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St. Augustine of Hippo

“The purpose of all wars, is peace.” Augustine was born on 13 November 354, in Thagaste, Numidia, a very cultural city located in North Africa. His mother was St. Monica, an ardent Catholic, and his father was a rich pagan man who later converted to Catholicism soon before his death. Although St. Augustine’s mother was Catholic, for some reason Augustine was never baptized. St. Augustine's family name was Aurelius. His family were known as Berbers, an indigenous group that originated specifically in North Africa, although the family acted as Romans because they only spoke Latin.

When St. Augustine turned eleven, his parents had him attend a school in Madaurus. There, he was taught Latin Literature but also was taught the pagan beliefs and practices of the area. One day, Augustine and some of his friends decided to steal some fruit from another’s field. He did not steal it for any particular reason except for the reason that he was not allowed to take the fruit. This was known as his first, “insight into the nature of sin ^[1].” When he was seventeen, a charitable neighbor, Romanianus, helped him attend school at Carthage, the capital of a large dominating nation.

Augustine taught rhetoric for one year in Thagaste starting in 373. When Augustine turned nineteen he married a young woman and lived with her for fifteen years. She bore him one son, Adeotadus, whom he loved but was known as the “son of his sin” because Augustine had not practiced chastity and joined a group when he was younger that did not practice chastity either. Augustine had been a Manichaeon, a heresy implemented by a Persian named Mani,

Manes, Manichaeus. Manichaeism taught that the soul was from the good of God and the body came from the evil of the devil so there was always a conflict between the two^[2]. The heresy also claimed to be able to explain the mysteries of the Catholic Church. Meanwhile, his mother had been praying that he be baptized and return to the church. Eventually his mother's prayer was answered when he heard a voice saying, "take up and read," so he read the scriptures and he along with his son, Adeotadus, was baptized by St. Ambrose of Milan. After his baptism, his mother died and so did his son. Augustine sold all his belongings in Africa and donated all the money to those who needed it. He also built a monastery out of his house.

In the year 392 Augustine left the monastery and was ordained a priest in Hippo Regius, a Roman, Berber, and Phoenician city. He was later installed as Coadjutor Bishop of Hippo and would help the bishop of Hippo until his death shortly after. Augustine would then be installed as his successor. Augustine taught against and defeated many heresies such as Manichaeism. He wrote an autobiography called *The Confessions*. Augustine also taught on many aspects of life. For example, Christian anthropology, which is, "the innate or constitution of the human known as the nature of mankind,^[3]" meaning that it is the study in a Christian aspect of the composition of man in which he taught that the human being was the perfect unity of two substances: soul and body^[1], in Slavery he taught that God "did not intend that this rational, who was made in his image, should have dominion over anything but the irrational creation – not man over man, but man over the beasts^[1]." His teachings on slavery meant that man should not have charge over any other human created in the likeness of God except for the creatures in which he gave to man to take charge over, and he also taught on free will saying that free will was not intended for sin^[1].

St. Augustine remained the Bishop of Hippo until his death on the thirteenth of November in 430, at the age of seventy-five. He was canonized by popular acclamation, so there never was any official processes for Augustine's canonization. St. Augustine is a preeminent Doctor of the Church, a philosopher, a theologian, and a patron saint of brewers, printers, theologians, sore eyes, as well as the cities and dioceses Bridgeport, Connecticut; Cagayan de Oro, Philippines; and San Agustin, Isabel.

In October of 1695, a box of bones and skull were discovered in a church. There was much dispute but people believed those bones to be the bones of St. Augustine. Eventually the matter was handed by Pope Benedict XIII to the Bishop of Pavia to make a decision on the bones. Eventually he decided that in his opinion, they were the bones of Saint Augustine ^[1]. I can be virtuous by applying St. Augustine's virtues of obedience and charity to my life.

Bibliography

- 1) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Augustine_of_Hippo
- 2) <http://catholicsaints.info/manichaeism/>
- 3) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_anthropology