

# THE SERVANT LEADER IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF AUGUSTINIAN SPIRITUALITY

Fr. Robert F. Prevost, O.S.A.  
Prior General 2001 – 2013.  
Order of Saint Augustine  
July 25, 2005

## Introduction

Early in the year 387, (so after Augustine's "conversion experience" in the garden, but before his baptism), we find Augustine – according to a letter he wrote to his good friend Nebridius – "stretched out on his bed, in the still of the night, holding dialogues with himself." (Letter 3,1). These reflections are, in large part, the result of a similar process. It is my hope that such late night "dialogues" will have come together into a series of reflections that in some way respond to the rather broad topic I was asked to speak on: "Leadership as servanthood in Augustinian Spirituality."

In order to address this topic, I would like to make clear a few presuppositions. While through the course of the talk I will make reference to various aspects of what have clearly been identified as the central values of Augustinian spirituality, it is not my intention to define nor to give an extensive explanation of what that spirituality is; the same is true for the very concept of "spirituality". My emphasis will be, rather, on a specific model of leadership, particularly defined for a style of life, clearly Gospel based, that responds to a charisma, a gift, given by the Spirit for the good of the Church; in other words, within the context of Augustinian living (whether as consecrated religious or as lay people living a kind of Augustinian spirituality in common with others).

It would also be important to recognize the delicacy of the topic to which this week's convention is dedicated. While I am obviously concentrating this talk on some specific Augustinian aspects, in no way do I wish to indicate that this talk is an all-inclusive treatment – whether of Augustinian spirituality or of what it means to be a leader in the context of consecrated life today. Topics such as the vow of obedience, authority in the Church, the legitimate exercise of such authority and the need for clarity in the role of leadership go beyond the scope of this present talk. But they cannot, obviously be ignored by us. Nonetheless, for many of us, the areas that are frequently lost are precisely the ones that come out of the Augustinian dimension that we will focus on here.

The clear-cut and usually easier methods of "I give the orders and you obey" are readily present for us. Some would suggest that the two methods are contradictory. I would propose, rather, that we need to integrate more effectively a true sense of obedience with a mature way of living out our Christian commitment to live as mature and responsible people who have been called to live, and build up, authentic and meaningful experiences of community life.

If you go to the World Wide Web, and do a “Google Search” with the words “servant leadership”, you will come up with some 955,000 responses. Almost one million entries on a topic that is clearly based in Scripture, controversial in many circles, and not well understood in the ordinary context of our society today. Some call it a “weak” style of leadership, and reject it as being ineffective. Others see that there is indeed much merit to the approach, while at the same time recognizing that it is not necessarily the answer to all situations. The expression was developed by Robert Greenleaf, over 30 years ago. Greenleaf was an executive for American Telephone & Telegraph (AT&T), who later began teaching at Harvard University.

During the tumultuous 1960s, Greenleaf tried to understand why so many young people were in rebellion against America's institutions, especially universities. He concluded that the fault lay with the institutions: they were not doing a good job of serving, and therefore, they were doing a poor job of leading. In 1970, Greenleaf wrote *The Servant as Leader*, a powerful little essay that continues to gain influence today. In it, Greenleaf described some of the characteristics and activities of servant-leaders, providing examples which show that individual efforts, inspired by vision and a servant ethic, can make a substantial difference in the quality of society. Greenleaf said true leaders are chosen by their followers. He discussed the skills necessary to be a servant-leader; the importance of awareness, foresight and listening; and the contrasts between coercive, manipulative and persuasive power.

This style of leadership is certainly Gospel based, and in addition, there are some Augustinian insights to human experience that give a deeper appreciation for this type of leadership, a style of leadership that is needed in Augustinian communities today.

## 1. Service

In Saint Mark's Gospel, we read: “Whoever wishes to be the greatest among you will be your servant.” (Mk 10:44). In a very succinct way, this Gospel quote sums up the first and foremost principle that underlies all service in Christian (and therefore Augustinian) spirituality: the role of leadership is always one of service. The fundamental purpose of authority within any faith context is that of serving others, not lording power over others. Up until the time of the Second Vatican Council, the authority exercised by a superior in religious life was called “dominative power”. The name itself carried with it connotations of exactly what the Gospel tells us we should avoid.

