Catholic Heroes of the Faith

Leader's Guide for the DVD

The Story of Saint Augustine

LEADER

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Introduction to the *Catholic Heroes of the Faith* Series

Saint: The "holy one" who leads a life in union with God through the grace of Christ and receives the reward of eternal life.

(*Catechism of the Catholic Church,* p. 898)

The Saints are the Catholic Heroes of the Faith!

Kids today have no shortage of heroes. From Hollywood celebrities, to music artists and sports figures, it would seem that there are plenty of heroes to go around. However, the heroes offered by popular culture are teaching children that physical perfection, financial success, and fame are the most important goals in life. The morals and values presented are often in direct opposition to the standards parents want to pass on to their children. So, while there is no shortage of heroes, there is a dreadful shortage of heroes worth emulating.

The *Catholic Heroes of the Faith* video series offers children real heroes that they can depend on—the saints. These saints have lived truly great lives marked by moral depth, strength of character, and an unwavering commitment to Christ and His Church. By sharing in their struggles and small steps of obedience, we are all challenged to live lives of faith. It is our sincere desire that as children get to know these "Catholic Heroes of the Faith," they will be challenged to follow in the footsteps of the greatest hero of them all, Jesus Christ. Learn more about the mission behind this series and find more free resources at:

www.CatholicHeroesoftheFaith.com

Synopsis of *Catholic Heroes of the Faith: The Story of Saint Augustine*

Saint Augustine is impacted by the prayers of his mother and the faithful preaching of Bishop Ambrose.

Saint Augustine is a young man with the world at his feet in the great city of Milan in AD 383. His amazing gift for rhetoric has given him the opportunity of a lifetime: He will work as the "voice of the empire" and convince the people to follow the edicts of the boy emperor and his mother Justina. Besides the prestige and honor such a position brings, Augustine enjoys a healthy salary and lavish lifestyle. Moreover, he finally feels free to do as he pleases, having left his mother, Monica, and her foolish ideas of Christianity far behind in Carthage.

There is just one problem. Soon, Augustine's conscience begins to quake as he realizes the extent of the empire's misuse of power over the hurting masses. Besides this, his faithful mother arrives in town and quickly joins up with the popular Bishop Ambrose. The bishop's intellect is not so easily dismissed, and his speaking skills rival those of the young man. To make matters worse, Empress Justina decides to take control of the bishop's Basilica, which he uses for worship and for service to those suffering under the weight of Roman taxes.

This sets up a conflict between church and state of epic proportions. The bishop and his followers take refuge in the church, refusing the empire's orders to abandon it. The empress digs in her heels and demands to have the church for her own use. Augustine finds himself in a great predicament when he is called upon to use his debating skills to sway public opinion towards the empress and away from the bishop and his mother.

All along the way, Augustine continues to struggle with his conscience. But, try as he might, he can find no fault in Bishop Ambrose's logic or in his actions. Augustine continues to struggle even as he watches others joyfully embrace a life of faith. Finally, Augustine's quest for truth leads him to a garden where he definitively encounters the Lord and famously commits his life to follow Him. After his conversion, Saint Augustine intended to live his life as a simple monk in North Africa, but God had other plans for him. Because of his great talents, he was ordained a priest, then became Coadjutor Bishop, then Bishop of Hippo. He served as Bishop until his death in 430.

Augustine's impact on Western thought and Christian doctrine cannot be overstated. His autobiography, *Confessions*, and his epic description of faith as a battle between good and evil, *The City of God*, are viewed as two of the most influential books of all time. They are still in print and still great sellers. Some consider Augustine to be the most influential Christian theologian of all time.

Pope Benedict XVI said about this great saint: "Saint Augustine was a man who never lived superficially; his thirst, his restless and constant thirst for the Truth is one of the basic characteristics of his existence; not however for 'pseudo-truths,' incapable of giving the heart lasting peace, but of that Truth that gives meaning to life and is the 'dwelling-place' in which the heart finds serenity and joy. As we know, his was a far from easy journey: he thought he had found the Truth in prestige, in his career, in the possession of things, in the voices that promised him instant happiness; he committed faults, he experienced sorrows, he faced failures but he never stopped, he was never content with what only gave him a glimmer of light."

While we have simplified his story a bit to present it to children, we trust you will enjoy and learn from our *Catholic Heroes of the Faith* presentation of *The Story of Saint Augustine.*

Teaching Plan for *The Story of Saint Augustine*

Get ready to travel to Rome during the time of the early church in the late 4th century. As children get to know the great theologian, Saint Augustine, they will learn of one man's journey to faith, along with the work of the young church, and the struggle for her survival. In keeping with Saint Augustine's famous teaching in his book *The City of God*, we have structured our lessons around a city theme. In addition, we will follow the story of Jonah, whose struggle to follow God has some parallels to Saint Augustine's story. Follow these easy steps to get the most out of this episode of *The Torchlighters*!

1. PREVIEW *The Story of Saint Augustine* before showing it to your students. This will help you to recognize the major themes and teachable moments that occur throughout the video, while equipping you to answer student questions. Our theme for this series is *City Tour – I Spy Truth!* Four sub-themes will be explored:

- **Lesson 1: The City of Man –** We are all born with a tendency to sin, characterized by love of self.
- **Lesson 2: The City of God –** God calls each of us to become a citizen of His City, one characterized by receiving and giving the love of God.
- **Lesson 3: A City on a Hill –** We need to let our light shine, as a city on a hill.
- **Lesson 4: A House on the Rock –** Build your life upon the rock of faith in Jesus Christ.

