



AUGUSTINE 1

THE LIFE & WORKS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

LESSON 5

AUGUSTINE'S CONVERSION EXPERIENCES





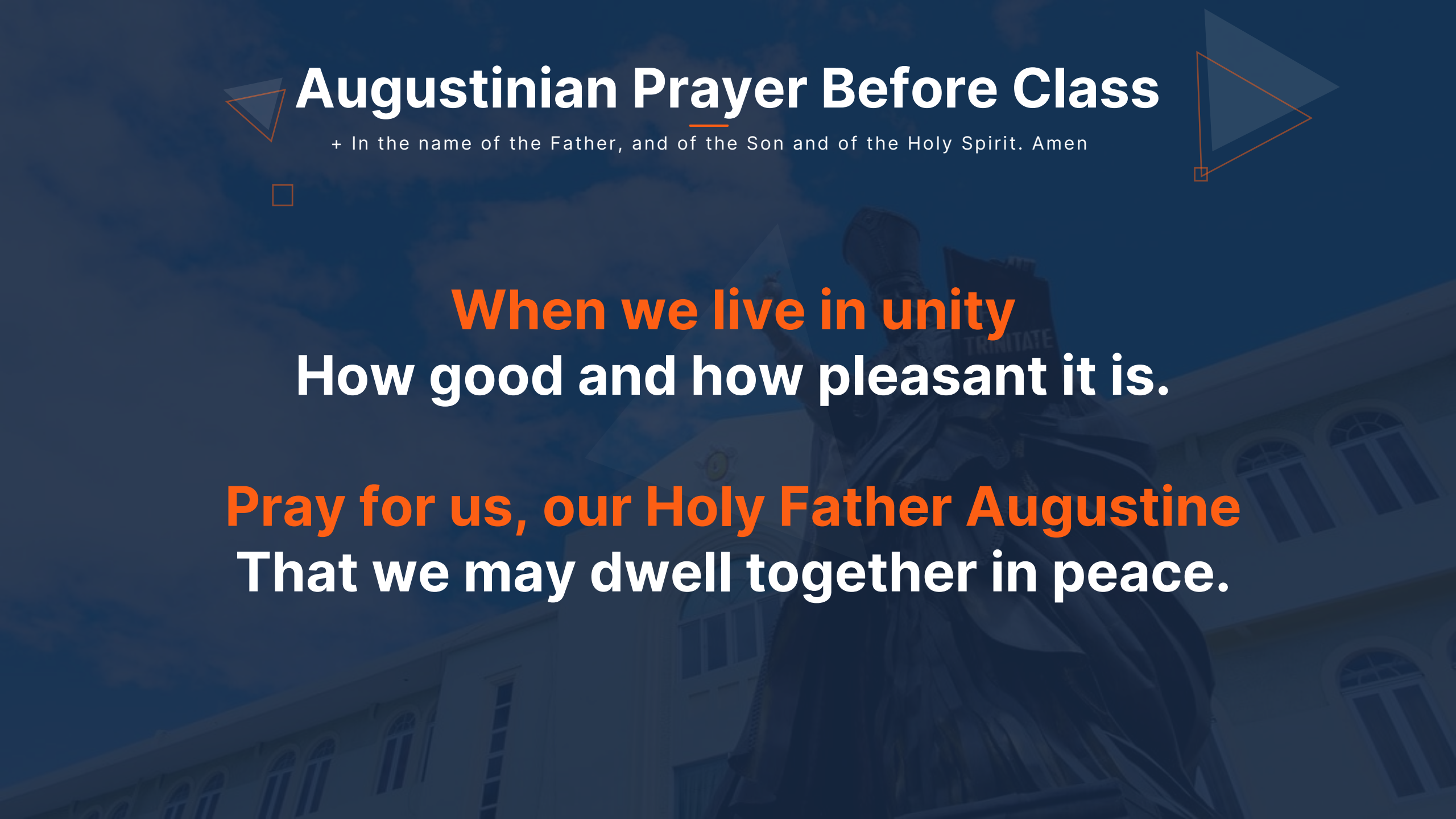
Augustinian Prayer Before Class

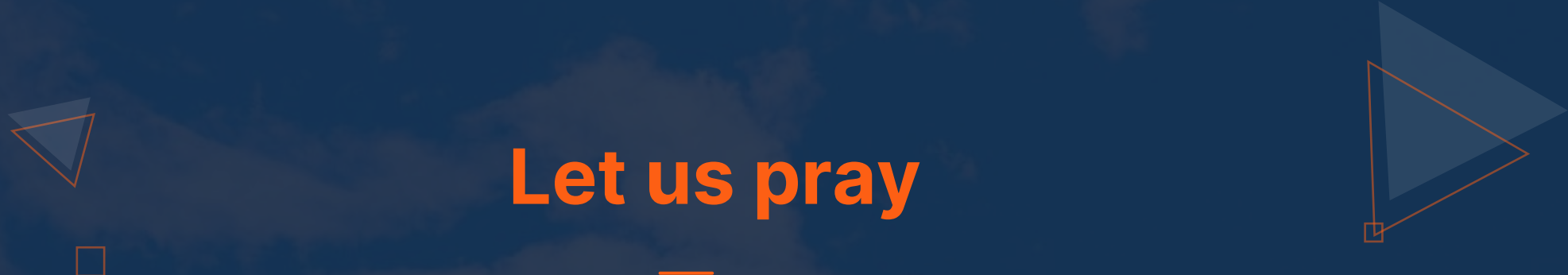
+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen



When we live in unity
How good and how pleasant it is.

Pray for us, our Holy Father Augustine
That we may dwell together in peace.





Let us pray

**God our Father, your Son promised to be present
in the midst of all who come together in His name.
Help us recognize His presence among us
and experience in our hearts
the abundance of Your grace,
Your mercy and your peace, in truth and in love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**



Our Father...

**Saint Augustine
Pray for us.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen +

Learning Objectives



By the end of the lesson, learners will be able to:



familiarize themselves with Saint Augustine's conversion experiences.



identify instances of divine intervention in their own lives, discerning moments of guidance, grace, or providence that have influenced their beliefs, decisions, and personal conversions.



express ways by which they can serve as genuine instruments in manifesting God's love to others.



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SHARING

**Recall and share
an event in your
life when you
experienced the
power of God's
love.**



SCRIPTURAL READING

A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians (Col. 3:12-17)

Brothers and sisters:

Put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the

**Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do.
And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection.
And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one Body.
And be thankful.**

SCRIPTURAL READING

A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians (Col. 3:12-17)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

SYNTHESIS

St. Paul's message in Colossians 3:12-17 is a journey from the inside out. It reveals that a holy life is not about rigidly following a set of rules, but about living out a new reality.

- It begins with Grace (Identity)