Saint Augustine reminds us of the same essential element of exercising authority when he tells us: “We are put in charge and we are servants; we possess authority, but only if we serve.” There is no room in Augustine's concept of authority for one who is self-seeking and in search of power over others. The exercise of authority in community requires the setting aside of self-interest and a total dedication to the good of the community. **This is the attitude that must be adopted as the starting point in trying to understand what leadership (and therefore the exercise of authority) is about in the context of Augustinian spirituality.**

Of the many scriptural citations that could be used to illustrate the evangelical spirit of service, perhaps none is more vivid than the account in the Gospel of St. John, which relates the events of the Last Supper:

*"After he had washed their feet, he put his cloak back on and reclined at table once more. He said to them: 'Do you understand what I just did for you? You address me as 'Teacher' and 'Lord', and fittingly enough, for that is what I am. But if I washed your feet – I who am teacher and lord – then you must wash each other's feet. What I just did was to give you an example: as I have done, so you must do.'" (Jn 13:12-15).*

In the living out of this attitude of service as leader, other "augustinian" values come into the picture, and while there could be many more, I would like to emphasize three: humility, fraternity, and the promotion of unity.

## **2. Humility**

*"Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee approached him with her sons and did him homage, wishing to ask him for something. He said to her, "What do you wish?" She answered him, "Command that these two sons of mine sit, one at your right hand and the other at your left, in your kingdom." Jesus said in reply, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink?" They said to him, "We can." He replied, "My cup you will indeed drink, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to give but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father." When the ten heard this, they became indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus summoned them and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and the great ones make their authority over them felt. But it shall not be so among you. Rather, whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mt.20,20-28).*

This passage from the Gospel of St Matthew forms the basis from which all Christian understanding of leadership and authority must be developed. An understanding of Augustinian spirituality is therefore no different, because as Augustine himself would tell us, we must find our "truth" in the Word of God.

In a sermon that Augustine preached at the ordination of a bishop, he said the following:

*"The man, you see, who presides over the people out first of all to understand that he is the servant of many masters. And let him not disdain this role; let him not, I repeat, disdain to be the servant of many people, because the Lord of lords did not disdain to serve us. You will remember that from the dregs of the flesh a certain appetite for superiority, for being top dog, had crept in among the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, our apostles, and the fumes of conceit had begun to obscure their vision. As we can read in the gospel, in fact, there arose a dispute among them, about which of them was to be the greatest (Lk 9:46). The Lord, however, present as the doctor, lanced this tumor of theirs. When he saw what vice this dispute arose from, he said to them, placing small children in front of himself, Unless a person becomes like*

*this child, he shall not enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt 18:3). What he was drawing their attention to in the child was humility.” (Serm. 340A).*

“So let us see in what way the bishop who has been put in charge is a servant. In the same way as the Lord himself. Because when he said to his apostles, *whoever wishes to be the greater among you shall be your servant*, he immediately reassured them, in case human pride should be indignant at being branded with the name of slave, and offered himself as an example, to encourage them to accept his orders.... *The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.* (Mk 10:44-45). (Serm 340A).

Humility is the virtue from which other aspects of true leadership (and true Christian life, for that matter) will be constructed. *If we want to understand true Augustinian leadership, we must begin with the virtue of humility.* So often, when one is called to a role of authority, it is pride that becomes an operating force, leading us to consider ourselves more important, higher in rank, in power, more worthy of respect. Our cultures frequently tell us this, and it takes a special effort to protect ourselves from falling into the trap of believing ourselves to be so much more important.

Let’s listen to another passage from St. Augustine: *“Do you want to be great? You must start from the bottom. Are you thinking of building a great skyscraper of a building? First give thought to the foundation of humility. And however much anybody may wish to spend on piling story upon story in his building, the bigger his building is meant to be, the deeper he digs the foundation. As the building is being constructed, of course, it rises higher and higher, but the one who is digging the foundations is pushed down lower and lower. So the building has to be humbled before it reaches its loftiest height, and its topmost pinnacle can only be erected after it has been humbled to the depths.”* (Serm. 69).

Without humility, there can be no growth in the spiritual life, there can be no true “leadership” within the framework of an “Augustinian” way of life, because it is for the Christian the only way to grow towards God. We find this message again and again in the Gospel, and as a result, it is found throughout the writing and teaching of St. Augustine. “You have hidden your Truth from the proud, and you revealed it to the humble. What are we, however important we are? If we are humble, we shall deserve to be given the bliss of seeing God fully face to face provided we deserve to be counted among the little ones. Even so, Father, he says, exulting in the Holy Spirit – he approved, he was pleased about it, he applauded its being so, he applauded its having been made so – *even so, Father, because this was decreed in your presence (Mt 11:26).*” (Serm 68).

