

## Reflection Monday 21<sup>st</sup> week St Augustine of Hippo 2023

**St Augustine of Hippo** was born in Thagaste in Africa of a Berber family in (354). He was brought up a Christian but left the Church and spent several years seriously seeking the truth, first in the Manichaeian heresy, which he eventually as being nonsensical, and then in Neoplatonism. Through the prayers of his mother and the teaching of St Ambrose of Milan, he was converted back to Christianity and baptized in 387, shortly before his mother's death. Augustine had a brilliant legal and academic career, but after his conversion he returned to Africa and led an ascetic life. He was elected Bishop of Hippo and spent 34 years looking after his flock, teaching them, strengthening them in the faith and protecting them strenuously against the errors of the time. He wrote an enormous amount and left a permanent mark on both philosophy and theology. His *Confessions*, as dazzling in style as they are deep in content, are a landmark of world literature. He was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Boniface VIII in 1308.

As a spiritual guide for Assumptionists, just as Christ was the light that inspired him to an ever-greater love. Let his words enlighten you with the light of Christ:

*Late have I loved you, Beauty so ancient and so new, late have I loved you!*

*Lo, you were within,*

*but I outside, seeking there for you,*

*and upon the shapely things you have made*

*I rushed headlong – I, misshapen.*

*You were with me, but I was not with you.*

*They held me back far from you,*

*those things which would have no being,*

*were they not in you.*

*You called, shouted, broke through my deafness;*

*you flared, blazed, banished my blindness;*

*you lavished your fragrance, I gasped; and now I pant for you;*

*I tasted you, and now I hunger and thirst;*

*you touched me, and I burned for your peace.*