community of believers sought to do this in the way they strove to live one in mind and heart by sharing all things in common.<sup>xxix</sup> They directed themselves this way as their response to the double commandment to love God and neighbor.<sup>xxx</sup>

The gospel of the unconditional love of Jesus Christ is the message which Augustine was compelled to preach in his ministry as pastor of souls.

Our response to what takes place in our way to salvation, however, is not merely *example*, but is also realized as *sacrament*.<sup>xxxi</sup> As Augustine employs the word *sacramentum* to signify many things beyond the traditional liturgical sacraments, we propose that the account which all God's people are called to render, our response to being inspired to love, can also enjoy the title *sacramentum* in an Augustinian sense. He reminds his congregation that God "demands an account; once the account is rendered he rewards us with eternity."<sup>xxxii</sup> When a person, in imitation of Christ, offers his or her life as a true sacrifice in service for the salvation of others, the account rendered is a *sacrum signum*.<sup>xxxiii</sup> At that point, the example which Christ provided is no longer merely an external factor but becomes an internal reality. When the sacred sign is received in a holy manner the resulting love is sacramental.<sup>xxxiv</sup> The faithful members of the body of Christ, who authentically respond to the double commandment to love God and neighbor, respond in love. That

clear that fear makes the heart into a slave and that the decision is not made freely.

A decision made freely is one that we should clearly prefer. Reality teaches us, however, that there are times when such a decision is not possible. We should allow this only because it may also prepare a place for the eventual realization of love. Augustine presents the following argument in a sermon he delivered over twenty years into his ministry as a bishop:

*Do it, do good, at least out of fear of punishment, if you can't yet do it out of love of justice.<sup>xx</sup>*

This love is what makes the unremarkable, quite remarkable. So, we can say that we are inspired with love, for love. We take a deep breath and move ahead....even if it is with fear.....taking a deep breath helps. What do we breathe in when we take that deep breath. Air, yes, but also so much more. We can take in grace. Our history is the realization of Grace... Grace is made real in our actions in our history. Here is an example of Grace in history...

### **The Inspirational Cross of Christ**

The love of Jesus Christ, in its fullness - its length, breadth, height and depth<sup>xxi</sup> - demonstrates to God's faithful people how they are called to respond to the gift of God's love which has been poured into their hearts.<sup>xxii</sup> Jesus Christ, the Word Incarnate, whose external example can be seen and imitated, is made real in history as the sacrament and mystery that his life, death and resurrection signify.<sup>xxiii</sup> The ultimate sacrifice of Christ on the cross is the sacrament which, in turn, provides the way for that example to be realized in the lives of the faithful.<sup>xxiv</sup> In other words, the sacrifice of Jesus' life is the sacrament of love -sacramentum caritatis- which offers salvation for the world.<sup>xxv</sup> That love is what inspires us, it is what the faithful are

God. If there is to be covenant relation between God and the human, then God must make the human as such "available". Augustine was quite aware of this when he writes at the very beginning of his *Confessions*,

*"You arouse us so that praising you may bring us joy, because you have made us and drawn us to yourself and our heart is restless (unquiet) until it rests in you."<sup>x</sup>*

### **Inspired for Merciful Love**

Let us now take a moment to look at an example of inspiration that led to a merciful response of love.

### **Exodus 3:1-12**

*Meanwhile Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. Leading the flock beyond the wilderness, he came to the mountain of God, Horeb. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him as fire flaming out of a bush. When he looked, although the bush was on fire, it was not being consumed. So Moses decided, "I must turn aside to look at this remarkable sight. Why does the bush not burn up?" When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to look, God called out to him from the bush: Moses! Moses! He answered, "Here I am." God said: Do not come near! Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. I am the God of your father, he continued, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.*

*The Call and Commission of Moses. But the LORD said: I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their cry against their taskmasters, so I know well what they are suffering. Therefore I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and lead them up from that land into a good and spacious*

*land, a land flowing with milk and honey, the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Hivites and the Jebusites. Now indeed the outcry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen how the Egyptians are oppressing them. Now, go! I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.*

*But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" God answered: I will be with you; and this will be your sign that I have sent you. When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will serve God at this mountain. "But," said Moses to God, "if I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what do I tell them?" God replied to Moses: I am who I am. Then he added: This is what you will tell the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you<sup>xii</sup>.*

YAHWEH.....YHWH..... It is like a breath coming to meet Moses....  
YHWH....imagine the sound of a breath.

Love is the answer to why we do everything. It is the root of what we have been exploring in being inspired. Without the presence of merciful love in all that we have explored there is nothing on which to base our identification of the Church being the body of Christ on earth. That body, the *Christus totus*, authentically responds in joy only if it is animated by love. In one of the oft-quoted sections of Augustine's *Tractate* on the First Letter of St. John, we hear the Bishop imploring parents and all member of the community to respond to their call to action with love as *the* motivating condition behind every choice. It is what unites the members into one, the *Christus totus*, and animates its every move.

Once for all, therefore, a short precept is presented to you:  
**Love and do what you will.** If you should be silent, be silent

out of love; if you should cry out, cry out out of love. If you should correct, correct out of love; if you should spare, spare out of love. Let the root of love be within; from this root only good can emerge.<sup>xiii</sup>

The primacy of love of justice (*amor iustitiae*) must always overcome fear of punishment (*timor poenae*)<sup>xiv</sup> as the incentive for living rightly. This is an answer to why offer joyful praise. Fear, however, cannot be ignored in looking at the why of offering praise. We can find examples in the scriptures where God comes across as one who can easily instill fear into the heart of the listener and so it is worth spending a moment reflecting on the reality of fear.

Augustine is more consistent in the way he hails the primacy of love.<sup>xv</sup> He declares in one sermon that when someone makes the conscious decision to be Christian and to act thusly, then the motivation of love overpowers any aspect of fear and allows the person to proceed accordingly.

*Those who cross over to Christ, cross over from fear to love, and begin to be able to do out of love what they couldn't do out of fear.*<sup>xvi</sup>

He takes the opportunity in another sermon to reinforce this primacy of love in living rightly. Fear can disrupt the human person's enjoyment of the happy life.<sup>xvii</sup> The joy in freely making the choice to live and love justice is erased when fear informs the one acting. Delight comes in action responding from a love of justice, not in fear.<sup>xviii</sup>

We can, then, allow for the possibility of fear to be an influential factor when it is not possible for the acting agent to perform good deeds solely as a response to love.<sup>xix</sup> We can make allowance for fear to motivate one into right living<sup>xx</sup> but wants to be