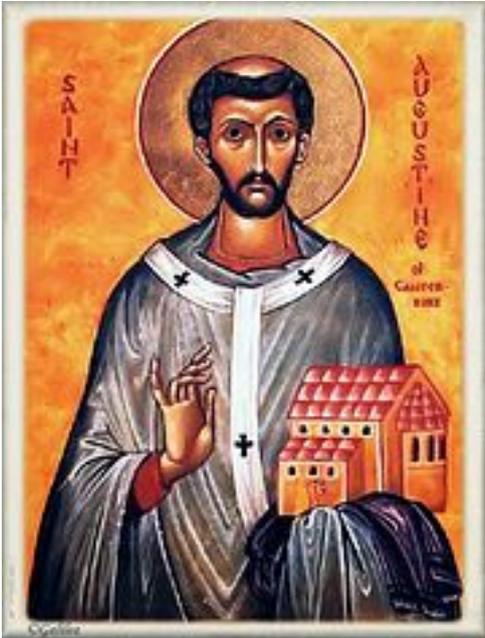


Contemplative Space Day

PRAYING WITH AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY



The day is specifically for clergy and other church leaders.

We reflect on four key turning-points as we follow in Augustine's footsteps - his calling in accepting Pope Gregory's mission to Kent; his 'false start' and journey through C6th Francia; his arrival and encounter with the Anglo-Saxon King, and Ethelbert's baptism after nine days of prayer; and how his legacy might help us pray and reflect on our own leadership today.

Outline for our day

9.30 on	Arrival, Registration, Tea/Coffee
10.00	Welcome and introductions
10.15	First Reflection - Calling

10.15 **Calling**

Augustine as Prior of S.Andrew's Monastery in Rome.

His 'call' and his 'sending' by Pope Gregory.

Why in 596? (Conditions in Rome (Floods, Plague, famine, Siege); the Lombards, all hastened the accelerating decline of Rome and its place in Western Catholicism.

This gave and urgency to Gregory's missionary impulse, who believed that the Last Days would arrive when the last pagan nation came into the Christian fold – and that meant the Anglo-Saxons of Kent (the Angli)

Augustine as Leader. He was Prior of Gregory's monastery in Rome, in a crucial but 2ndary role, in a stable, rooted well-ordered community. He also had experience in the hugely challenging support needed for the ever-increasing poor who flooded into the city to escape from marauding Lombard warriors. Now Augustine would be thrust out on the sea, the rivers, and the open road, in a very different leadership challenge, in this the first 'travelling monastery' to be launched from Roman soil.

This wasn't a free-for-all jaunt in pursuit of adventure or fortune, open to whoever wanted to come, but for carefully chosen, skilled members of the expedition. They were a handful of monks, and a fist-full of lay brothers who worked the estate, who were selected for their practical skills that would be useful for the mission in Canterbury. The numbered roughly 6 monks and 14 lay brothers, chosen for their youth and fitness for the long arduous journey that lay ahead for the next 9 months.

But, on the positive side, the monks' monastic life of prayer and rhythm of work at St. Andrew's laid the foundations for a coherent and responsible community, practised in the monastic disciplines they would need to preserve their unity on the way to England.

Of crucial importance was Queen Bertha's own request for a mission to the Kingdom of Kent to evangelise the nation. She had long awaited the arrival of a mission in Kent to bring the Gospel to her pagan people. For Queen Bertha, this would not be 'The End', but the beginning.

10.40 Quiet space for personal reflection

A Reflective Prayer

- 'Obey your superior' (Rule of Augustine of Hippo). Who do you consider to have oversight *over you*? Who keeps you accountable? For what?
- Who do *you* serve as your 'superior'? What 'power' do *you* exercise in relation to others in ministry? In the congregation?
- How do you exercise 'ready and loving obedience' in regard to others?
- Write a prayer that sums up what your reflection has revealed to you.

11.10 Tea / Coffee available in the Hall

11.10 Second Reflection – Crisis in Francia