- It flows into Mercy (Community)
- It sustains itself in Thanksgiving (Worship)

AUGUSTINE'S
CONVERSIONS
EXPERIENCES



WHAT IS CONVERSION?

Conversion is the visible turning point, a decision or action that changes one's life direction.

Epistrophe

**Gk. epi (upon/tpward)
+ strephein (to turn)
= *A turning
back toward/around***

**directional mechanism
physical turning around
or turning back
toward a origin**

EXTERNAL TURN

+

Metanoia

**Gk. meta (change/beyond)
+ nous (mind)
= *A change of mind or
turning the heart/mind
around***

**internal substance
spiritual or cognitive shift
of mind (heart)
makes genuine conversion
possible**

INTERNAL SHIFT

=

Conversion

**Lat. con (with/together)
+ vertere (to turn)
= *to turn around/transform
a total turning around***

**Without the internal shift
(metanoia),
a turn is just
superficial behavior;
without the turning around
(epistrophe),
an internal realization leads
to no change in action.**



WHO IS AMBROSE?

<https://youtu.be/Fctdq8fVNZo>

or

<https://youtu.be/C708VffEBXw>



WHO IS AMBROSE?

- an ascetic and a learned man
- a bishop for ten years and was about fourteen years older than Augustine
- completely dedicated to God and to pastoral duties.
- Augustine regarded Ambrose as “a man happy according to worldly standards” because he was so much honored by such important people.

AUGUSTINE PRIOR TO MEETING AMBROSE

before meeting Ambrose:
he was desirous to see
and to hear Ambrose
speak (only to listen to
his style and learning)

While listening to
Ambrose' SERMONS
He was impressed by his
style and learning but
did not listen to the
soundness of his
doctrine (content of the
sermon)

when he was a regular
listener He was amazed
at how St. Ambrose
expounded the Bible so
clearly and so
profoundly; with
Ambrose, Augustine
understood the Bible (he
suddenly saw the Bible
as the monument rich in
symbolisms and not a
collection of tales)

Augustine's realizations after hearing Ambrose' Sermons



01

Manichaeans gave him a distorted interpretation of the Bible (his wrong notions about God were purified)



02

The simplicity of the Sacred Scripture's language would have been in reality his greatest aid in his search for Truth.



