

ST. AUGUSTINE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES



Saint Augustine teaching. Fresco by Benozzo Gozzoli in San Gimignano, Roma (1240-1290)

The Confessions, Augustine's masterpiece, has influenced Christian spirituality for 1600 years. He wrote it to give testimony of his intimate pilgrimage in search of God. The narrative describes a progressive ascent; "an exercise" maintained by the inner restlessness that human beings experience in their search for truth and happiness. The times in which we live, marked by a massive servitude of cultural idols, a divisive and violent clash of ideologies, the burden of insatiable ambitions have submerged our human experience in a dense fog of inner restlessness and dispersion. More than ever there is an imperative to recover a coherent and transcendent vision of life, beginning with our own personal predicament.

On such critical matter **Augustine** emerges as **spiritual master** with a voice that resonates convincingly in our own time. His clear, direct language and his deep knowledge of the human condition establish a strong empathic link with the readers that facilitate the assimilation of his spiritual teachings. The classic *Confessions*, with its capacity to reflect the truth and transform human experience, is a point of encounter for all of us where we can learn something about ourselves and about God as we respond to the call of his 'hidden providence'. The spiritual exercises embedded in the work optimally focus our attention and give us an opportunity for personal and communal transformation.

Fr. Andrés G. Niño, OSA, Ph.D.

[Group gathers Tuesdays 7-8 pm. St Mary's Lower Chapel]