2. REVIEW the Supplementary Information. Become more informed on this true story by reading through "Key People in the life of Saint Augustine," "The Fourth Century Roman Empire," and "Saint Augustine's Timeline," beginning on p. 15. You may also be interested to know that an informative documentary on the life of the saint titled *Saint Augustine: A Voice for All Generations,* filmed on location, is also available through Vision Video.

3. SELECT and PREPARE Teaching Material. Our four lesson plans are designed to lead children on a faith journey with Saint Augustine. Along the way, they will learn a lot about the early church. Scripture will fit the theme of a Godly city. In addition, Jonah's story is suggested as a Scripture tie in. Feel free to mix and match the material to best suit your group and the time available. All material is reproducible and designed to help children apply the teaching themes. **NOTE:** Special supplies are needed for activities in each session. Also, we recommend inviting someone who has studied theology to share with your class during the third lesson. If you choose to take this option, be sure to give your guest plenty of advanced notice.

4. VISIT www.CatholicHeroesoftheFaith.com. The materials in this guide and the Student Pages are just the beginning. Visit our website for other free resources.

Session 1 – The City of Man

FOCUS: The city of man is another way to describe the tendency to sin we are all born with. Without God, our focus becomes self-centered.

THEME VERSE: "The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp." Rev. 21:23

- **PREPARE:** The majority of our story will take place in Milan just before the year 400. If possible, set up your room to look like the Ancient Roman Empire with flowing fabrics, fancy trim, clay pots and vases, and even robes, sashes, and jewelry. Gather travel brochures or travel magazines for the opening activity. These should be readily available at any travel agency or the AAA for free. Another option is to utilize your newspaper's travel section. For **SEEK THE TRUTH BIBLE TIME,** place the theme verse listed above on a sheet of paper. Roll the sheet up like a scroll and tie with a piece of thin gold ribbon or twine. Hide this somewhere in the room for use during Bible time. Also make photocopies of p. 8 to use as invitations for the final activity. Supply ribbon for students to make scrolls.

- **CITY TOUR!:** Pass out travel brochures showing different city destinations. Allow students plenty of time to pass the brochures around and discuss which city they would most like to visit. Include Rome as one of the options and discuss the ancient sites in Rome.

- **ROMAN COLUMNS:** Have white poster board available and hand out one sheet of poster board to groups of about four students. Give each group colorful markers. Make sure each group has one or more travel brochures. If possible, give each group a brochure on Rome.

  Ask some of these questions and have students discuss and write answers or draw pictures all over their boards. Also discuss the area you live in, whether it is rural, urban, or suburban.

  - *What are the main attractions of this city?*
  - *What do people do there for fun?*
  - *Where would you go in this city?*
  - *Why do so many people live in cities?*
  - *Do you enjoy visiting cities? Why or why not?*

  When they are finished, make a "Roman Column" out of each piece of poster board. Roll it into a cylindrical shape lengthwise. Overlap the edges and then staple or tape them together. These columns will represent the city of man and the things that occupy our time and energy when we do not have the right focus. Display the columns prominently for the duration of your unit on Saint Augustine.

- **OPENING PRAYER:** Pray the Our Father and Hail Mary with the children. Tell the children to pray for the courage to always seek the truth, as Saint Augustine did.

- **SEEK THE TRUTH BIBLE TIME:** SAY: *Each of the cities we looked at was different from the others. It's almost like they each have their own personality! Our Bible story today will be just a few verses, but in those few verses we will get to know two very different cities. Jonah was a prophet of God who lived around the 8th century B.C.*

  READ: Jonah 1:1-3. ASK: *What did God tell Jonah to do? Why did Jonah disobey? What two cities are mentioned here? Describe them. Do you think any place or anyone is too "bad" for God's loving grace? How about too "good"? Is anyone so good they do not need God's grace?*

- **CITY OF MAN:** SAY: *For the next few weeks we will be learning about a faith hero named Saint Augustine. As a young man Saint Augustine ran from God, kind of like Jonah. But, instead of trying to avoid evil, Saint Augustine ran straight to it! Eventually he came up with a saying to describe this world.* Lead a game of "hangman" to help students uncover the phrase "The City of Man."

  ASK: *What do you think Saint Augustine meant by "The City of Man"?* (a metaphor to represent selfish and sinful living)

  ASK: *Do you think Saint Augustine meant just cities?* (He was referring to the whole world and also to our hearts.)

- **BIBLE SCROLL:** SAY: *I have hidden a scroll in our room with a nugget of truth from God's Word. When I say GO, everyone can try to find the scroll tied up with a golden ribbon. GO!* Call the students back together and ask for a volunteer to read the contents of the scroll.

  ASK: *Does this verse describe "The City of Man"? What does it describe?* (Lead the students to uncover the phrase "The City of God" if possible.) *How is the City of God different than the City of Man?* SAY: *Next week we will see more of how all of this fits with our hero, Saint Augustine.*

- **PREVIEW THE STORY OF SAINT AUGUSTINE:** SAY: *Saint Augustine was a really bright, young man. At a young age he rejected Christianity and set off for Rome. Here is a short clip of the video we will see next week.* Play short preview clip at beginning of DVD.