01

As a result

Augustine began seriously to study the Sacred Scripture;



02

It was Ambrose who introduced Augustine to Neo Platonic Philosophy. Ambrose' sermons were CHRISTIAN-NEO PLATONIC SERMONS

INTELLECTUAL CONVERSION

"By these books I was directed to seek for incorporeal truth, and I saw your 'invisible things, understood by the things that are made'" (Conf. 7.20.26).

Augustine's intellectual conversion
happened in two main stages:



**DETHRONING
MANICHAEISM**



**NEO-PLATONIC
BREAKTHROUGH**

a. It reframed God

b. It reframed Evil

LIMITATION OF INTELLECTUAL CONVERSION

Augustine famously notes that intellectual conviction **is not** salvation.

"It is one thing from a wooded summit to catch a glimpse of the homeland of peace and not to find the way to it... and another thing to hold on to the way that leads there."

(Conf. 7.21.27)



THE WAR OF THE TWO WILLS

MORAL CONVERSION

"Grant me chastity and continence, but not yet" (Conf. 8.7.17).

Augustine explains that he possessed two wills:



an old, carnal will
that pulled him
toward earthly
habits



a new, spiritual will
that pulled him
toward God

these two wills were tearing him apart, he was deeply divided (Conf. 8.10.22).

MORAL BREAKTHROUGH'S

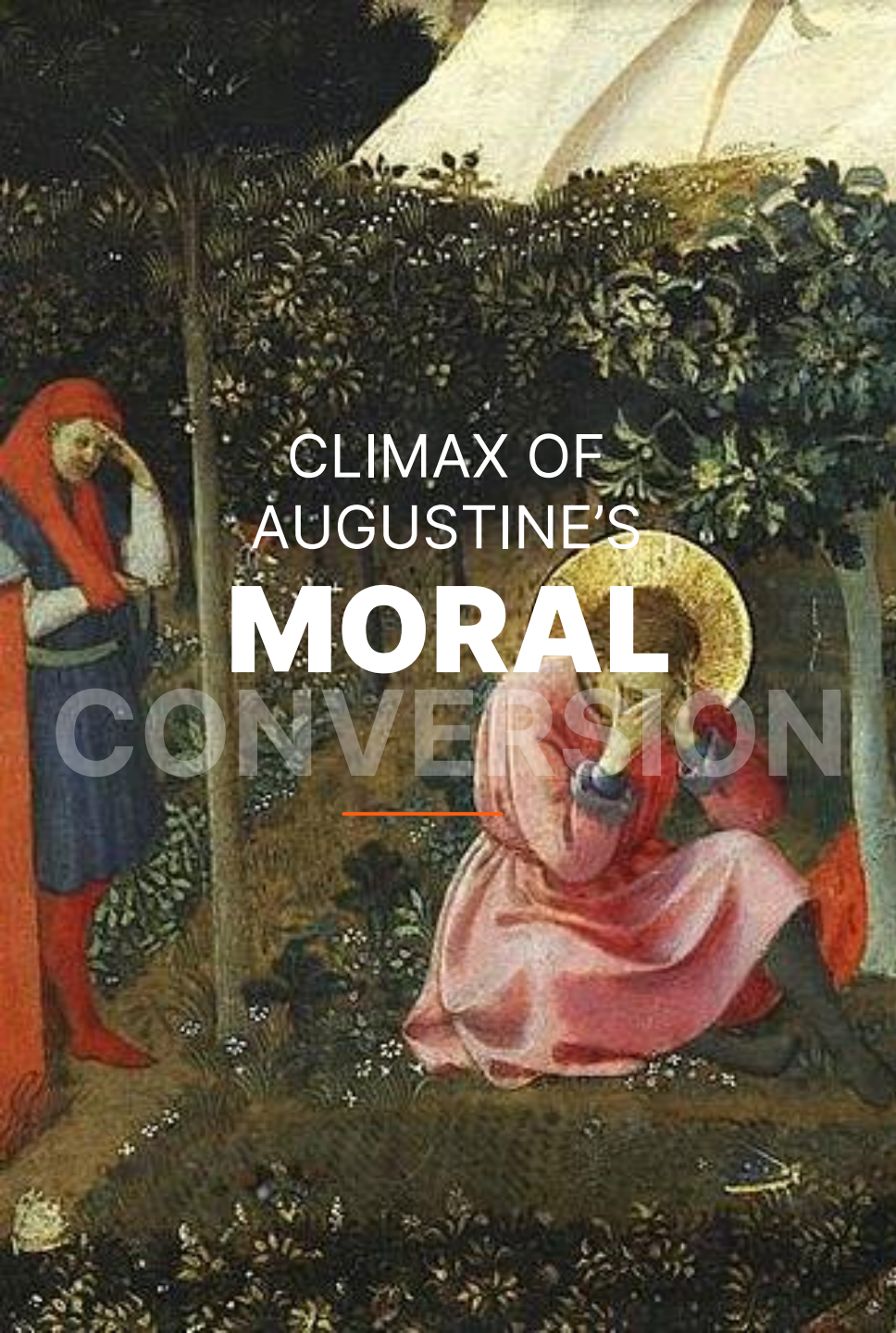
- The Example of Victorinus
- The Story of Saint Anthony

