



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

SPRING 2008

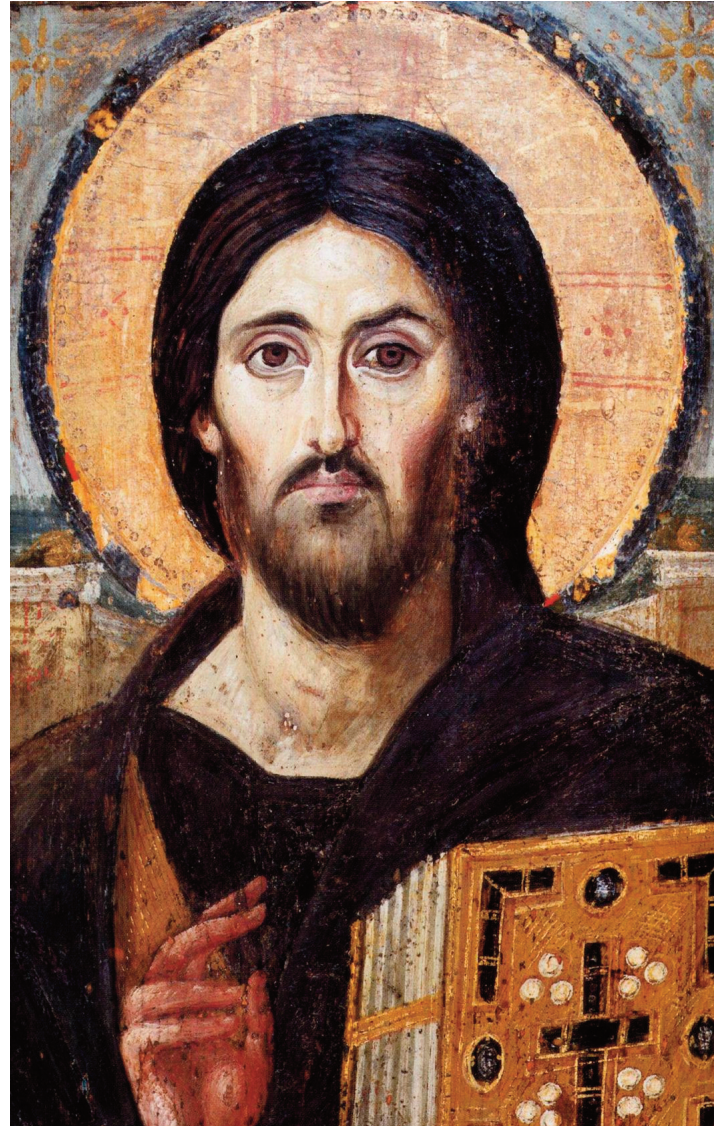
Beauty and Education

The American theologian **David B. Hart** has written that Christian thought must remain immovably fixed alongside Christ, in his irreducible particularity. Precisely insofar as the temper of 'postmodernism' runs against confidence in universal truths of reason, postmodern thought confirms theology in its original condition: that of a story thoroughly dependent upon a sequence of historical events to which the only access is the report and practice of believers, a story whose truthfulness may be urged – even enacted – but never simply **proved by reason**.

What Christian thought offers the world is not a set of rational arguments that force assent from others, leaving them at a loss for words; rather it stands before the world principally with the story it tells concerning God and creation, the form of Christ, the loveliness of the practice of Christian charity,.... Making its appeal first to **the eye and the heart**, as the only way it may 'command' assent, the Church cannot separate truth from rhetoric or from **beauty**.

At Augustine College this is what we hope to encourage by **telling of the lives and thoughts of those who made our world what it is** – some of them saints and others definitely not. The Christian contribution presents lives that **challenge the world with their loveliness**. I hope that all of you know those who carry **"the fragrance of Christ"** with them. This is what our world desperately needs: not the hubris that believes we can fix everything but the knowledge of the One "whose property is always to have mercy" (to cite the words of Cranmer) and who is the ultimate judge and sustainer of the world and of us.

The emphasis that David Hart places on beauty – particularly **the beauty of Christ** – is a much needed corrective to our project-driven churches. Without realizing it we have allowed the Enemy to establish an outpost inside our heads; very often we worship our own abilities, forgetting that what they achieve is done **"not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord"** (Zechariah 4).