  SAY: *Next week we will see a 30-minute video on Saint Augustine. We will see what drew Saint Augustine to the cities of Rome and Milan and what he eventually found there.*

- **SCROLL INVITATIONS:** Use page 8 to create an invitation for students to use to invite friends to next week's movie day, when you will show *Catholic Heroes of the Faith: The Story of Saint Augustine.* Provide ribbon for students to roll the invitations into scrolls and tie them up. Allow them to make as many as they can use. Encourage students to give the invitations to friends who don't have a church home.

- **CLOSING PRAYER:** *Lord, renew in your Church the spirit you gave Saint Augustine. Filled with this spirit, may we thirst for you alone as the fountain of wisdom and seek you as the source of eternal love. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen. (From Morning Prayer for the Feast of St. Augustine,* August 28.*)*

You are invited to

The Story of Saint Augustine

Date:

Time:

Place:

Learn more about
Catholic Heroes of the Faith programs at
www.CatholicHeroesoftheFaith.com

Session 2 – The City of God

FOCUS: View *The Story of Saint Augustine* and consider how God calls each of us to become a citizen of the "City of God," characterized by love and forgiveness.

THEME VERSE: "Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in drunkenness and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 13:13-14a, selected

- **OPENING PRAYER:** Pray the Our Father and Hail Mary with the Children. Ask the children to pray that they would be inspired to follow Jesus in all things, like Saint Augustine.

- **PREPARE:** Write the theme verse in large letters on a single sheet of paper, roll into a scroll, and tie with ribbon. Hide this in the room somewhere for use in **SEEK THE TRUTH BIBLE TIME.**

- **REVIEW** the "City of Man" concept. Use the pillars you made last week and lead the students to recall how the "City of Man" is an analogy for our selfish desires and living for the pleasures of this world. Discuss how this is different from the "City of God."

- **RHETORIC RALLY:** Use p. 3 in the student guide to challenge students to say some fun tongue twisters. If time allows, have students make up their own tongue twisters too. Use this opportunity to define the word "rhetoric" so students are familiar with the term before viewing the video.

- **INTRODUCE THE VIDEO:** SAY: *Our faith hero Saint Augustine was really good at rhetoric. His special talent was being able to present an argument or make a case and get others to agree with him. As you watch the video, look for times Saint Augustine used his gift for rhetoric.*

- **SHOW** the 30-minute program *Catholic Heroes of the Faith: The Story of Saint Augustine.*

- **STUDENT QUESTIONS:** Allow students time to process the video and ask questions about flow and content.

  ASK: *Did you see Saint Augustine using his speaking skills? How was he using his skills?*

  ASK: *How did Saint Augustine reject the City of Man (worldly ambition) and embrace the City of God (faith). How are the two cities different?*

- **FURTHER DISCUSSION:** Lead discussion using appropriate questions from the "Dig into the Story" and "Dig Deeper" sections (pp. 4 and 5 in the Student Pages).

- **SEEK THE TRUTH BIBLE TIME:** Invite students into your Bible story area. SAY: *Last time we heard how Jonah tried to run from God. Sounds a little bit like Saint Augustine, doesn't it? Do you think Jonah had the gift of rhetoric? Today we will look a little further into Jonah's story. Who knows what happened to Jonah while he was on the ship heading away from the city of Ninevah, which was where God wanted him to go?* Pause while students tell of Jonah being tossed overboard and swallowed by a whale.

SAY: *Today we will pick up while Jonah is inside the whale.* Read or Paraphrase Jonah 2:7-10, part of Jonah's prayer for deliverance.

ASK: *How does Jonah's story remind you of Saint Augustine? Is Jonah living in the City of Man or the City of God?*

- **BIBLE VERSE:** SAY: *Saint Augustine was a man who was seeking truth. Even as he worked for the empire he continued to seek truth and wanted to find what is right.* Have students search the room for the Bible scroll.

  SAY: *This is a paraphrase of the verse that Saint Augustine read when he finally accepted the Lord.* Read the verse and discuss.

- **PARENT LETTER:** Distribute this letter to help parents understand the lessons you are sharing in class (p. 14 in Leader's Guide).

- **PRAYER:** *Dear Jesus, We want to live in the City of God always. Help us to hear your calling and to respond to your plans for our lives. Guide us when we waste time and energy on things of this world, and lead us to focus on the things of you. Amen.*

- **PLANNING AHEAD:** For next week's session, invite a guest who has been to seminary or has studied theology and has an understanding of Saint Augustine's lasting impact on theology and faith. Ask him or her to come prepared to share a bit of what they know about Saint Augustine. Also visit a local library and gather a few books by Saint Augustine to show your class.

Note: Refer to the answer key for answers to selected student pages.

Session 3 – A City on the Hill

FOCUS: God gave you gifts. He wants you to let them shine like a city on a hill!

THEME VERSE: "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matt. 5:14-16

- **OPENING PRAYER:** Open with the Our Father and Hail Mary, asking the children to pray that they will always use the gifts God has given them for service to the Church and the world.

