

## **WELCOME TO SAINT AUGUSTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

“You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You. Grant, O Lord, that I may know and understand which is my first obligation - to call upon you or to praise you.”

( St Augustine, Confessions, 1.1.2). Our patron saint, Augustine penned down those immortal lines which have succinctly articulated Catholic spirituality and liturgy for all ages!

What a great blessing it is to have a place where we gather as a community to acknowledge this truth publicly. It is therefore my pleasure to invite you to come and join us in worshipping the Lord who made us for himself. The Psalmist summarized our joy when he said, “I rejoice when I heard them say let us go to God's house and now our feet are standing within your gates O Jerusalem” ( Psalm 122:1-2). Coming to St Augustine on 1169 Kerr Avenue is like ascending the mountain of the Lord. Our parish is like a city set on a mountain that cannot be hidden”( Matthew 5:14). The parish Church and school of St Augustine were opened in 1933, twelve years before the Second World War. The school, which was the home of the revered and dreaded Thunderbolt, closed two years ago but like crabgrass and acacia trees will rise again in no distant time.

As a Catholic Church our mission is to live out Christ’s triple office of Prophet, Priest and King. We do this by telling the

Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ in season and out of season. We do this by offering the holy sacrifice of the Mass, celebrating other sacraments, praying the rosary and doing other Catholic devotions like Stations of the Cross, first Saturdays and brown scapular of Lady of Mount Carmel. We do this by encouraging vocations to the priesthood and religious life and by reaching out in love and mercy to our brothers and sisters who need us via corporal and spiritual works of mercy. In all, we stand in fidelity to the Magisterium. *Cum ecclesia sentire* is our watchword. Regarding the Commandments of the Most High, we do not pick and choose. We embrace them all for they are recipes for authenticity and happiness here and hereafter. He made us for Himself and we are restless until we rest in Him.

St Augustine, the great saint from the Motherland, summed our sentiments of worship and love for the Most High, who made us for himself in these words:

“Late have I loved you, O Beauty ever ancient, ever new, late have I loved you! You were within me, but I was outside, and it was there that I searched for you... You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness. You flashed, you shone, and you dispelled my blindness. You breathed your fragrance on me; I drew in breath and now I pant for you. I have tasted you, now I hunger and thirst for more. You touched me, and I burned for your peace” ( St Augustine, Confessions, 10.27.1)

The same great saint mentioned that he who sings well prays twice. We have a fantastic and legendary choir that helps us to lift up our hearts, minds and souls to the Lord when we worship. Anytime you worship with us, your prayers are doubled.

So, brethren, now let us sing Alleluia, not in the enjoyment of heavenly rest, but to sweeten our toil. Sing as travelers sing along the road: but keep on walking. Solace your toil by singing – do not yield idleness. Sing but keep on walking. What do I mean by walking? I mean, press on from good to better (St Augustine, Let us sing Alleluia in praise to the good God who delivers us from evil, Sermon 256, 1.2.3 Office of the Reading, Saturday, Week 34 of the Year ).

“Let us be concerned for one another, encouraging one another to show love and to do good” (Hebrew 10:24). “The grace of God has appeared, saving all and training us to reject godless ways and worldly desires and to live temperately, justly, and devoutly in this age, as we await the blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of the great God and our savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to deliver us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for himself a people as his own, eager to do what is good” ( Titus 2:12-14).

May I conclude this Welcome Page to our website by the beautiful prayer penned by the St Anselm: “Teach me to seek you, and when I seek you show yourself to me, for I cannot seek you unless you teach me, nor can I find you unless you show yourself to me. Let me seek you in desiring you and desire

you in seeking you, find you in loving you and love you in finding you.” Amen.

Yours in Christ,

Father Francis Chiawa

Pastor, St Augustine Catholic Church, Memphis TN

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