

PASTORAL PLAN OF THE ORDER

PRESENTATION

The present *PASTORAL PLAN* of the Order responds to the Determination 13, 1 of the 53rd General Chapter of the year 2004¹, and to the various proposals presented in the various reunions concerning the pastoral concerns of the Order of Augustinian Recollects.² The encouragement, prayer, experience and dedicated labor of many Augustinian Recollects during the decade of the 90's precede the elaboration of this document. All have contributed with great expectancy to each page of this document offering to its realization valuable material toward the development of a pastoral approach which would be in accordance with our spirituality.

At the same time, our *Plan* is situated within the context of the new evangelization and expresses the fruits of Vatican II renewal in the Order and which indicates the desire to live and act in full communion with the Church and to be in contact with the reality in which the Order is present. This *Pastoral Plan* seeks to assist us to recall the past with gratitude and to live the present with enthusiasm and to view the future with hope.³

This is a short document which contains a series of basic principles applicable in all nations and which will orient our religious to work as an Augustinian Recollect in accordance with his charismatic identity. As such, it is distinct from other pastoral plans both in its content and objectives.

The sources of this document are the Word of God, the magisterium of the Church, the life and doctrine of St. Augustine, and the history and pastoral experience of the Order.

On this basis, this *Pastoral Plan* is intended, primarily, to assist our religious to recognize those elements which characterize the pastoral labor of the Order such as an emphasis on the role of conversion, the encounter with God in interiority and the formation of fraternal communities.⁴ Secondly, the purpose of the document anticipates an enlightened revision of our pastoral practices in accordance with the Augustinian Recollect spirituality and charism.

It is our hope that this document, the result of study, reflection, and the intervention of many religious in the course of several years, will contribute to the configuration of an Augustinian Recollect pastoral identity. It is also desired that the *Pastoral Plan* will forge links of communion within the Order and that it will motivate an evangelizing action proper to disciples and missionaries of Jesus Christ in order that our peoples may have life in Him. (*Jn* 14, 6)⁵

We urge our religious to receive this *Pastoral Plan* with interest, that they study its contents with close attention, and that they take it into consideration in their particular pastoral projects.

We pray that the Mother of the Good Shepherd, source of Consolation for the poor and the afflicted, and our Father, St. Augustine, pastor and educator of pastors, will accompany our efforts on behalf of the men and women of our time.

Fr. Javier D. Guerra Ayala
Prior General

¹ Cf. Determination 13, 1 of the 53rd General Chapter

² Cf. Propuestas de las Semanas de Pastoral OAR: Santo Domingo 1992, Mexico 1995, Majadahonda 1997, Lima 2007.

³ *NMI* 1

⁴ Cf. 53rd General Chapter 13, 1

⁵ Cf. Inaugural Discourse of His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI in the Fifth Conference of Latin American and Caribbean Bishops, Aparecida, Brazil, May 2007.

ABBREVIATIONS

Church Documents

- AG* *Ad Gentes*: Decree on the missionary activity of the Church (1965)
- CDC* *Code of Canon Law* (1983)
- CIC* *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1997)
- DI* *Inaugural discourse of Pope Benedict XVI at the Fifth Conference of the Bishops Of Latin America and the Caribbean* , Aparcida (2007)
- EN* *Evangelio nuntiandi*, Pastoral Exhortation (1975)
- GS* *Gaudium et Spes*: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (1965)
- NMI* *Novo Millennio Ineunte*:Apostolic Letter of Pope John Paul II (2001)
- OT* *Optatum totius*: Decree on the Formation of Priests, (1965)
- PC* *Perfectae Caritatis*: Decree on the Renewal of Religious Life, (1965)
- PO* *Presbiterorum Ordinis*: Decree on the Life and Ministry of Priests, (1965)
- UR* *Unitatis redintegratio*: Decree on Ecumenism, (1964)
- VC* *Vita consecrate*: Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation (1996)

Documents of the Order

AO Acta Ordinis Augustinianorum Recollectorum

Cap. Gen. 53 General Chapter, Rome (2004)

C.ad. Additional Code, OAR, Madrid (1987)

Cong. Mis II Augustinian Recollect Mission Congress, Madrid (1991)

Const. Constitutions OAR, Madrid (1987)

Enc. Mis. II Encounter of Augustinian Recollect missionaries of America, Asia and Africa. Yopal, Colombia (2006)

Est. mis. Augustinian Recollect Statutes for the Missions, Rome (2004)

FV Forma de Vivir Madrid (1987)

HG Historia General de la Orden

PF Plan of Formation (Studium Sapientiae), Madrid (1987)

Works of St. Augustine

Conf. Confessions

De b. vita De Beata Vita

De bono vid. De bono Viduitatis

De cat. rud. De catechizandis rudibus

De civ. Dei De civitate Dei

De doct. Christ De doctrina Christiana

De g. ad lit. De genesi ad litteram

De mor. Eccl. cath. De moribus Ecclesiae catholicae

De op. mon. De opera monachorum

De s. virg. De santa virginitatis

De Trin. De Trinitate

De ut. Cred. De utilitate credendi

De v. rel. De vera religione

En. In ps. Enarrationes in psalmos

Ep. Epistular

In Io ep. *In Epistulam Ioannis ad parthos tractatus*
Reg. *Regula sancti Augustini*
S *Sermo*
Vita *Vita sancti A. Augustini, autore Possidio*

I. CONVERSION

1. Jesus initiated his ministry of evangelization with these words, “reform your lives and believe in the Gospel”.⁶ These fundamental attitudes, conversion and faith united to love, constitute the synthesis of the whole Gospel. At the same time, they are the characteristic notes of the life and work of St. Augustine. For this reason, they will also be the constants of a pastoral approach to evangelization within the Augustinian Recollect family.