- **PREPARE:** Invite a guest who is schooled in theology to come to your class and share about Saint Augustine's importance to the church at large. Make sure your guest understands how to explain in a child-appropriate manner. Also, check your local or church library for books by Saint Augustine. *The City of God* and *Confessions* are his most popular works and should be readily available. Write the Theme verse on a single sheet of paper, roll into a scroll, and tie with ribbon. Hide this in the room somewhere for use in **SEEK THE TRUTH BIBLE TIME.**

- **STORY MIX-UP:** Use p. 7 in the Student Pages to review the story of Saint Augustine for your guest. Encourage the class to share the important details of the story, focusing on what they know about the City of Man and the City of God.

- **THEOLOGIAN INTERVIEW:** Give your special guest an opportunity to share what he or she knows about Saint Augustine and his impact on the church. Use the questions on p. 8 in the Student Guide to get the conversation started. Be sure to thank your guest for sharing with you. ALTERNATE IDEA: Invite someone who has traveled to Rome and can share pictures and stories of their visit to this ancient city.

- **WEAVE IN THE BIBLE:** Invite the class into the Bible center for Bible time.

  READ: Jonah 3:1-5, the story of Jonah going to Nineveh and proclaiming the truth. ASK: *Jonah is a prophet. How is he using his gifts?*

- **BIBLE VERSE:** Have students search the room for the Bible scroll and read the verse.

  DISCUSS: *When Jonah was running from God, it was as if he was hiding his light under a bowl. What happened when Jonah finally let his light shine?*

- **DEBATE CLUB:** Use p. 9 in the student guide for a debate-style activity. Divide the class into groups of 2-4 students. An even number of groups will work best. Select one or more statements to debate and form teams that are "for" and "against." Allow a few minutes for teams to come up with their own points to persuade the class of their views and then hold a mock debate. Keep the debate very controlled by allowing each team just one minute of uninterrupted time to share their views. If time allows, give them an additional 30 seconds of rebuttal time.

- **GIFTS TO SHARE:** ASK: *How many of you feel debating or public speaking might be something you are extra good at? If not, what is something you enjoy and excel at?* [Give time for students to answer. Perhaps allow them to write down a few areas of interest.]

  DISCUSS: *How did Saint Augustine use his gift for speaking for the City of Man* (selfish gain)? *How did he use his gifts for the City of God* (God's Kingdom)? *Think of the special gifts you have. How can you use them for the City of God? When you use your gifts for God's kingdom, you are letting your light shine!*

- **PLANNING:** Next week your class will put their faith into action. They will participate in a prayer walk through your city or town. Invite parents and other chaperones to accompany you on this event as needed. Next week's lesson also includes plans to create a garden mosaic as a reminder to "build your house on the rock." Gather supplies this week.

- **PRAYER:** *Lord Jesus, help us to be like a city on the hill, whose light shines in the darkness. Show us the many gifts you have given us and give us creative ways to use them to serve you. Amen.*

NOTE: Refer to the answer key for answers to selected student pages.

Session 4 – A House on the Rock

FOCUS: Build your life upon the rock of faith in Jesus Christ.

SERIES THEME VERSE: For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ." I Corinthians 3:11

- **PLANNING:** Gather and prepare supplies needed for the mosaic craft, found on p. 11 of the Student Guide. Also plan your prayer walk route and make sure you have enough adult chaperones. Prepare a scroll with today's Bible verse, tie it with ribbon and hide it in the room.

- **SAINT AUGUSTINE SAYS:** Use p. 10 in the student guide to lead students to uncover a famous saying from Saint Augustine. Discuss the truth revealed in the puzzle. If parents have joined you for today's prayer walk, have students tell what they have learned during your Saint Augustine unit.

- **MOSAIC MEMORY CRAFT:** Ancient Rome is known for beautiful mosaic designs. Lead your students in creating a mosaic craft that will remind them to build their house on the rock of faith. Follow the directions on p. 11 in the Student Guide. ALTERNATE IDEA: Decorate paperweight size stones with foam shapes in a mosaic style.

- **SEEK THE TRUTH BIBLE TIME:** Invite the class into your Bible center and share the story found in Jonah 3:6-10. Discuss how the king of Nineveh repents, as does the rest of the city. God's plan is that all should come to know him and build their lives on the foundation of Faith.

- **BIBLE VERSE:** Have students search the room for the Bible scroll and read the verse.

  DISCUSS: The Ninevites have chosen to make their city a City of God! How does our verse today give us another way to think of building a life of faith?

- **LIVING IN THE CITY OF GOD:** Use the "City of Man" pillars you made in Session 1 and remove the staples. Turn them to the white, unused side. Ask students to think of characteristics of the "City of God." What is the city like? What are the people like? Fill the boards with descriptive phrases. Bend the poster boards the opposite way to show the new City of God phrases and staple again into columns. Discuss how we live now in both cities, but one day we will live fully in the "City of God!"

- **PRAYER WALK THROUGH YOUR CITY:** Take the class on a prayer walk through your neighborhood or town. Pray for people you know and people you do not know. Pray that they would know Jesus and would build their lives on His truth. ALTERNATE IDEA: Pray in a circle for each child's neighborhood. Encourage children to build their lives on the rock of faith in Jesus and to let their light shine.