This picture from the 6th C. is possibly the oldest panel painting of Christ, spared from the destruction of the iconoclastic period in the safety of St. Catherine's monastery, Sinai

It is my hope that the students of Augustine College – following a programme that in September was perhaps not obviously relevant to their world but that has now, I suspect, taken on a rather different appearance – might be encouraged by what they are experiencing at the College to live a life dedicated solely to the glory of God – as per the "S.D.G." (*Soli Deo Gloria*) that Bach inscribed on so many of his manuscripts.

John Patrick | President

2007/08 STUDENTS

Our 11th academic year continues as we approach Reading Week. Instead of speaking for our students it is not a bad idea to let them report.

"If people could know in advance the potential Augustine has to change them, the school would be bursting at the seams. The classes at Augustine have shown me more errors in my thinking about God, goodness, and life than in my seven years of higher education. Finding people who are both spiritually vital and intellectually rigorous is a difficult task, but the students and faculty here have defied all odds. While the courses are demanding, I love doing the work. It doesn't feel like drudgery to me, as my biology classes did, and the material is infinitely more useful. The school has given me a new interest in art, a sense of Western history, and a theological makeover. I am looking forward to the rest of the semester!" – **Jenny Holmes**, Medical student, UTSW Dallas, Texas.

This year's **Restless Hearts' Cafe** has just concluded **February 5th** in unforgettable fashion. There is no way to convey to readers the nature of this 'spectacle' (the French word seems the appropriate one) – but who can resist trying. A report on a student project conducted since the start of the year ("literally constantly," sometimes exclusive of all other activity) – the growing of a moustache (not quite 'flourishing' yet). Some heavy-duty hip-hop dance moves (the energy is still hanging in the air). An Anglican sermon gone terribly wrong. A clinic visit to cure 'the problem' of Augustine College syndrome. Some real artistry in music. Poetic and literary originals. – One of the longest Cafés in recollection, but the time seemed to get shorter as the evening wore on.

EVENTS

Coming up soon is our **2008 Weston Lecture March 7th, 7:30 p.m.**, at **St. Paul University Auditorium**. This year our lecturer is **Dr. Craig Gay**, Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at Regent College in Vancouver. The title of this year's lecture is **Dialogue: The Heart that Beats at the Centre of Life**. Prof. Gay argues that human language is not a mere tool, an instrument of communication. Instrumentality is secondary to the world that language brings forth, and at the centre of that world is *dialogue*, the social reality of the 'you' implied in all speech. Dialogue, "the medium of spirituality," is implicit in the very existence of language, unique to man alone. The implications of this fact are of course profound.

Prof. Gay is the author of *Cash Values: The Value of Money the Nature of Worth* (2003), in which he asked whether the apparent global triumph of capitalism threatens a "market totalitarianism." Prof. Gay responds by urging readers to assert other than "cash values" to free us from control by the market system and bring that system in hand. He has

also written *The Way of the (Modern) World, or, Why It's Tempting to Live as if God Doesn't Exist* (1998).

The Weston Lecture is a tradition inaugurated through the generous support of George Weston Limited. It has presented our current class, returning alumni, and members of the public with a brilliant example of how faith and reason may be united in a way that each strengthens the other.

2008 SUMMER CONFERENCE

This year's Augustine College **Summer Conference** (Module VII in our **Roots of Modern Medicine** series), will take place **June 1–7** on the topic, **Technology and Life**.

The focus of this year's conference is explained by **Dr. John Patrick** in the words of Václav Havel: "We should by now be aware that technology, that child of modern science, which in turn is a child of modern metaphysics, is out of humanity's control: it has ceased to serve us and now encourages us to participate in the preparation of our destruction. Furthermore, humanity can find no way out: we have no reasonable idea, no visible faith, and even less of a political solution to help bring things back under human control. We look on helplessly as that heartless machine that we have created engulfs us, tearing us away from our natural affiliations, just as it removes us from the experience of Being and casts us into the world of 'Existences'."