In many of our cultures, such humility is not really a value or a virtue that is appreciated as such. The comment is sometimes made that “this is a humble person”, or a person “of humble origins” – as to look down upon the individual’s poverty, whether with reference to economic, educational or some other form of what might be termed as “poverty”. In the non-Christian world of Augustine’s time, humility was unheard of. No philosopher would extol its virtues. Only Christ is, as it were, a teacher of humility. Commenting on Psalm 31 (32), Augustine emphasizes the uniqueness of true Christian humility:



*"You will not find this ... in any of the books of the pagans, whether Epicurean, Stoic, Manichean or Platonist. You will find throughout those books excellent precepts of morality and self-improvement, but nowhere humility like this. The way of humility comes from no other source; it comes only from Christ. It is the way originated by him who, though most high, came in humility. What else did he teach us by humbling himself and becoming obedient even to death, even to the death of the cross?... What else did he teach us, he who was baptized though sinless, and crucified though innocent? What else did he teach us, but this same humility?" (Exp. Ps 31,2).*

A true Christian leader, a true Augustinian leader, must first and foremost be a faithful follower of Christ. And Christ has shown us the way, which is one of humility. Leading in any other way runs the grave danger of going on the wrong path – making the true goal "my ideas", "my plans", "my personal glory". But following Christ, who is "the way, the truth and the life" means beginning by following the footsteps of the humble Christ, who came to us to teach us humility, and through his humility, (even in obedience to death, and death on the cross), he offers us new life. (cf. Sermon. 142,2).

### **3. The Fraternal Relationship between Leader and Community Members**

This aspect of the exercise of authority can be one of the most challenging dimensions to be found in the living out of any kind of community life. And this is the case because it necessarily involves all parties involved. A leader can have the best intentions, but if those with whom he/she is living and working do not accept the one chosen as leader (however that process takes place), his leadership can end up being very ineffectual. If the members of the community are looking for a certain type of leader, but their expectations are not met, here too problems can develop. On an individual level, we sometimes find the experience of a person who has difficulty dealing with anyone in an authority position, projecting unresolved issues onto the leader, with the result that in the relationship there is a serious obstacle that does not allow for a healthy situation. And vice versa.

The person given an office of authority can presume and/or assume a role of "superiority", believing himself justified in exercising a kind of domination and power with no regard for the members of the community. This too will oftentimes set up a dynamic within the community within which the members of the community will resent, and even reject, the authority of the person called to lead. Here we are dealing with something that has psychological, cultural and spiritual dimensions, and each of these dimensions would merit serious study in and of themselves. It is beyond the scope of this presentation to delve too deeply into any one of them, but obviously some references will be made.

Let's listen for a moment to what St. Augustine suggests on the topic of the relationship between the leader or authority and the members of the community:

*"Ipse vero qui vobis praeest, non se existimet potestate dominantem, sed caritatem servientem felicem."*(Rule, VII,46). In English, this has been translated: "The superior, for his part, must not

think himself fortunate in his exercise of authority, but in his role of serving you in love." However, this particular translation does not do justice to Augustine's thought for different reasons. First of all, Augustine, in the Rule, does not speak of "the superior", but of the "Praepositus" – the one who is before you. (We, as Augustinians, use the word "prior" – the "*primus inter pares*", to indicate the one who is before you as leader, but not dominating over you as a ruler with power.) Now, we must ask ourselves how does this concept get "translated" into our real life experience? Do I live out my role as a brother who encourages, who gives life, who brings people together, who helps show the way along the path, and yes, who sometimes corrects as needed, as an older brother or a father should do in a family?

To put this issue in other terms, we might propose for ourselves two different models of exercising authority. Is Augustinian leadership meant to be a kind of military command and obedience model? Or is it rather a relationship between human beings who are searching together for the same goals?