- **PRAYER:** *Lord, today we pray for our own community. May it be a real "City of God" built on the rock of faith. May our community be like a shining beacon that draws others to your light. Help us each to let our light shine as part of your kingdom. Amen.*

NOTE: Refer to the answer key for answers to selected student pages.

Dear Parents,

Today your child viewed a *Catholic Heroes of the Faith* DVD depicting the life of Saint Augustine, an important early church theologian, author, and bishop. Saint Augustine's work is best remembered in his classic book *The City of God,* which is still an all-time best seller.

Augustine was raised by a Christian mother named Monica, who is known for her devotion to pray for her son's conversion. Ultimately, however, Augustine took his own route to faith. Along the way he would father a child, join up with various heretical groups, and work as the spokesman for the Roman Empire. His search for truth and meaning finally came to fruition after he met the dedicated bishop, Ambrose of Milan. After first deciding to no longer tell lies for the emperor, Augustine's quest for truth lead him to a life-changing encounter with the Lord.

Our lessons on Saint Augustine focus on the theme of living for God vs. living for one's self (the City of God vs. the City of Man). Students are being encouraged to live for God and let their light shine.

We hope this experience of learning through one of God's great saints is meaningful for your child. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

Key People in the Life of Saint Augustine

SAINT AUGUSTINE was born in 354 in Thagaste, North Africa. He was raised by a devout Christian mother, Monica, and an unbelieving father. Though a difficult child with no love for learning, Augustine was sent to study under the Pagan Maximus, where he began his education. Augustine continued his education in Carthage, where he rejected Christianity, embraced the heresy of the Manichees, and lived a life marked by debauchery. When his interest in the sect waned, he left Carthage for Rome with his friend, Alypius. He taught there until he discovered a rhetoric position in Milan. In Milan, he met Bishop Ambrose, a charismatic man who deeply impacted Augustine's rediscovery of his faith. It is not known whether Augustine stood up for the Bishop during the conflict over the Basilica, but he was there at that time. Consequently, he resigned from his post as Rhetorician and resolved to become a catechumen. His final conversion to Christianity occurred in 386 after reading *The Life of Saint Anthony* and Romans 13:13-14. He, Alypius, and his son, Adeodatus, were baptized in Milan by Ambrose. In 391, he returned to North Africa and became an ordained priest (and later, coadjutor bishop) at Hippo Regius. There, he wrote his many works, including his famous *Confessions* and *City of God.* Augustine died in 430 during the Vandals' siege of his city.

ALYPIUS was Saint Augustine's most faithful friend, remaining by Augustine's side from his years in Carthage to his final conversion. In 383, he set sail with Augustine for Rome. Alypius followed Augustine to Milan, where he became an assessor. Just like Augustine, Alypius was deeply affected by Ambrose, and the friends converted to Christianity together. They both returned to North Africa, and Alypius helped Augustine establish the first monastery in Thagaste. When Augustine became priest at Hippo, Alypius moved with him and became a member of the monastic community Augustine founded there. He later visited the Holy Land, where he met Saint Jerome, and in 394, became the good bishop of Thagaste, dedicated to truth. He died sometime in the year 430.

SAINT MONICA, the mother of Saint Augustine, was born in Thagaste in 333 to Christian parents. She married Patricius, an unbeliever and critic of Christianity, and bore three children. Troubled by Augustine's wild ways and connection with Manichaeism, she poured out her heart in prayers, fasting, and tears. She prayed also for her abusive husband, who converted to Christianity on his deathbed in 371. Despite Augustine's best efforts to deceive her, Monica followed him to Rome as well as Milan. She developed a friendship with Bishop Ambrose and became known for her charitable work. Monica died at the port of Ostia in 387 after joyfully witnessing Augustine's conversion. In some churches today, Monica is the patron saint of abuse victims and victims of infidelity.

SYMMACHUS QUINTUS AURELIUS (ca. 345-ca. 402) was a Roman statesman, orator, and man of letters. He was *Praefectus Urbis* of Rome in 381, and, though a pagan, did not actively attack Christianity. While he and Ambrose did conflict over certain matters, their disputes were respectfully conducted in writing. For our story we have simplified Symmachus' role.

THE SECRET SERVICE AGENTS — In Saint Augustine's *Confessions* Book Eight he tells of two secret service agents who committed their lives to the Lord and joined a monastery. These two are represented in our story as "Rufus" and "Brutus," thought their real names are unknown.

EMPRESS JUSTINA (b. ca.349-d. c.388/391, Arian and second wife of the Emperor Valentinian I. She became guardian of the child-emperor Valentinian II and used her influence to support Arian ideals, placing her in constant conflict with Ambrose. Justina never succeeded in her fight against the Nicaean Christians.

EMPEROR VALENTINIAN II, Flavius Valentinianus, (371-392) was recognized as Emperor by Theodosius I after the death of his father. The child-emperor, however, was merely a figurehead, and the power of the Empire rested in the hands of Theodosius I, *de facto* Eastern ruler, and the German Frank Arbogast, who had control of the Western armies. Arbogast terrorized Valentinian II and eventually murdered him in 392.

