



AUGUSTINIAN (AFA) Federation of Africa

Newsletter

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FR FARRELL: THE NEW PRIOR GENERAL OF THE ORDER OF ST AUGUSTINE

It was another historic moment for the Order of St Augustine as the delegates and definitors of the different circumscriptions of the Order across the world gathered in the premises of the Augustinian Curia Generale in Rome for the 188th Ordinary General Chapter of the Order. The Ordinary General Chapter of the Order is a significant event in the life of the Order of St Augustine that takes place once in every 6 years to elect new leaders and to set a direction for the Order. In the evening of Monday 1st September, 2025 the Son of Augustine and our Holy Father Pope Leo XIV presided at the Solemn Liturgical Celebration of the Mass of the Holy Spirit at the Basilica of St Augustine in Rome to declare this significant gathering open.

Highlight of the Ordinary General Chapter was the **Election and Inauguration** of the Most Rev. Fr. Joseph Farrell, OSA as the 98th Prior General of the Order. Fr. Joseph Farrell is affiliated to the Augustinian Province of St

Thomas of Villanova in The United States of America. Until now, Fr. Farrell served as the Vicar General of the Order and in significant commissions of the Order through which he assisted



his predecessor Most Rev. Alejandro Moral Anton in managing the affairs of the Order. Also, the Chapter saw to the election of the members of the General Council among which are Rev. Fr. James Wambugu, OSA as General Councilor for Africa and Rev. Fr. Martin Davakan, OSA as General Councilor for Europe. Fr. Wambugu is affiliated to the Augustinian Vicariate of Kenya and until his election served as the

Prior of the Augustinian International House of Formation Karen in Nairobi, Kenya. While Fr. Martin Davakan, OSA, though a native of Africa – Benin Republic to be precise, is affiliated to the Augustinian Province of Belgium and until his election to the General Council served as the Prior Provincial of the Province of Belgium. The Ordinary General Chapter came to a close on Thursday 18th September 2025.

In Thanksgiving to God, the Augustinian Federation in Africa rejoices with the Order of St Augustine on the emergence of the new Prior General and Council as well as the success of the Ordinary General Chapter. We join the members, associates and friends of the Augustinian family across the world to entrust the service of Fr. Joseph Farrell and Council to the inspiration and direction of the Holy Spirit and the Wise Counsel of Our Mother of Good Counsel to guide the Augustinian Family with one mind and one heart towards God.

MAIDEN AUGUSTINIAN EDUCATION CONFERENCE IN AFRICA

The Order of St Augustine hosted its maiden Augustinian education conference in Africa. The Conference which was designed for educators in all the Augustinian schools and colleges in Africa, was organized by the Augustinian Regional Task force on Education for Africa, a subsidiary of the order's International Commission for Apostolate and Evangelization. The conference was held online and it attracted over 250 participants from all the Augustinian Schools across the African circumscriptions as well as educators from other schools managed by the affiliate congregations of the Augustinian Federation in Africa (AFA). It was a two days conference that began on Friday 9th to Saturday 10th March, 2025 with the theme: **THE IDENTITY OF AN AUGUSTINIAN SCHOOL IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.**

In his opening remark, the Assistant General and Coordinator of the International commission for apostolate and evangelization Rev. Fr. Javier Perez Barba, OSA observed that the order is sowing a seed for a promising future of Augustinian pedagogy in Africa by investing in the formation of Augustinian educators in Africa. He concluded his opening remark with a formal declaration of the conference open. With that the conference proceedings were ushered in, beginning with a keynote speech delivered by the Coordinator of the Regional Task Force on education in Africa and a member of the international Commission for Apostolate and Evangelization, Rev. Fr. Kenneth Eze, OSA, PhD. In his keynote address titled, **THE IDENTITY OF THE AUGUSTINIAN SCHOOL IN**



THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, Fr Kenneth acknowledged the transformative

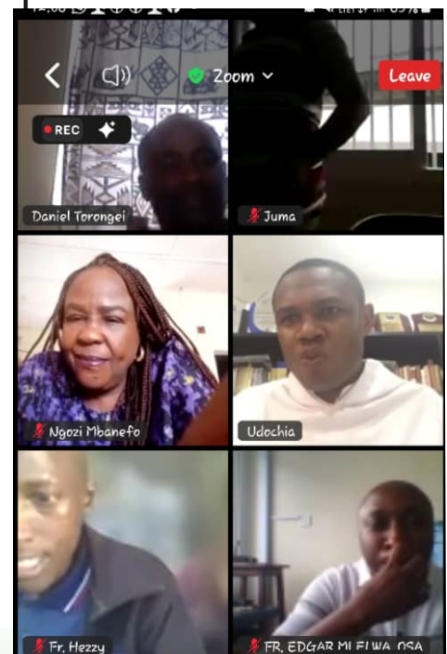
THE IDENTITY OF AN AUGUSTINIAN SCHOOL IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