In part, Augustine answers this question quite simply when he says in the Rule: "You should obey superiors as fathers or mothers." This is already a key point in understanding the Augustinian concept of leadership and "obedience". In earlier monastic developments, this concept is somewhat different. Saint Basil, for example, uses the image of a master and slave when he speaks of monastic obedience in his Short Rules. "It is Augustine's merit to have transformed the rigid command-obedience pattern followed in Eastern monasteries into a more human and personal superior-subject relationship that is based entirely on mutual trust and Christian love."<sup>1</sup> So, the exercise of authority by leadership, in an Augustinian context, is not meant to be a kind of military arrangement, where the superior gives orders, and others blindly obey. That of course creates some problems for us, because life would be much easier if it were that clear-cut.

Augustinian leadership requires, by its very nature, the building up of a relationship based upon dialogue, which means listening to one another (never a one-way street), out of which trust will grow. This requires a high level of maturity, and a sense of true concern for the common good, and not merely each one looking out for his own interests. The same cannot be expected at all stages of religious formation, and needless to say, in the early stages of initial formation, an authentic sense of "obedience" and respect for superiors must be developed. Augustine himself recognized this when he emphasized the authority of superiors in correcting community members:

*"Whenever the good of discipline requires you to speak harshly in correcting your younger subjects (minoribus coercendis), then, even if you think you have been unduly harsh in your language, you are not required to ask forgiveness lest, by practicing too great humility toward those who should be your subjects, the authority to rule is undermined."* (Rule, Chapt. VI, 43.) This statement by Augustine refers to the minors who were growing up in the monastery, and who had to be educated and trained there.<sup>2</sup> The type of discipline used, the style of authority and leadership, should obviously be different with children or teenagers than

---

<sup>1</sup> A.Zumkeller, Augustine's Rule, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 107.

with mature adults. Unfortunately, religious life has not always been effective in promoting a healthy maturity among its members. And at times, superiors have acted toward the adult community members as if they were still children or adolescents in need of such disciplining. (Obviously, the other side is also true: if religious do not act maturely in community, the consequences are quite serious.)

We are speaking then, of a relationship of fraternal love and of mutual trust. And in saying that, we obviously find ourselves with several challenges, perhaps the greatest of which is around the building up of authentic trust among community members.

How does a community arrive at an experience of authentic trust? How can a leader play a role in promoting such trust? I believe there are a number of different steps that can be taken, but in reality, it is a long process that must begin from the earliest day of the community members' formation. Preparation for leading a healthy and mature life in community must include aspects such as promoting dialogue in community, learning to listen to one another, recognizing the gifts that individuals bring to the community, being truthful with one another, even when it is painful or difficult to do so.

By living in a community where there is dialogue, individuals gradually learn to share more of themselves, and in this process, they discover that what they say has value, it is important, and through this experience, they will believe that they are important as individuals, and that they have a part to play in the community's life. This dynamic is fundamental if an authentic community experience is going to be developed. It is one of the differences between a "group" and a "community".

#### **4. Promoting unity through leadership**

Another dimension of leadership, as developed within the context of an Augustinian spirituality, is his/her ability to actively promote unity among the members. One of the goals of any leader should be the building up of unity, in one or more ways, among those whom he/she is called to serve. Whether we are speaking of working on a common project for which a certain cohesion is needed among the participants, or working together in a school or parish, or living together in community, one of the most important of the leader's tasks is to build up unity among those who are working or living together. Some of the reasons are obvious: without unity, energy is lost, people work in opposite directions, the goal or goals of the project will not be accomplished, time is lost, people's gifts may be wasted. For St. Augustine, the concept of unity is another of the foundation stones of what we can call his spirituality, his way of living the Gospel.

We are all familiar with the texts in the Acts of the Apostles, which describe the early Christian communities: "The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common." (Acts 4:32). This model, for Augustine, was in reality the goal to be set for all Christians, and he cited

this text repeatedly in his works (more than 50 times, between Acts 4:32 and Acts 2, 42.) For St. Augustine, in order to understand the human being, it is necessary to recognize that we are created as “social beings”, to be in relationship with one another. The building up of the human family, of community, is necessary in order for us to arrive at the goal that God intended for us in creating us.

Some elements that we can highlight about a leader in an Augustinian community:

He is first of all a disciple, a follower, of Jesus Christ, along with other disciples. St. Augustine criticizes quite harshly those “pastors” (leaders of the Christian community) who are out for their own interests, who seek to gain their own comfort and advantage, who forget about the other members of the community. (Sermon 46).