BISHOP (Saint) AMBROSE (c.338/340–397) was born into an affluent Roman Christian family. As the son of the praetorian prefect of Gallia Narbonensis, Ambrose followed in his father's footsteps and studied law, literature, and rhetoric in Rome. He received a place on the council there, and in 372, was promoted to consular prefect of Liguria and Emilia. His candidacy for the office of bishop came two years later after he delivered an influential address in the midst of a crisis. He became bishop of Milan, where he studied theology under Simplician, the presbyter of Rome. He devoted his life to the work of the church, defending her from all heresy as seen in his conflicts with the Empress Justina. The conflict over control of the Basilica played out from 385 to the Spring of 386. The conflict culminated with the bishop and his congregation staying in the basilica for several days and nights while soldiers surrounded the building. Ambrose is best remembered for his excommunication in 390 of the Emperor Theodosius I. Ambrose died in 397 on Good Friday as a beloved defender of the faith. The following day, five bishops were required to baptize the crowds at the Cathedral.

ADEODATUS AND AUGUSTINE'S MISTRESS — While in Carthage, Augustine took a mistress who gave birth to his son, Adeodatus, in 373. Urged by his mother, Augustine eventually let his mistress go, but kept his son with him. Adeodatus was an exceptionally precocious child and a dear friend to his father. He died at the young age of 16.

The Fourth-Century Roman Empire

Augustine lived during the fourth century, which was an important and exciting time in Christian history. The Council of Nicaea, called by the Emperor Constantine in AD 325, was the century's most remarkable event. Invitations were sent to 1000 western bishops and 800 eastern bishops to form a creed that could be universally accepted by church leaders representing the then known world. Incredibly, somewhere between 220 and 370 individuals attended, and the council succeeded in one of Christendom's greatest endeavors, resulting in the Nicene Creed.

Great religious personalities marked this century, such as Saint Anthony (Father of Monasticism), Saint Athanasius of Alexandria, Ambrose of Milan, Saint Jerome, and the three Cappadocian Fathers: Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzen.

At this time, the Roman Empire was the "civilized" world. Covering the entire basin of the Mediterranean Sea, it spanned modern Turkey, Israel, Egypt, and North Africa. Gaul (France) and Iberia (Spain and Portugal) were also entirely Roman, as was England. Scotland and Ireland, however, were non-Roman and considered barbarian. The Empire's northern borders extended to the Rhine and Danube rivers, beyond which lived various tribes of peoples the Romans called Germans.

Politics

Though the Roman Empire had been built on sweeping conquest and rapid expansion, it had become far too vast to govern effectively. In the late 3rd century, the Roman Empire was divided, resulting inevitably in dynastic feuds and conflict within the ruling families. After Constantine's death in 337, his sons ruled separate territories: Constantine II (337-34) ruled Gaul and Africa, Constans (337-350) Italy and Illyricum, and Constantius (337-361) Thrace and the East. Though, by 340, Constans had taken control of much of the empire, Constantius succeeded as sole emperor in 359. He was followed by Julian, who renounced Christianity, Jovian, Valentinian I, and Gratian (375-383). Gratian's ten-year old son, Valentinian II (383-392), succeeded him after his murder at Lyons, and his trusted general, Theodosius (347-395), became *de facto* emperor of the East. It is the young Valentine II whom we find on the throne when Saint Augustine moves to Milan to take up his post as the "Voice of the Emperor."

Amidst the Empire's internal struggles, growing hostilities with its neighbors also held the attention of the Empire. Conflicts brewed with the Christian-persecuting Persian Empire (modern day Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan) and the Germanic tribes of the Alamanni and Franks along the Danube. Barbarians, such as the Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Huns, and Vandals, posed new threats to the Empire as they pressed on continuously for new lands to pillage and settle. Nevertheless, Germans were converting to Christianity and many served in the Roman army and also held positions of trust. Times were changing, but Rome was not prepared for what was to come.

Religion

Religion in the Roman Empire was just as diverse as its peoples. Eastern religions and Judaism had penetrated Rome for many years and were a part of life. The Edict of Milan issued by Constantine, then emperor of the west, and Licinius, emperor of the east, in 313, gave freedom to all religions. In 380 Theodosius (not yet sole emperor) and Gratian declared together that "Catholic" Christianity, as distinguished from Arian Christianity, was the official religion of the empire.

Despite the emperor's best efforts, the ancient religion of Rome was equated with patriotism and culture while Christianity was decidedly non-patriotic. The aristocracy, even in Augustine's time, were primarily adherents to the old religion, even if in name only. Religion identified and defined the individual, and the senate was primarily pagan. As Christian families connected to the court overshadowed the pagan aristocratic families, they considered these upstarts an affront to their position and their traditional status as upholders of all that Rome represented. After all, these families were the Romans of Rome. Any move against the religion of Rome had to be opposed.

The controversy over the altar of victory epitomizes this concept of patriotism and social status. The altar of victory was placed at the far end of the Curia, or the Senate House in Rome. It is uncertain if the altar stood before the statue, or if the statue was placed upon it. As the personification of Roman victory, the golden statue depicted a winged woman holding a palm branch in one hand and the victor's laurel crown in the other. Octavian set up the altar in 29 BC to commemorate the defeat of Anthony and Cleopatra at Actium. It was removed by Emperor Constantius II in 357, restored by Julian the Apostate and again removed by Gratian in 382. Efforts in 384 to have it replaced, repulsed by Ambrose, continued until the Edict of 380. The usurper, Eugenius (392-394), restored it for a time, but the altar later disappeared.