role of AI in education but observed that AI is not a replacement for human intellect, creativity and moral reasoning, hence AI should not be allowed to replace the critical roles of teachers as mentors, spiritual guides and role models. He advised Augustinian educators and schools to carefully navigate the waters of AI while integrating AI innovations into their pedagogical practices and daily operations so as to ensure that the rich Augustinian pedagogical values of Veritas (truth) Caritas (Love) and Unitas (Unity) and traditions that constitute the identity of an Augustinian school are not arbitrarily eclipsed.

The participants also received other paper presentations from the Provincial of the Augustinian Province of Colombia - Rev. Fr

Mauricio Saavedra, OSA, titled **INTERACTION OF AUGUSTINIAN PEDAGOGY WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE; ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE** and from Rev. Fr. Elias Nera Arellano, OSA from Peru titled; **FROM THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION TO THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL REVOLUTION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF AI.** The conference was carried out using simultaneous translation of French and English and each session saw the participants break out into group sessions for workshops and rounded up with questions, answers and contributions from participants, making the conference a rich,

impactful and inspiring experience. The conference was brought to a close with a closing remark by Rev. Fr Kenneth Eze, OSA and a certificate of participation was issued to all participants.



AUGUSTINIAN PROVINCE OF BELGIUM: A Historic Ordination at St. Rita's Seminary, Lomé, Togo

On Saturday, July 5, 2025, the Province of Belgium of the Order of St. Augustine celebrated a milestone in its missionary history in Togo with the ordination of two priests and one deacon at St. Rita's Seminary, located in Hedranawoe-Dzia, Lomé, Togo. The celebration, highly solemn was held in the Chapel of Agnus Dei, marking the first ordination ever celebrated at this formation house since its establishment in 2017.

The ordination was presided over by His Lordship Martin Banga Ayanyaki, OSA, Bishop of Buta Diocese in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Himself a member of the Order of St. Augustine, Bishop Banga brought a unique depth to the

celebration, both as a shepherd and as a brother in the Augustinian family. Notably, this ordination was his first



and divine providence. With a profound spirit of fraternity, Father Martin Davakan, OSA, Provincial of the Belgian Province, Father Jean-Baptiste Zeke, OSA, member of his council, Brother Julien Hounsiede, OSA, provincial bursar, as well as Father Wilfried, OSA, twice former Provincial, traveled from Belgium to honor this event. Catholic faithful, members of the clergy, religious, and many friends from across the region gathered to witness the ordination of Reverend Father Amable Joseph Gido Abia, Reverend Father Isidore Kodjo Senou Koffi, and Reverend Deacon Elias Oliver Raphael Mbuyo — three devoted men who journeyed through many years of intense formation, prayer, and discernment.

A Day of Grace and Significance

episcopal ordination since his consecration as bishop on July 7, 2024 an event full of meaning



BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE ORDINANDS

REV. FR. AMABLE JOSEPH GIDO ABIA

Born on November 16, 1990, in Tambura-Yambio, South Sudan, Fr. Amable is the youngest of twelve children six boys and six girls. His vocation journey began in 2012 when he entered formation with the Order. As an Anglophone, he first undertook French language studies in Dungu, Congo, to prepare for his philosophical formation. He completed his philosophical studies in Congo, and in 2020, he moved to Togo to begin theology at the Grand Séminaire Interdiocésain Saint Jean Paul II in Lomé. He made his final religious profession on July 7, 2021, and was ordained a deacon on October 19, 2023. His calm spirit, deep devotion, and humble service have made him beloved among his confrères and formation houses across Africa.

REV. FR. ISIDORE KODJO SENOU KOFF

A native of Togo, Fr. Isidore was born on June 5, 1990, and he is the second of three children. His journey into the Augustinian family began in 2014 when he was admitted as a postulant. He pursued philosophy at the Université Saint Augustin de Limet in Kinshasa, Congo. He later continued his theological studies in Belgium, at the Séminaire Saint Jean XXIII in Louvain-la-Neuve, where he encountered the rich theological heritage of the Western Church. He made his final profession on October 14, 2023, and was ordained deacon on September 14, 2024, in Belgium. Fr. Isidore brings with him a global Augustinian experience and a gentle but passionate love for pastoral care.