The leader is a brother or sister among brothers and sisters. The image of Church as fraternity is significant. The promotion of community as a communion of goods and a sharing of faith is also important. “A community is a group of people united in harmony and in communion of goods as they strive to live and to love in sanctity of life.” (Tractates on John, 32, 7).

This service goes beyond doing good works. There is a call here to share life, to become one in solidarity with those who make up the community with whom we live and work. Another dimension of “loving as Jesus loved”, that is, of exercising “authority” as did Jesus, is to welcome the smallest, the least important, the ones who are rejected or abandoned, by the “powerful of this world”.

In this way, the leader gives the example of building up fraternity among all people, and especially with the poor and the weak, the sick, the abandoned. Obviously, this goes totally opposite the tendencies we find in our world today, with a growing sense of individualism, the accumulation of material wealth, the desire for immediate satisfaction of one's desires, and a blindness to the needs of the vast majority of the world's population. Even our religious communities, in theory made up of men and women who have given their lives to Christ, can become “shelters” that protect us from, hide us from the urgent needs of God's people who are crying out for justice in our world today. A true Augustinian leader cannot be deaf to the cry of the poor. And in building up “unity”, we must be careful that we are not falling into the trap of building up small and secure enclaves where we can be shielded from the urgent appeals that are made from those who will become greatest in the Kingdom of God.

## **5. Other dimensions of leadership within Augustinian communities**

### **- Vision for the future**

The leader is also an “apostle”, one who has heard the Good News, and who is prepared to do everything necessary in order to give witness to the Gospel in the world today. A leader is a person who has a vision, a sense of where the community needs to be, of where



the community needs to be going. Where does that vision come from? In part at least, from the discovery of what the Word of God is saying to us, today, in our reality. This, in and of itself, carries with it what we might call some prerequisites, most importantly prayer and study. These are two aspects of an authentically Augustinian spirituality which cannot be neglected, if we truly wish to lead in a way that corresponds to our identity and our charism.

Why does Simon become “Peter”, the Rock? Jesus gives Peter his new name, not based upon the kind of “earthly power” that some might wish to possess in being given authority. Jesus asks, “Simon Peter, do you love me?” And after hearing Peter’s response, Jesus tells him, “Feed my sheep”. Once again, we return to the call of service, of being a servant of those with whom you are called to exercise “authority”. Peter is given “authority” because he has learned to love as Jesus loves; because he has learned what it means to give his life in service to others. Because Peter loved, because Peter listened to Jesus, he had a sense of “vision”, of the vision of Jesus and an understanding of where the recently born community, the Church, was gradually going.

Any effective leader must have a sense of vision. But as Augustinians, we do not necessarily have to hold the entire vision ourselves, individually. Because of our sense of community, and of looking for the presence of the Spirit in community, we can come to identify our vision precisely in and through the community. There is an interesting image, of which I was reminded on one occasion when I was presented with a gift in Papua. The gift was a wood carving of two hunters, one standing on the shoulders of another. The leader, in turn, is not necessarily the tallest person in the group. Together, in order to see where we are going, the community lifts up one person, the leader, who is then able to see, with the help of the community, where the group ought to be moving. The leader’s job then becomes to help assure that the process to get to that identified goal takes place, and in an effective manner. He knows how to promote collaboration and a true team spirit.

#### - A love of Truth

Any person who speaks of “truth” must be careful as he does so, because “Truth is not mine, nor his, nor hers, but belongs to all of us whom [the Lord] calls to share it, in communion, at the same time giving us the terrible warning not to arrogate truth to ourselves as private property, lest we find ourselves deprived of it. (Conf. XII, 25).

This statement by St Augustine will remind us of several dimensions of the importance of “truth” in leadership, and of searching for truth as men and women who wish to live an authentic Augustinian spirituality. Just as authentic friendship depends largely upon two or more people being honest and “up front” with one another, so too a healthy community life depends upon an authentic search for truth – not in some abstract sense, but in the day to day living out of our life together.

To find “truth”, we must be sincere, and humble in our searching. We must, as the Acts of the Apostles remind us, be willing to listen to “the teaching of the Apostles”, the teaching of the Church. It would seem important to be willing to search together as community – the “leader” or the “authority” does not necessarily possess all the answers, and together, we must be willing to find the best solutions to the situations that we are faced with.