"Although Havel was writing about life under Marxism he was well aware that his ideas apply to Western democracy too; certainly the 'health care industry' exemplifies these same problems. In this conference we will look at the rise of applied science, particularly in medicine, as part of the overall, stunning growth of scientific knowledge. 'Scientism' also appears, manifest in countless ways. Our ethics, our literature, and our arts show the same consequence of replacing God with rationalism, instrumentality, and individualism. Only in physics is a less mechanistic understanding beginning to appear."

Topics of the Conference sessions will include **The Technology Imperative and Depersonalization, Quantum Physics: Reason for Humility in Science, Utilitarianism and Medicine, Orthodoxy and Medicine, Reality and Mystery in the Suffering Patient, Ministering to the Diseased in Dostoyevsky and Chesterton, Medical Ethics 2008, Marxism: The Destruction of the Human Being, and The New Man in Art of the Early 20th Century**.

The Conference will include a visit to a new exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada, titled *The 1930s: The Making of 'The New Man,'* which brings together over 200 works of art (including work by Dalí, Picasso, Kandinsky, Ernst, Grant Wood, Walker Evans) that explore the link between art and biology at a time when, notes the museum, "biology became a guiding and often destructive force."



Book of the Semester discussion of Augustine's *Confessions*

ADMINISTRATION NEWS

Among the new initiatives prompted by entering our second decade of operations Augustine College has just created the new position of Development Officer, to which we welcome **the Rev. Peter Jardine**. The Rev. Jardine serves as Curate at the Parish of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Ottawa (in the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada), and has had a long association with the Voice of the Martyrs, which works for the support of the persecuted Church worldwide. He has been involved in numerous applications for grants from Canadian and international organisations. We are delighted to have him and look forward to seeing his energy and entrepreneurial expertise turned to the work of this College.

One of his first initiatives is to develop a network of **Augustine College 'ambassadors'** (a successful component in the growth of the Voice of the Martyrs). These ambassadors for the College would be volunteers located across North America who received training to speak on behalf of the College to church groups, Bible-study groups, or any Christian group that might ask for a talk. The Ambassadors would be equipped with information kits and speaking notes, and their efforts co-ordinated by the Development Officer, who would track these talks and ask for prayers to be offered ahead of each one. We encourage anyone who wishes to learn more about this project to contact us.

AFAC

The **American Friends of Augustine College**, has now received approval for 501(c)(3) status with the Internal Revenue Service, making it a registered charitable organization in the United States. **Ross Betts** of Pittsburgh, Pa., **Stephen Griggs** of Austin, Tex.,

Rob Marlow of Tempe, Ariz., and **Mike Peil** of Peoria, Ill., have agreed to lead the organization, whose goal will be to assist in the recruitment of US students and to provide material support for Augustine College. For more on its activities, consult the AFAC website, now up at amfriendsaugustine.org.

ALUMNI NEWS

Elisabeth Batchelder (2003), now married to Matt Akers, has passed her bar exams and begun her legal career as a clerk, working first for Judge Swaby and then with Judge Adams in the United States District Court, clawing her way up the learning curve. Her husband Matt received his Masters of Philosophy and is now writing a dissertation on the 17th-century poet/priest Thomas Traherne (whom any poetry lover is highly encouraged to get to know – truly one of the great poets).

Chelsea Miller (2005) writes, "I'm in my final semester at The King's College in New York, working towards my BA in Politics, Philosophy, and Economics. The college is only about ten years old in its Manhattan version. I've enjoyed my classes for the most part – some of the professors here are truly incredible! I graduate in May and hope to get a job in an urban design office as I'm interested in urban planning. Cass and I have seen each other for every American Thanksgiving since Augustine! It is a nice tradition that I hope will outlast our college years. Ilona was in NY two years ago, so we had tea together again and shared so many memories! Augustine College was such a distinctive year for all of us; sharing memories and stories with anyone from my year there is really enlivening – because, really, who else can understand that time? Ottawa and Augustine are often on my mind."

Roz Brain (2006) has arrived in Nepal to start work as Pastoral Carer for International Nepal Fellowship, "a Christian mission called by God to serve Nepali people" through health and development work and service in and to Nepali churches. Roz will offer support to INF members scattered throughout Nepal and who often face physical hardship and isolation. She is now undergoing four months language and cultural training in Pokhara before moving to Kathmandu. She asks for our prayers – for support and guidance and the understanding of her new mission. "I am both daunted and excited by the challenges ... and keenly aware that I am not 'up to' them all, but that I do not go alone. My God is able to do more than I am and I would not go if I did not believe He can and will." – Good on ya Roz! We stand behind you!