REV. ELIAS OLIVER RAPHAEL MBUYO

A native of Togo, Fr. Isidore was born on June 5, 1990, and he is the second of three children. His journey into the Augustinian family began in 2014 when he was admitted as a postulant. He pursued philosophy at the Université Saint Augustin de Limet in Kinshasa, Congo. He later continued his theological studies in Belgium, at the Séminaire Saint Jean XXIII in Louvain-la-Neuve, where he encountered the rich theological heritage of the Western Church. He made his final profession on October 14, 2023, and was ordained deacon on September 14, 2024, in Belgium. Fr. Isidore brings with him a global Augustinian experience and a gentle but passionate love for pastoral care.

BISHOP'S FIRST ORDINATION

There was a unique joy in the air as Bishop Martin Banga, himself an Augustinian and spiritual son of the same formative soil in Dungu, laid his hands on the heads of his fellow brothers in consecrated life. It was a moment of symbolic return the ordaining bishop and the ordinands had once walked the same paths as served in the formation house as assistant parish priest. it never happened by accident," the bishop remarked. The liturgy was dignified and deeply moving with readings and liturgical chants, as the Mass lifted hearts and minds to God. Following the Mass, a festive reception was held with music, food, cultural dances, and expressions of joy. The seminary courtyard was filled with laughter, embraces, and thanksgiving, as family members and confrères celebrated the new ministers of Christ.

FIRST MASSES AND EPISCOPAL ANNIVERSARY

On Sunday, July 6, the newly ordained priests celebrated their First Masses at St. Rita's Seminary in the presence of the bishop and faithful. These Masses were moments of thanksgiving, with heartfelt homilies and emotional gestures ; a public offering of their priestly vocation at the feet of the Church. The following day being Monday the 7th of July marked Bishop Banga's first episcopal anniversary, although celebrated quietly while in transit. The convergence of dates , ordaining his brothers and marking a year as bishop ; gave the entire event a deeply symbolic and providential meaning.

A MEMORABLE EVENT FOR THE PROVINCE OF

BELGIUM IN AFRICA

This ordination marks a memorable event in the mission of the Province of Belgium in West Africa. What began as a dream establishing a formation house in Togo has now borne fruits. The Province has not only cultivated vocations from Africa but also formed them into mature, committed servants of the Gospel. This ordination is a reminder that the Holy Spirit is still at work, raising shepherds and servants who will guide, teach, and sanctify God's people. The story of these three men, from different countries and cultures, united in one Augustinian charism, is a beautiful testimony to the unity of the Church deeply evident in the Augustinian province of Belgium, the power of vocation, and the joy of religious life.

"one heart, one soul in search of God."
— St. Augustine of Hippo

PROVINCE OF NIGERIA

FIVE NEW PRIESTS ORDAINED IN NIGERIA

On 19th June, 2025, St. Monica's Catholic Church Rantya, Jos, witnessed a momentous occasion as five deacons were ordained to the priesthood in the Province of St. Augustine of Nigeria. The ordaining prelate, Most Rev. Dr. Matthew Ishaya Audu, Catholic Archbishop of Jos Archdiocese, conferred the sacrament of Holy Orders on Rev. Cyprian Choja Okpowe, OSA, Rev. Fidelis Marubitoba Taranya, OSA, Rev. Abraham Ayuka, OSA, Rev. Abel Daniel Inalegwu, OSA, and Rev. Moses Angelo Ziazia, OSA.

The ceremony was attended by numerous priests, religious, and lay faithful, who gathered to celebrate this significant milestone in the lives of the newly ordained priests. Family members of the newly ordained priests were present, beaming with pride as they witnessed their loved ones take this

significant step in their vocation.

The Prior Provincial of the Order of St. Augustine Province of Nigeria, Very Rev. Fr. Anthony Ikechukweu Kanu, OSA led the Augustinian priests in attendance, highlighting the strong

bond of fraternity within the Order. As the newly ordained priests embark on their ministerial journey, it is our prayer that building on the foundation of our Augustinian heritage, they will serve the Lord and His people with dedication and humility.



ANNOUNCEMENT

AFA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2026

We are pleased to inform all members of AFA that the AFA General Assembly will take place as follows:

Date: Monday, 2nd - Friday, 6th March 2026

Venue: School Sisters of Notre Dame Home, Accra, Ghana

Let us keep this upcoming Assembly in our prayers, asking God for a fruitful and spirit-filled encounter that will strengthen the unity and missionary zeal of our Augustinian Family.

Signed

Fr. Kenneth Eze, OSA
AFA President