Dealing with truth requires great humility – and if fraternal correction is necessary, both the person who recognizes the error, and the person who is in need of healing or correction, must be humble and willing to listen to the truth. Our reaction, all too often, is one of anger and resentment on the part of the one being corrected, and of dominance on the part of the community leader. This can cause a serious breakdown in the desired fraternal relationship that we have spoken about earlier.

In order to arrive at the truth, we must have good communication. The true leader does not try to control information as a source of power, but rather he/she looks toward promoting greater openness and mutual understanding through the use of good communication methods. We have already spoken about dialogue in community. To this, it would be important to include other dimensions that affect both the life of the community and the actual involvement of the community in whatever apostolic activities the members are committed to: parish, school, etc. The importance of good communication should not be underestimated, because frequently, the presence of tensions or problems in Augustinian community is directly related to a lack of communication (or a misunderstanding caused by a lack of clarity in some area of information that should have been communicated).

#### - A sense of welcoming and inclusion

An important element of Augustinian spirituality is a spirit of welcoming, of inclusion, or bringing others into our lives, our homes, our experience of community. A true leader, in an Augustinian sense, cannot be satisfied or feel he/she has done enough if he/she has only attended to those who are already in the community. “I have other sheep who do not belong to this fold. These also I must lead, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd.” (Jn 10:16). While not everyone will be called to join an Augustinian religious community, there is a dimension of our lives that includes the sense of hospitality – of making others feel welcome, of inviting them to take part in some way in our lives, especially those who are excluded.

This requires great generosity, and a willingness to go the extra mile. Even within community, we may find situations where there is an “in-group” and a group of “second-class” members. A leader who is faithful to our Augustinian spirituality will never allow that kind of situation to exist. It is therefore very important to be careful about creating an image that can lead to favoritisms or preferential treatment. This does not of course eliminate the possibility of having friends in community. It does, however, place a certain burden on all community members, so that we will make sincere efforts to reach out to all community members, and not just to those with whom we feel most comfortable.

This same call to welcome others leads us beyond the immediate limits of the local community. Jesus always reached out to the poor, to the sick, to those who were “excluded” in society (e.g. lepers, sinners, tax collectors, the Samaritan woman). When some were scandalized by his attitude, he clearly responded, saying, “Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners.” (Mk 2:17). Our community life, the living out of our Augustinian spirituality, must never be perceived as the creation of a kind of elitist group that excludes others. In community, as in the Eucharistic celebration, we should find our source of life, our strength, so that from there we can go out to others, we can be the model of life for others, sharing with them the same Word that nourishes us, thereby building up in our world an experience of Church, an experience of true Christian community.

## **6. Qualities of the Servant Leader**

As I mentioned at the start of this talk, there are a number of qualities of the “servant leader” which have been identified in the process of a specific style of leadership training.<sup>3</sup> Briefly, I will outline them here. It will be very clear to you how much many of these correspond to the Augustinian values that I have presented during this talk.

1. Listening
2. Empathy
3. Healing
4. Awareness
5. Persuasion
6. Conceptualization
7. Foresight
8. Stewardship
9. Commitment to the Growth of People
10. Building community

## **CONCLUSION**

The challenge of speaking about leadership in today’s world and today’s Church is great. There are yet many other aspects that could be spoken about, and I presume that, during the coming days, there will be further opportunities to continue our reflection on this topic. My hope is that, through these thoughts that I have presented to you, all of us will be able to see some of the most central or foundational dimensions of Augustinian spirituality as they need to be reflected in, and promoted by, true Christian leaders. There are of course many challenges, and it is not an easy way to lead. In many respects, the military model is much more direct and

---

<sup>3</sup> Based on the writings of Robert Greenleaf, and included in the materials given by the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership.

clean-cut. And yet, if we are going to be true to our own vocation, we cannot simply dismiss the challenges that are difficult to assume.

We have briefly considered the meaning of leadership within the Augustinian values of promoting unity as we seek the truth; a service exercised first and foremost with great humility. The task, the mission of leadership, is obviously not easy, and it requires the participation of all members of the community. In order to fulfil the challenge placed before us, it is necessary to return time and time again to prayer and to the Word of God. The world will not teach us these values, nor will the values of this world model authentic Christian leadership for us. But I believe that the world is longing for this model of leadership, which has much to teach to others. So, it's now up to all of us, if we want to offer the world what we have received. "As I have done for you, go now and do for others."