Ruth Rosentrater (2007) has settled into a position at State University of New York at Oswego where she is Assistant Athletic Director for Marketing and Promotions and also assistant coach for volleyball.

WORTH READING

We refer you to the October 2007 issue of *Touchstone* magazine for an excellent article by **David Lyle Jeffrey**, one of the founders of Augustine College, titled **“The Pearl of Great Wisdom: The Deep and Abiding Biblical Roots of Western Liberal Education.”** Also to a fine article by **Ross Betts** of our own AFAC (see above) on Darwinism and purpose in the teaching of science, just published by *Classical Education Quarterly* and available on the College website: **“Keeping Science in Context: The Challenge for the Christian Educator.”**

OUR STORY, TOLD IN FINANCE

People sometimes ask us how the College runs financially. Invariably they assume that we operate in the way many colleges and private schools do: on the basis of a substantial founding grant that has permitted the purchase of property, or with the receipt of an endowment to sustain faculty and administrative salaries, etc. They are usually surprised – sometimes they are alarmed – to hear the reality.

Augustine College is a non-profit institution that owns no property and has no salaried faculty and only two salaried employees (all our personnel being sustained by incomes or stipends that are very modest compared to the norm). We run on no endowment and have no ‘nest egg’ to secure a long-term or even middle-term future. In our first decade we were blessed with a cushion of corporate support, in part continuing today (we express our ongoing gratitude to the Spaenaur corporation for its generous gifts). The source of most of our finances, however, is individual donors and our own teaching operations (tuition from the academic programme and fees from the Summer Conference).

Each year we must hit anew the financial target that will allow us to run for one more year. And each year we have done so – though it has sometimes seemed we would not make it. Augustine College has proved a financial success.

It is a financial success by the terms in which we have been taught, by our experience at the College, to measure success: the terms more of the early church than the ivy league. No business model has ever been written that secured financing on the basis of a concrete commitment from the Holy Spirit; a more ridiculous document is hard to imagine. Yet we have operated as if we had just such support.

Those who see what the College does seem convinced that we are doing the work of the Lord, never possible without the support of the Spirit. (That is hardly to say that we are faultless: **“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves”** – 1 John 1:8.) Each year more people discover us and more support us, which is exactly how the early Church grew (Paul having placed no ads and dispatched no mailers). Slowly and steadily we are growing – not without setbacks, yet we are confident in the future. **“If our hearts do not**

condemn us, we have confidence before God” (1 John 3:28), and Augustine College is a place small enough that we can say, accurately, that we search our hearts to please the Lord. (The administration of large corporate universities knows nothing, nor attempts to know, about the hearts of its personnel but that is not the case at a college the size of this, which we consider optimal for the task of teaching.)

We are also aware that there is more that a college of this nature might do. The mission of this College has always been **to educate Christians in the wealth of their own intellectual tradition** and in the most objective way possible **to tell the story of the ‘development’ from the ancient world (ever conscious of God) to the world populated by the self-asserting ‘hero’ of modern times** – a character that sometimes professes to be himself a follower of Christ.

Thus far our objective has been to teach young Christians, but we would like to expand to teach **adults unable to follow the Augustine College programme**, especially *alumni* far from Ottawa, *teachers and youth pastors*, and *Christian professionals* who face (in their work as physicians, lawyers, etc.) the many obstructions of modern thought. We are ready to go, with projects on the shelf for these new initiatives – but we do not yet have the resources to carry them out.

We continue in confidence, buoyed up by the grace of the Holy Spirit. And we offer our heartfelt thanks to all who have contributed to what we do in any way and look forward to what the Lord may yet have in store for us.

Would you like to share in our ministry?

You do not have to live in Ottawa or give money to do so.

- Augustine College needs an alumnus who would like to take charge of our alumni web page.
- Augustine College needs a coordinator to develop connections with both the home-school and the classical Christian education network.
- Augustine College students need homes away from home, good discussion, good food, and listening ears.
- Augustine College house needs someone to see to maintenance throughout the year.

There are many ways to lend a hand. Please let us know if you would like to help.

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