

**Volume 9**

**Number 019**

## **Augustine II**

**Lead: In AD 386 an official orator in the imperial city of Milan, Italy, Augustine, his intellectual system in tatters and his personal life in shambles, reached a life-changing conclusion.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: When the ambitious new teacher of rhetoric arrived in the imperial capital, he paid a courtesy call on Ambrose, the local Christian bishop. The younger man was impressed with the Bishop's**

demeanor, teaching ability and the honor in which the entire community held him. This encounter set in motion the steps leading to Augustine's conversion to Christianity. He eventually became a priest and, in 395 Bishop of the City of Hippo a North African diocese in what is present-day Algeria.

While carrying on his pastoral duties, Augustine's lasting contribution to civilization and his Church was in helping define the basic system of Christian belief that came to be known as Catholic orthodoxy and in comforting and challenging those depressed because of the disintegration of the Roman Empire.

**Augustine helped define the process of conversion and Christian living in his *Confessions* completed around AD 400. His clear, intellectually consistent writings helped the Church resolve questions about good and evil raised by the followers of the Persian prophet Mani. He attacked the separatist tendencies of the Donatists who believed that only pure priests could deliver the sacraments. He weighed in on the issue of original sin and the relationship between grace and free will stirred up by those who believed the teachings of the Celtic monk Pelagius and saw them denounced in Church councils. He advocated a vigorous form of predestination,**

**which was rejected by Roman Catholicism but would find strong advocates after the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. Finally, in *De Civitate Dei, The City of God*, he encouraged a generation of believers cast into despair following sack of Rome in AD 410 by the Arian Visigothic general Alaric.**

**By his personal vulnerability, intellectual integrity and vigorous advocacy of orthodoxy, Augustine remains one of the key figures in the development of primitive Christianity.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

## **Resources**

**Augustine, Aurelius. *Confessions of Saint Augustine*. E.B. Pusey, Translator. New York, NY: E.P. Hutton, 1907.**

**Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967.**

**Kelly, J.N.D. *Early Christian Doctrines*. New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1960.**

**Matthews, Gareth B. *The Augustinian Tradition*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999.**

**Wills, Garry. *Saint Augustine*. New York, NY: Viking Press, 1999.**

**<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/augustine.html>**

**Copyright by Dan Roberts Enterprises, Inc.**