2. Conversion means to live turned toward God to accept Him and to allow oneself to be possessed by Him, that is, accept what God wishes in order to love Him without measure.⁷ Conversion is a process which embraces the whole of a lifetime and which commits the person, in his entire self, as he evolves both interiorly and outwardly. St. Augustine experienced successive conversions in his journey of faith: intellectual⁸, moral⁹, affective¹⁰, monastic¹¹, pastoral¹².
3. Augustine distinguished clearly between what was and what would be in each instant.¹³ But he did not rest in that already gained but continued searching¹⁴ with greater desire¹⁵. This restlessness was the dominating characteristic of his life.¹⁶
4. An Augustinian Recollect operates within this dynamic and teaches others what he learns by so doing, that is, the conviction that the human being is always somehow in a journey towards God,¹⁷ that he is searching for the face of God¹⁸ and seeks to be enlightened by him. In this process, the religious is not alone but rather is supported by his brothers in community and in communion with all men.¹⁹
5. As Augustinian Recollects we are called to meditate upon the human mystery²⁰ and his vocation to transcendence and his capacity for finding himself with self and with God.²¹

II. INTERIORIDAD

⁶ Mark 1, 15

⁷ Cf. S. 336, 2: “Let us love God gratefully,...let us love Him for Himself alone”.

⁸ Cf. *Conf.* IV, 4, 7

⁹ Cf. *Conf.* IX, 6, 14

¹⁰ “When I shall cleave to you with all my being, no more will there be pain and toil for me. My life will be life indeed, filled wholly with you.” *Conf.* X, 28, 39

¹¹ Cf. *Conf.* IX, 8, 17; *Vita* 2

¹² Cf. *Vita* 4.

¹³ “Struck with terror at my sins and at the burden of my misery, I had been tormented at heart and had pondered flight into the desert but you forbade me, and comforted me, saying: ‘Therefore Christ died for all’ (...) You know my lack of wisdom and my infirmity: teach me, and heal me”. *Conf.* X, 43, 70

¹⁴ “Let me seek you ‘so that my soul may live. My body lives by my soul and my soul lives by you”, *Conf.* X, 20, 29.

¹⁵ “That which is to be found is hidden in such a way that when one finds it he continues searching”. *In lo ev.* 63, 1.

¹⁶ Cf. *Conf.* X, 20, 29

¹⁷ “Relieve your pilgrim’s fatigue with song. Do not let laziness dominate you, sing and walk. What does it mean to walk? It means go forward always doing what is good”. S 256.3.

¹⁸ “I asked the Lord for one thing, that is, seek His face”. *En in ps.* 26, 2, 16.

¹⁹ S 229.1

²⁰ “What am I to myself that you command me to love you, and grow angry and threaten me with mighty woes unless I do? Is it but a small affliction if I do not love you”. *Conf.* 1, 5, 5.

²¹ Cf. *Conf.* 1. 1. 1.

6. *Coming to his senses at last, he said...*²². At this moment, the prodigal son began his return to his father. St. Augustine identified himself with this son when he spoke about his distance from God, his inner emptiness and his return to the Truth.²³
7. The prodigal son, coming to his senses, entered into himself, reflected, and left the “region of death”²⁴ and began his journey of return. St. Augustine embarked on the inward journey where he would discover Truth and, with this discovery, he came to a new life in Christ. He invites all to live the same experience: *In te ipsum redi.*²⁵
8. The Augustinian Recollect pastor travels this same itinerary and will offer it to the sheep which have been commended to his care by the Lord.²⁶ Since one cannot give what one does not have, the pastor needs to drink daily from the fountain of living water²⁷, Christ our Lord, who inhabits in the interior of man thanks to the action of the Holy Spirit²⁸.
9. Man looks anxiously for happiness in the goods of this world²⁹. They frequently experience a deep restlessness in their interior. It is then when men need someone to reach out to them with gentle concern and point the way to the true Master.³⁰
10. An Augustinian Recollect should be formed in the practice of interiority in order to be able to accompany others in the discovery of the Truth. He himself ought to experience with joy and certainty that which St. Paul expressed: *the life I live now is not my own; Christ is living in me.*³¹
11. Interiority is a feature characteristic of whatever Augustinian pastoral practice which pretends to respond to the needs and expectations of contemporary human beings.³² The Augustinian Recollect is to be someone specialized in awareness of human and spiritual growth for the formation of the communion of all in Christ.³³

III. CONTEMPLATION

²² Luke 15, 17

²³ “The joyous festivities within your home wring tears from our eyes when the story is read in your house of how your youngest son was dead and is come to life again, was lost and is found”. *Conf.* 8, 10, 16

²⁴ “Being thus admonished to return to myself, under your leadership. I entered into my inmost being. This I could do, for you became my helper”...I found myself to be far from you in a region of unlikeness” *Conf.* 7, 10, 16.

