

**APRIL 24**  
**The Conversion of Saint Augustine**  
**BISHOP AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH**  
**AS A VOTIVE OFFICE**

When Augustine came to Milan to teach rhetoric, he was often present at the sermons of Saint Ambrose, bishop of that see. Thus it happened that he gradually cooled towards the sect of the Manichees (by whose errors he had once been led astray) and turned towards reading the sacred books, especially the epistles of the apostle Paul. Spurning the good life of this world, he became eager to reach true salvation. When the wine-harvest holidays arrived, therefore, he withdrew from the schools to a town called Cassiacum with his mother Monica and several friends. Having spent several months there in sacred reading, meditation and prayer, he returned to Milan, and on this day, as tradition has it, in the year 387 he was baptised by Saint Ambrose. Monica was full of joy at his conversion.

**INVITATORY**

*Ant.* Let us praise God for the conversion of holy father Augustine, alleluia.

*Invitatory psalm, as in the Ordinary.*

**OFFICE OF READINGS**

**Hymn**

*De profundis tenebrarum*

**O**ut of gloomy depths this morning  
light upon the world is dawning:  
sparkling clear it shines today.

Once an instrument of error  
Saint Augustine now brings honour,  
and adorns the Church of God.

When the Word of God he heeded,  
all his errors he conceded,  
and approached Baptismal grace.

Errors which he once protected,  
now in writings are rejected,  
in his speech abandoned too!

Building faith, and virtues forming,  
with his word he slays appalling  
travesties of sacred law.

With his living voice he preaches  
how God's doctrine ever reaches  
and lights up the heart of man.

All who call him 'Father' may come,  
by his teachings, to their true home:  
glory of the Trinity! Amen.

## Second Reading

From the Confessions of Saint Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

VIII: 1, 5, 8, 12; IX: 6 *passim*.

### *Put on the Lord Jesus*

Let me, O God, remember with thanks to You and confess Your mercies upon me.

I longed for You, but I was bound not with the iron of another's chains, but by my own iron will. The new will, which I now began to have, by which I willed to worship You freely, and to enjoy You, O God, the only certain Joy, was not yet strong enough to overcome that earlier will, rooted deep though the years. My two wills, one old, one new, one carnal, one spiritual, were in conflict, and in their conflict wasted my soul.

In the midst of that great tumult of my inner dwelling place, I turned upon Alypius, wild in look and troubled in mind, crying out: "What is wrong with us? What is this that you have heard? The unlearned arise and take heaven by force, and here are we with our learning, stuck fast in flesh and blood!" These words, and more of the same sort I uttered, then the violence of my feeling tore me from him, while he stood staring at me thunderstruck.

There was a garden attached to our lodging; to this garden the storm in my breast somehow brought me. When my most searching scrutiny had drawn up all my vileness from the secret depths of my soul and heaped it in my heart's sight, a mighty storm, arose in me, bringing a mighty rain of tears.

And suddenly I heard a voice from some nearby house, a boy's voice or a girl's voice, I do not know: but it was a sort of sing-song, repeated again and again, "Take and read, take and read." I ceased weeping and immediately began to search my mind most carefully as to whether children were accustomed to chant these words in any kind of game, and I could not remember that I had ever heard any such thing. Damming back the flood of my tears I arose, interpreting the incident as quite certainly a divine command to open my book of Scripture and read the passage at which I should open.

So I was moved to return to the place where Alypius was sitting, for I had put down the Apostle's book there when I arose. I snatched it up, opened it and in silence read the passage upon which my eyes first fell: *Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and enmity, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences*. I had no wish to read further, and no need. For in that instant, with the very ending of the sentence, it was as though a light of utter confidence shone in all my heart, and all the darkness of uncertainty vanished away.

When the time had come to give in my name for baptism, we left the country and returned to Milan. Alypius had decided to be born again in You at the same time, for he was already endowed with the humility that Your sacraments require. We were baptised, and all anxiety as to our past life fled away.

## Responsory

- R. I will love you \* and love itself will make you present to me, alleluia.  
V. Let love itself be the consummation of all my works, \* and love itself ...

## Morning Prayer

### Hymn

*Any appropriate hymn may be sung. When chant is used, the hymn 'Fulget in caelis celebris sacerdos' may be sung.*

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*Where celebrated with the grade of a feast:*

- Ant. 1. O eternal truth and true charity and cherished eternity: I cry out to you day and night, alleluia.  
Ant. 2. Behold, heaven and earth and all that is in them everywhere instruct me that I should love you, alleluia.  
Ant. 3. Praise the Lord with tongue and life, with mouth and heart, with habits and voices, alleluia.
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### Short reading

**Ez 11: 17 – 21**

The Lord God says this: 'I will gather you together from the peoples, I will bring you all back from the countries where you have been scattered and I will give you the land of Israel. They will come and will purge it of all the horrors and the filthy practices. I will give them a single heart and I will put a new spirit in them; I will remove the heart of stone from their bodies and give them a heart of flesh instead, so that they will keep my laws and respect my observances and put them into practice. Then they shall be my people and I will be their God.'