He realized that uneducated, simple people were "storming heaven"

"What is wrong with us? What is this you have heard? The unlearned rise up and take heaven by storm, and we, with all our cold learning, see how we wallow in flesh and blood!"

(Conf. 8.8.19)





CLIMAX OF
AUGUSTINE'S
MORAL
CONVERSION

Augustine describes a violent psychological and spiritual warfare—a clash between his

old will (rooted in fleshly habits) and his **new will** (rooted in God).

"How long, how long? Tomorrow and tomorrow? Why not now? Why not this very hour an end to my uncleanness?"
(Conf. 8.12.28)



TOLLE, LEGE;
TOLLE, LEGE.

TAKE UP AND READ
TAKE UP AND READ

"Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."

(Romans 13:13-14)



"No further did I desire to read, nor was there any need. For instantly, as the sentence ended, by a light, as it were, of serenity infused into my heart, all the gloom of doubt vanished away."

(Conf. 8.12.29)



SCRIPTURAL CONVERSION

Two factors completely shifted his perspective:

- The Preaching of Bishop Ambrose
- The Garden Epiphany - Tolle, lege; tolle, lege.

Augustine's conversion to the Scriptures fundamentally reshaped the rest of his life. He went from being a secular teacher of Roman rhetoric to a servant of the Divine Word.





The experience at Cassiciacum in the late 386 until the early 387 is considered as the beginning of Augustine's transition from a life of vanity to a life of contemplation. There, he and his group of friends and intimate family members tried to pursue wisdom in a Neo-Platonic way.



CASSICIACUM

- prepared him for his baptism immediately afterwards
- reinforced his desire for communal living.



AUGUSTINE'S BAPTISM

Augustine's baptism takes place in Milan during the Easter Vigil of 387 AD. He is baptized by Ambrose, the Bishop of Milan, who had been a significant influence on his intellectual and spiritual development. Augustine, along with his son Adeodatus and his close friend Alypius, undergoes baptism together.



