



The Holy See

HOLY MASS FOR THE OPENING OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE ORDER OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

HOMILY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV

Basilica of Saint Augustine in Campo Marzio (Rome)

Monday, 1st September 2025

[Multimedia]

My dear sisters and brothers,

Father Alejandro Moral, Prior General, my brothers in the Episcopate, Luis and Wilder, and all of you, my Augustinian brothers, brothers and sisters who are here present. Before beginning the formal homily which is prepared, I just want to greet all of you. And for those of you who understand English but do not understand Italian: pray for a gift of the Holy Spirit! And perhaps during this brief time of reflection on the Word of God and reflecting upon that which the Lord is asking of all of you, those of you who are about to begin this Ordinary General Chapter, that you will be given indeed not necessarily the gift to understand or speak all languages, but the gift to listen, and the gift to be humble, and the gift to promote unity, within the Order and throughout the Order, throughout the Church and the world.

We celebrate this Eucharist at the beginning of the General Chapter, a moment of grace for the Augustinian Order and a moment of grace for the entire Church.

In this Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit, let us ask him, for whom the love of Christ dwells in our hearts (cf. *Rm* 5:5), to guide our work day by day.

An ancient author, referring to the Pentecost (cf. *Acts* 2:1-11), describes it as an “abundant and irresistible outpouring of the Spirit” (DIDYMUS THE BLIND, *De Trinitate*, 6, 8: PG 39, 533). Let us

ask the Lord that it be thus for you too: that his Spirit may prevail over every human logic, in an “abundant and irresistible” way, so that the Third Divine Person may truly become the protagonist of the coming days.

The Holy Spirit speaks, today as in the past. He does so in the “*penetralia cordis*” and through the brothers and the circumstances of life. This is why it is important for the atmosphere of the Chapter, in harmony with the centuries-long tradition of the Church, to be an atmosphere of listening: of listening to God, listening to others.

Meditating on the Pentecost, our Father Saint Augustine, in response to the provocative question of why, today, the extraordinary sign of “*glossolalia*” is not repeated, as it was one day in Jerusalem, makes a reflection that I think will be very useful to you in the mandate you are about to fulfil. Augustine says: “Each single believer was speaking in all languages; and now the unity of believers is speaking in all languages. And so even now all languages are ours, since we are members of the body in which they are to be found” (*Sermon 269, 1*).

Dear friends, here, together, you are members of the Body of Christ, who speaks all languages. If not all those of the world, certainly all those that God knows to be necessary for the fulfilment of the good that, in his provident wisdom, he entrusts to you.

Live these days, therefore, in a sincere effort to communicate and to understand, and do so as a generous response to the great and unique gift of light and grace that the Father of Heaven gives you by summoning you here, specifically you, for the good of all.

And we come to a second point: do all this humbly. Saint Augustine, commenting on the variety of ways in which the Holy Spirit has poured himself out onto the world throughout the centuries, reads this multiplicity as an invitation to us to make ourselves small in the face of the freedom and inscrutability of God’s action (*ivi, 2*). Let no one think they have all the answers. May each person openly share what they have. May everyone welcome with faith that which the Lord inspires, in the knowledge that “as the heavens are higher than the earth” (*Is 55:9*), so his ways are higher than our ways, and his thoughts are higher than our thoughts. Only in this way will the Spirit be able to “teach” and “remind” us of what Jesus said (cf. *Jn 14:26*), inscribing it in our hearts so that its echo may spread from them, in the uniqueness and unrepeatability of every beat.

However, there is another point of reflection I would like to emphasize from what today’s Liturgy offers us: the value of unity.

In the first Letter, Saint Paul, speaking of the community of Corinth, describes it in a way that may easily be applied to your Chapter. Here too, in fact, “to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (*1 Cor 12:7*); here too “all these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills” (v. 11), and of you too it may be said that “just

as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ” (v. 12).

Let unity be an indispensable goal of your efforts, but not only that: may it also be the criterion for evaluating your actions and your work together, because what unites is from him, but what divides cannot be.

In this regard, Saint Augustine comes to our aid here too; again commenting on the miracle of Pentecost, he observes: “Just as at that time the languages of all nations in one person indicated the presence of the Holy Spirit, in the same way he is now indicated by the love of the unity of all nations” (*ivi*, 3). And then he continues: “Just as spiritual people ... take pleasure in unity, so worldly people are ever ready to wrangle” (*ibid.*). He therefore asks: “What greater power could piety have than the love of unity?”, and concludes: “The time you can be sure you have the Holy Spirit is when you consent through sincere charity firmly to attach your minds to the unity” (*ibid.*).

Listening, humility and unity: these are three suggestions, which I hope will be useful, that the Liturgy provides to you for the coming days.

The invitation is to make them your own, renewing the prayer we raised to the Lord at the beginning of this Celebration: “May the Paraclete, who proceeds from you, O Father, illuminate our minds and, according to the promise of your Son, guide us to all the truth” (cf. ROMAN MISSAL, *Votive Holy Mass of the Holy Spirit*, B, Collect).