

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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How Big Is Your Heart?

There is a lovely legend about St. Augustine, one of the patron saints of the Divine Word Missionaries. Around the year 400, Augustine began writing his immense 15-book study on the Holy Trinity, “De Trinitate,” a work that still profoundly shapes how Christians speak about God as Trinity.

The story goes like this:

One day, Augustine was walking along the beach reflecting on his writings about the Trinity. He was trying to understand how God could be Father, Son, and Spirit, yet still be one God. He saw a little child who had dug a hole in the sand. The child ran to scoop up seawater and hurried back to pour it into the small hole. Augustine was amused as he watched for a while, and then finally asked the child what he was doing. The child answered that he would scoop all the water from the sea and pour it into the hole.

“What?” Augustine said. “That is impossible. The sea is far too large and the hole far too small.” The child replied, “It is even more impossible for you, Fr. Augustine, to fit the Trinity into your head!” Augustine turned away in amazement, and when he looked back the child had disappeared.

The story is only a legend written centuries after Augustine, but it makes a good point. Some people claim they cannot believe in God because they cannot understand the Trinity. Yet there are many things we believe in that we do not completely understand: electricity, gravity, particle physics, even the nature of love. It is good to seek understanding, but we need to be realistic about the limits of the human mind.

A famous summary of Augustine’s thought is, “If you understand it, it is not God.” Of course, we do understand something about God. We have the Bible, including Jesus’ stories, his miracles, his resurrection. At Divine Word College we study theology, explore the Scriptures, and strive to express our limited understanding through writings, conferences, and preaching.

Happily, there is another way of knowing God even when we do not understand. God gave us minds to seek

understanding, but he also gave us hearts that help us know and love him.

St. Arnold Janssen, SVD gave the Society of the Divine Word and the Holy Spirit Sisters a motto to encourage us in our missionary service: ***May the Holy Triune God live in our hearts, and in the hearts of all people.***

Students, staff and faculty here are committed to reaching out in friendship to people of different cultures, languages, and ways of life. As the Holy Triune God takes up residence in our hearts, we discover there is room there for all humanity. Like studying, loving outreach requires practice, the kind of practice that many of the stories in this newsletter describe.

God has made us in the divine image. The more room we make for God in our hearts, the more room we find there for one another.