### Short Responsory

℟. Your love is my weight; I am set on fire in your house, and borne upwards, \* Alleluia, alleluia. ℣. I am set on fire with the lifting up of my heart, singing your song. \* Alleluia, alleluia. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. ℟. Your love is my weight...

### Benedictus antiphon

Augustine wept during the hymns and canticles, deeply moved by the sweet-sounding voices of the Church, alleluia.

## **Intercessions**

Let us lovingly call upon God, who bestowed his grace on Blessed Augustine, so that, with the shadows of error dispersed, he cleaved to God alone with his whole heart.

*Make us holy, for you are holy.*

Lord, who tore open the heart of Blessed Augustine with your love,

– pour into us true repentance for our sins, and set our hearts on fire with the flame of your love.

Lord, who never cease to call back to yourself your children who wander in the land of illusions,

– through our ministry, cause many souls to come to share in your pardon and mercy.

Lord, who always want your Church to shine before the world without spot or wrinkle:

– allow us to work together so that the renewal of the apostolic life may advance the Church itself.

Lord, who pour out your benefits on those who seek you with a sincere heart,

– grant that we may preserve faithfully the charism of those who, under your inspiration, instituted our form of life, to the glory of your name.

## **Collect**

God,

who, by ineffable providence, led Blessed Augustine

from the shadows of error

to the light of Gospel truth,

grant us, we pray,

that we who venerate his conversion today

may, by his prayers,

have our deeds changed for the better.

Through our Lord.

## EVENING PRAYER

### Hymn

*Any appropriate hymn may be sung.*

**G**reat Augustine, father holy,  
Give support to this our plea ;  
By this cry to the Creator  
See that we may pleasing be;  
And, O prelates' greatest glory,  
Guide your flock all peacefully.

You loved well the counselled poorness,  
Praised by Poor, their praise you earn;  
You upheld the teaching truthful,  
Loved by all who truth discern;  
Scripture, made as honey morsels,  
You explain that we may learn.

What before was dark and hidden,  
Clear as light to us you make;  
From the teaching of the Saviour,  
Bread delightful, then, you break;  
And the drink you serve life-giving,  
From the psalms as nectar take.

Of the life and way of clerics,  
That most holy rule you write;  
Those who love it and obey it,  
Take the royal way of light;  
And beneath your holy guidance,  
Reach, in heaven, their home so bright.

To the King of kings, salvation,  
Life and power and glory be;  
To the Trinity be honour,  
Praise for all eternity,  
And in heaven to all the blessed,  
May he join us, graciously. Amen.

### Psalmody

*Where celebrated as a feast, psalms and canticle from the Common of Pastors; otherwise, these antiphons may be used with the ferial psalms.*

*Ant. 1* For me you are the door to your sheep, alleluia.

*Ant. 2* I will snatch up to your love all those united to me, alleluia.

*Ant. 3* O bright and beautiful day, knowing no evening, having no sunset, on which I shall hear the voice of praise, alleluia!

### Short Reading

**Js 3: 17-18**

The wisdom which comes from above is marked chiefly indeed by its purity, but also by its peacefulness; it is courteous and ready to be convinced, always taking the better part; it carries mercy with it, and a harvest of all that is good; it is uncensorious and without affectation. Peace is the seed-ground of holiness, and those who make peace will win its harvest.

## Short Responsory

**R.** I will love you, and love itself will make you present to me. \* Alleluia, alleluia.  
**V.** Let love itself be the consummation of all my works. \* Alleluia, alleluia. **V.** Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. **R.** I will love you, and love itself will make you present to me. \* Alleluia, alleluia.

## Magnificat antiphon

Remain in love, until what I have promised has come, and sorrow will pass away and praise alone will replace it, alleluia.

## Intercessions

Before the end of the day, let us humbly make our supplications to Christ, the true and eternal high priest, praying: — Lord, be mindful of your flock.

Lord, who gave Blessed Augustine the grace to combine the sacred ministry with the profession of a more perfect way of life, — make us, too, your witnesses in the world.

Lord, who taught the outstanding example of perfection and showed it by your way of living, — stir up many who, led by your grace, may follow you more closely and may persevere in their holy intention.

Lord, who are the hope and comfort of the afflicted, — graciously raise up and make happy our brothers and sisters tormented by illness, depressed in spirit or suffering from old age.

Lord, who are the King for whom all are alive, — mercifully bring our deceased brothers and sisters to a place of light and peace.

## Collect

God,  
who by ineffable providence led Blessed Augustine  
from the shadows of error  
to the light of Gospel truth,  
grant us, we pray,  
that we who venerate his conversion today  
may, by his prayers,  
have our deeds changed for the better.  
Through our Lord.