

## **We Went to His Party -- Now Who Was That Guy?**

Augustine of Hippo, patron saint of our parish, is held up today as creator of the spirit that defines the Christian church in the Western World. Of all the theologians of the centuries, many scholars think only St. Paul has been more influential.

As he struggled toward an understanding of God, Augustine relied on his faith. He knew that "faith" is what is achieved by believing scripture and authority; but "understanding" is the knowledge of God that will come in the next life. "Since it is God we are speaking of, you do not understand it. If you could understand it, it would not be God."

Augustine dictated his letters and articles to relays of secretaries, often late into the night. But at this time in history (4th century), there were no Christian libraries or established ways of distributing books. Augustine understood that a single copy of the most brilliant book was far less influential than widely distributed copies of less distinguished books. So he hired teams of men to copy his manuscripts which were then sent off to friends and other scholars.

We know Augustine so intimately today because of his book *Confessions*, meaning The Testimony – as in testifying to God, giving witness to the Lord. *Confessions* is the diary of his journey to discover God. That God that Augustine found was a personal God, a concept radical in his time but taken for granted today. "Thou hast made us for thyself," he tells God, "and our hearts are restless till they rest in thee!"

*Editorial by Tom Krug*

### **Uh Oh, Paint's Coming**

Nothing may be as difficult for a group as reaching agreement on color.

We certainly do not even have an agreeable vocabulary to discuss it. Red, cerise, vermilion, barn red, fire engine red, episcopal red, blood red, beet red ... you see?

Do you even see what I see? How can we know for sure?

Since every single one of us has an opinion and, apparently, a divine right to have our opinion heard, we can have lots of discussion about colors, shades, tints and hues. I'm sure that some people do not like the color of Coke cans, or Mr. Clean, or Ford Thunderbirds, or ...whatever.

Which brings us to paint. As in wall colors. And ceilings. To freshen is to change and to change is to invite dispute. Somehow when the sanctuary and the church hall get their overdue cheering up with rollers and brushes and dropcloths and masking tape, someone or some select group will choose colors. They will seek expert, trained opinion, thumb through hundreds of swatches, hold 'em up to other items, then they will decide "there, it's that one." And it is absolutely guaranteed that some will say "ugh." Others might venture "It's okay I guess." A few will rave on. That's the way it has to be.

Taste in anything is disputable and what is exquisite for one is ghastly to another. And both sides will insist they are not wrong! So how shall we settle a dispute over church color? Voting's no good: almost nobody's pleased with "the majority's opinion." So let's get an authority in here, an artiste, someone with a gift! And that's what has been done. Formal education, training, experience – a consultant! Otherwise it's pandemonium.

### **Odds 'n Ends** *continued*

**and door trim** is taking a bit longer than expected. There is more cabinetry involved in adapting pieces to the altered way St. Augustine's is applying the windows salvaged from another church.

Did you note the new **fence and gate** erected on the east side of the church property? That has been a **Bobby Allen** project from the beginning. He was able to adapt the materials from those used around air conditioning compressors at Holy Cross.

You could turn this into a **game** with prizes, like the one found in the back of current LIFE magazines: see if you can detect all the changes made in your church surroundings in the past 90 days. No prizes here, but the list of right answers is **pretty amazing**. Some changes of course are small, but others, like the sanctuary wall, are significant. And the list will keep growing for months to come.

"**Our Anniversary Song**," with lyrics penned by our **Shirley Davis**, was sung twice at last night's party – with "75 years" changed to "78." We figure this piece, to the tune of "Blessed Assurance," has been sung by this congregation on at least seven occasions, and it still sounds good.

*"... more\* from St. Augustine's," is for members and friends of a courageous Episcopal Church in south St. Petersburg. This publication aims to be more than a weekly newsletter: it is about recognition, spiritual attitude, nixing hearsay and unashamed cheerleading. Members Judy and Tom Krug are co-editors; Mordecai Walker is co-founder. Some 65 parishioners are essential to the project.*