MONICA'S DEATH

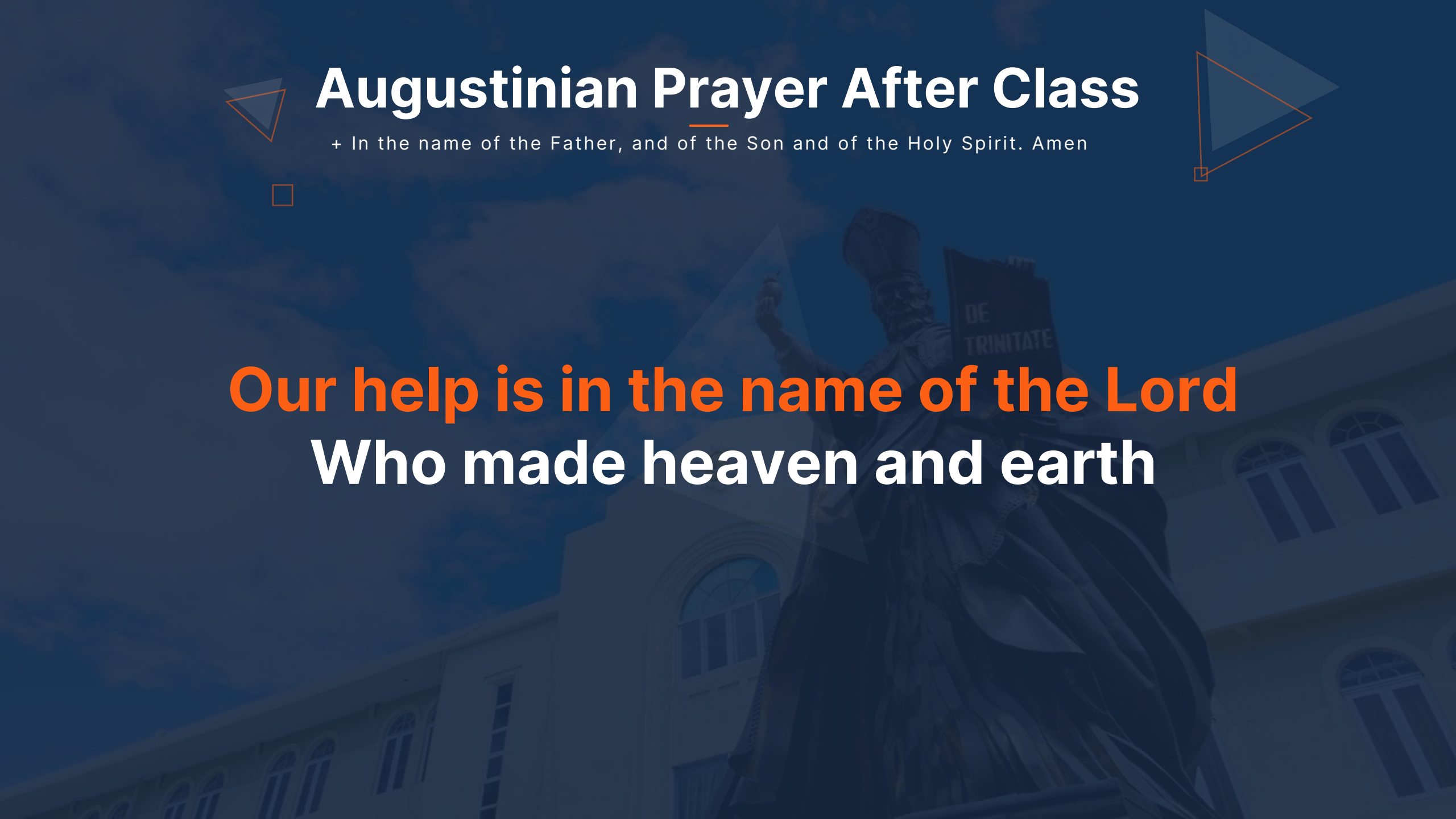
gettyimages'
Credit: Sepia Times

Monica's death occurs shortly after Augustine's conversion to Christianity. After his baptism by Ambrose in Milan, Augustine, his mother, and a small group of friends and family begin their journey back to Thagaste. They stop at the port city of Ostia, near Rome, where Monica falls ill.