Saint Augustine

Augustine entered this world only briefly, from his arrival in Rome in 383 to his departure in 390. During that time he was occupied with teaching and studying. He also served as Public Orator in Milan, where he struggled with faith, yet did not want to give up worldly pleasures. Finally, in 386, Augustine had his now famous encounter with Scripture and embraced Christianity. Following baptism and further study, he lived in his preferred land of North Africa, far from the conflicts of empire.

Saint Augustine's Timeline

325	The Council of Nicaea
354	**(Nov. 13) Birth of Augustine at Thagaste**
356	Saint Anthony, "Father of Monasticism" dies
361–363	Reign of Julian the Apostate (Constantine's nephew)
365	**Augustine to school at Madaura**
371	**Augustine goes to Carthage to study rhetoric**
373	Death of Athanasius
	Ambrose becomes bishop of Milan
375	**Augustine returns home to teach rhetoric**
	Death of Western Emperor Valentinian I
376	**Augustine moves to Carthage to teach**
379	Basil of Caesarea, One of the Cappadocian Fathers, dies
380	Christianity declared the state religion by Emperor Theodosius I
382	The Council of Constantinople Convened
383	**Augustine sails to Rome**
384	**Moves to Milan where he teaches rhetoric**
386	**Conversion of Augustine and his retreat to Cassiciacum**
387	**Augustine baptized by Bishop Ambrose in Milan**
	Monica dies at Ostia, a port city
388	**Augustine returns to Rome**
388	Death of Gregory of Nanzianzin (another of the Cappadocian Fathers)
390	**Augustine returns to Thagaste by way of Carthage**
391	**Augustine ordained priest by Bishop Valerius of Hippo**
392	**Augustine humiliates Fortunatus the Manichee in a debate at Hippo**

393	**Augustine delivers a discourse at the Plenary Council of Africa.**
	This discourse later becomes his *De Fide et Symbolo.*
396	**He becomes coadjutor bishop to the aged and ailing Valerius.**
	Death of Gregory of Nyssa (another of the Cappadocian Fathers)
397	Death of Ambrose
398	John Chrysostom named Patriarch of Constantinople
c. 400	**Augustine writes his *Confessions***
	Bible translated into Latin by Jerome
c. 403–412	The Donatist controversy
412–421	Pelagian controversy
413–426	**Augustine writes *The City of God, On the Trinity,* and *The Enchiridion***
417	Donatist schism condemned by Pope Innocent I
419	Death of Jerome
427	**Augustine writes his *Retractions***
428	Vandals invade North Africa
430	**Death (Aug 28) of Augustine as Vandals engage in 18-month siege of the well-fortified town of Hippo Regius.**

Famous Quotes by Saint Augustine

God loves each of us as if there were only one of us.

Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you.

Miracles are not contrary to nature, but only contrary to what we know about nature.

What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men. That is what love looks like.

Our hearts are restless until they rest in thee, O Lord.

Find out how much God has given you and from it take what you need; the remainder is needed by others.

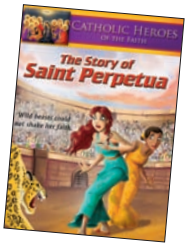
He that is kind is free, though he is a slave; he that is evil is a slave, though he be a king.

It was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility that makes men as angels.

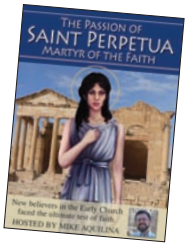
If you believe what you like in the gospels, and reject what you don't like, it is not the gospel you believe, but yourself.

The confession of evil works is the first beginning of good works.

The *Catholic Heroes of the Faith* Series



The Story of Saint Perpetua — It is the year AD 203 in Carthage, North Africa. Perpetua, an affluent young mother, is charged with converting to Christianity and is sent to prison. But Perpetua's freedom can be secured easily. All Perpetua has to do is offer one pinch of incense in honor to the Roman gods. With this simple act of devotion and loyalty to the Roman Empire Perpetua can regain her freedom and return to her son and a life of comfort. As Perpetua's father pleads for Perpetua to consider the welfare of her child and the reputation of their family, Perpetua slowly makes her way to face the Roman proconsul and declare her final decision. What will it be? This inaugural episode of Catholic Heroes of the Faith presents one of the most influential, true stories of the Early Church.



The Passion of Saint Perpetua: Martyr of the Faith — This documentary tells the true account of the courageous young martyr of the early church. Join well-known author Mike Aquilina as he recounts the history and message of this timeless true story and its relevance for us today. Containing footage taken at the actual sites where the story took place in Carthage, Tunisia, this documentary will inform as well as inspire.

Mike Aquilina is vice-president of St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology and author of more than a dozen books on Catholic history, doctrine and devotion as well as co-host with Scott Hahn of EWTN's series "Swear to God."