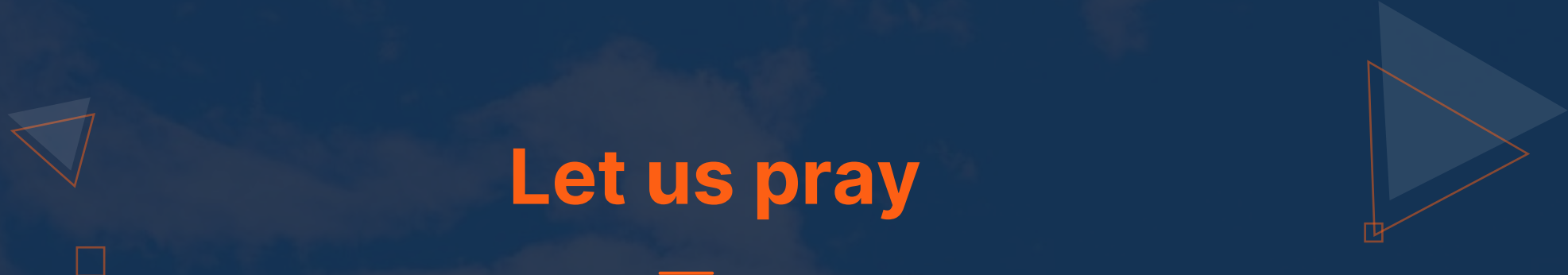


Augustinian Prayer After Class

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

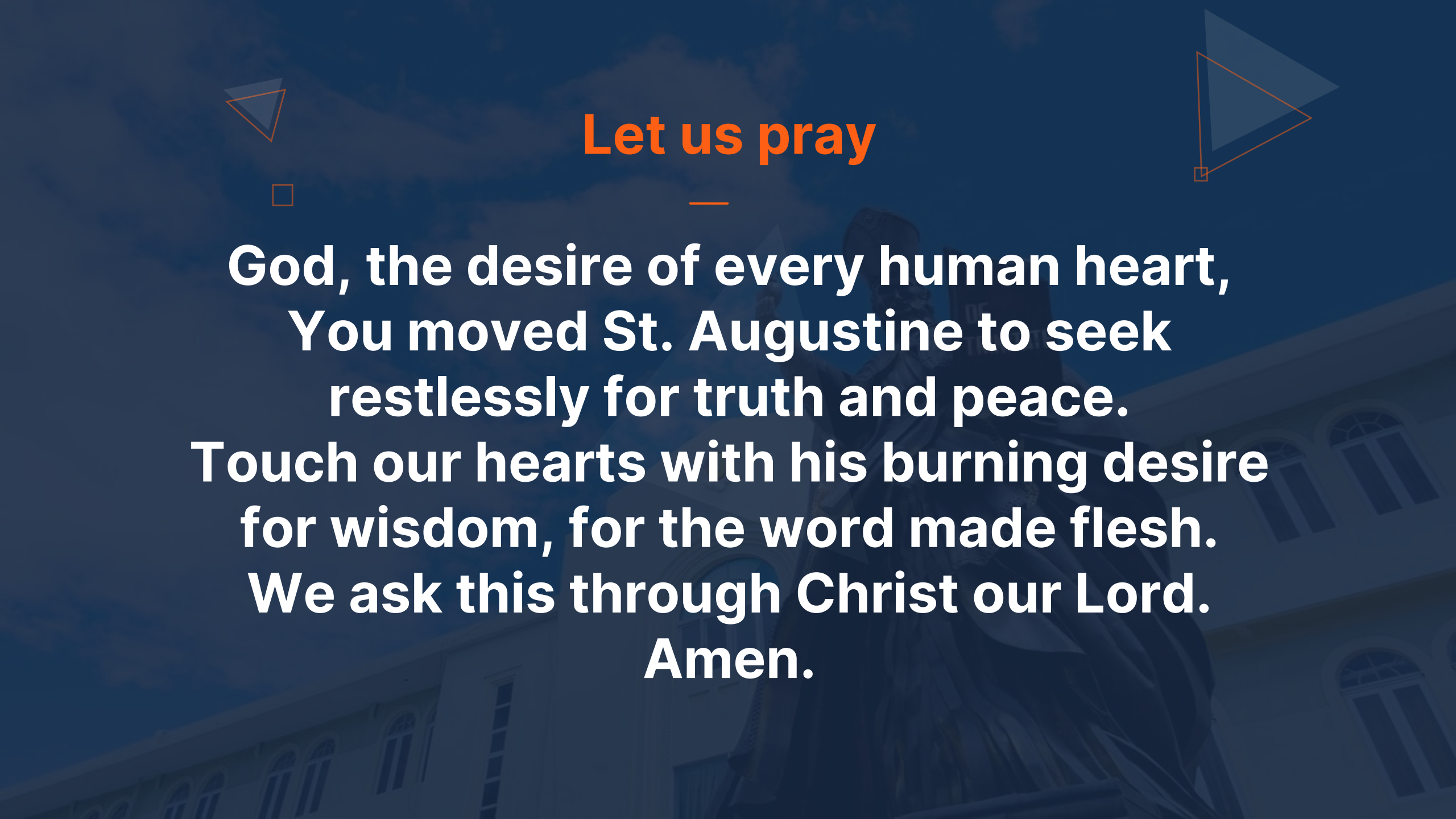


Our help is in the name of the Lord
Who made heaven and earth



Let us pray

**God, the desire of every human heart,
You moved St. Augustine to seek
restlessly for truth and peace.
Touch our hearts with his burning desire
for wisdom, for the word made flesh.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**





Glory be...

**Saint Augustine
Pray for us.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen +



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