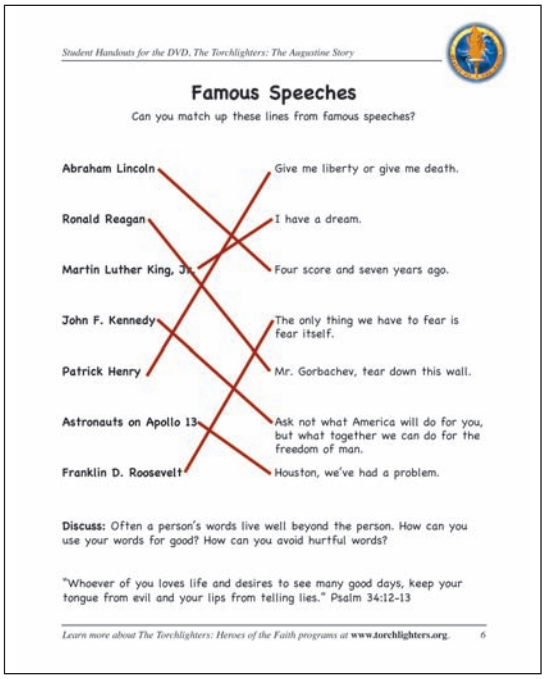
The Story of Saint Augustine — Bright, young Augustine thinks his mother's religion is foolishness. Convinced that his superior intellect will guide him, he sneaks away from home and ventures to a new life in the city of Rome. Soon Augustine finds himself in an important position as "The Voice of the Emperor," with the life of luxury he's always wanted. When the empire decides to take over the Christian basilica, Augustine prepares to give the speech of a lifetime, one that will slow the rising tide of Christianity's influence. With his devout mother and the unwavering Bishop Ambrose on one side and the empire's loyal soldiers on the other, Augustine must choose whom he will serve. A moving and powerful presentation of the story of two of the most revered Doctors of the Church: Saint Augustine and Saint Ambrose and the powerful intercession of a devoted mother, Saint Monica.

Saint Augustine: A Voice for All Generations — St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430) is a preeminent Doctor of the Church and the patron of the Augustinian order. His works, including The City of God, On the Trinity, and Confessions, have had an inestimable impact on the Church and, by extension, on Western Civilization at large. Yet, where did such faith begin? After rejecting his mother's Christianity as simplistic and restraining, Augustine embarked on a path towards self-gratification, marked by the pursuit of money, political power, and sexual pleasure. Explore the conversion story of one of the most significant figures in church history and learn about his struggle to find answers amid a sea of competing voices. Travel to fourth-century Rome and Milan to discover why St. Augustine has become a "Voice for All Generations."

Visit www.CatholicHeroesoftheFaith.com for resources and up-to-date information on new releases.

Answer Key for Select Student Pages

Famous Speeches, p. 6



Student Handouts for the DVD, The Torchlighters: The Augustine Story

Famous Speeches

Can you match up these lines from famous speeches?

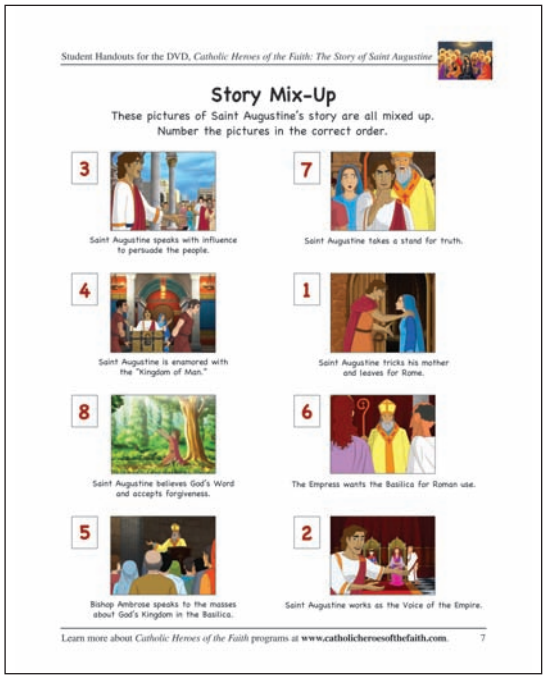
Abraham Lincoln	Give me liberty or give me death.
Ronald Reagan	I have a dream.
Martin Luther King, Jr.	Four score and seven years ago.
John F. Kennedy	The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.
Patrick Henry	Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.
Astronauts on Apollo 13	Ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.
Franklin D. Roosevelt	Houston, we've had a problem.

Discuss: Often a person's words live well beyond the person. How can you use your words for good? How can you avoid hurtful words?

"Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies." Psalm 34:12-13

Learn more about The Torchlighters: Heroes of the Faith programs at **www.torchlighters.org**. 6

Story Mix-Up, p. 7



Student Handouts for the DVD, *Catholic Heroes of the Faith: The Story of Saint Augustine*

Story Mix-Up

These pictures of Saint Augustine's story are all mixed up. Number the pictures in the correct order.

3 — Saint Augustine speaks with influence to persuade the people.

7 — Saint Augustine takes a stand for truth.

4 — Saint Augustine is enamored with the "Kingdom of Man."

1 — Saint Augustine tricks his mother and leaves for Rome.

8 — Saint Augustine believes God's Word and accepts forgiveness.

6 — The Empress wants the Basilica for Roman use.

5 — Bishop Ambrose speaks to the masses about God's Kingdom in the Basilica.

2 — Saint Augustine works as the Voice of the Empire.

Learn more about *Catholic Heroes of the Faith* programs at **www.catholicheroesofthefaith.com**. 7

Saing Augustine Says, p. 10

You have made us
for yourself, Oh
Lord, and our hearts
are restless until
they find rest in you.