²⁵ *De vera rel.* 39, 72

²⁶ “For us, whom the Lord has placed in this position, because He choose to do so, and for which we are to give a strict account, there are two things to keep in mind, that is, we are Christians and we are pastors. To be a Christian is for our benefit, to be a pastor is for the benefit of others”. *S.* 46. 2.

²⁷ “With the aid of the Lord and insofar as the limitations of my abilities permit, I have chosen to serve in this way the great expectations of your charity and to serve you as well from the Lord’s dispensary from which I nourish myself together with you”. *S.* 41. 1.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ “All men desire to be happy...They are not happy because they concern themselves with other things that will make them unhappy”. *Conf.* 10, 23, 33.

³⁰ “That which the teachers teach is from the outside are aids, such as admonitions: the one who teaches the hearts is the one who occupies the pulpit”. *In. Io. Ep.* 3. 13

³¹ *Gal.* 2. 20.

³² “The pastor ought to be a man of prayer before being an orator”. *S.* 179. 1.

³³ *Cf. S.* 227.

12. Contemplation of the mystery of God constitutes a fundamental dimension of the Christian life. It is above all the fruit of listening to the Word³⁴ through which we discover the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Contemplation inspired and sustained by the Holy Spirit introduces us to the family of God. Even more, it makes us the family of God.
13. God alone is the full and sufficient measure of man.³⁵ For this very reason, man can find peace only in God: *you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.*³⁶
14. The Augustinian Recollect pastoral practice is oriented directly toward God, beginning and end of all things and, especially, of man. Life in the Spirit is the vertebral axis of all discourse about God and, for this reason, applicable to the Augustinian task. The primordial and principal reference to God is to God as the ultimate and unique end.³⁷
15. Contemplation leads to the inhabitation of God in the religious³⁸ and allows for the Spirit to fill the emptiness of the believer. It makes the religious necessarily communitarian because God is the love of communion among the three persons.³⁹ Whoever contemplates God contemplates his brother. The Spirit, who unites the Father and the Son, also unites the brothers in a communion of veneration and love.⁴⁰
16. A distinctive and proper characteristic of the evangelizing task of the Augustinian Recollect is, thus, that of helping the believer to learn how to contemplate God and his brothers with a living faith and with ardent love⁴¹ and firm hope. As Augustinian Recollects we are called to reflect the glory of God in what we are and in what we do. That which we live inwardly is spontaneously reflected in the exterior. This, in itself, is a guarantee of authenticity.

IV. APOSTOLATE

FROM THE COMMUNITY

17. The foundation for pastoral action for the Augustinian Recollect is the community itself. The heart of the apostle is formed in the community. The community is the seedbed and school of pastors, called by Mother Church to serve such as occurred in the time of St. Augustine.⁴²

³⁴ “God speaks to us in the reading of his Word and we speak to God in our prayer. If we listen with docility to what He tells us, the One to Whom we direct our prayers is already within us”. *S.* 219.

³⁵ Cf. *De g. ad lit.* 4. 3. 7.

³⁶ *Conf.* 1. 1. 1.

³⁷ “Now, I love You alone, You alone do I follow, You alone do I seek, You alone am I ready to serve”. *Sol.* 1. 1. 5.

³⁸ “We also build and construct a house in our hearts so that He may come to us to teach us and to converse with us”. *In lo ev.* 7, 9.

³⁹ “When we love our brother in charity, we love our brother in God; and it is impossible not to love that love which moves us to love our brother”. *De Trin.* 8, 8, 12.

⁴⁰ “Love your brother! Because, if you love your brother whom you can see, in him you will see God: you will see love itself and, within love, dwells God Himself”. *In lo. Ep.* 5, 7.

⁴¹ “Your love pierced our heart like an arrow...so strong a fire did they enkindle in us that all the hostile blasts from deceitful tongues would only inflame us more fiercely and not put out that fire”. *Conf.* 9, 2, 3.

⁴² “And, when day after day, the splendor of the Catholic truth became known and continued growing and upon seeing the spirit which inspired the servants of God, their continence and austere poverty, the churches flocked with urgency to the monastery, which had flourished under the spiritual guidance of St. Augustine, in order to find bishops and clerics for their churches.”. *Vita* 11.

18. It is a gift from God that the brothers live united in community.⁴³ The community will be what its members are. For this reason, it is necessary that the religious collaborate with the grace of God and, thus, construct a community.⁴⁴ Each brother, in communion with the Body of Christ, which is his community, and with the Church,⁴⁵ should feel affirmed and unconditionally supported by the same community.⁴⁶
19. Fidelity to the Augustinian Recollect spirituality is the guarantee of our apostolate and of an authentic service to the Church. St. Augustine always reminded his monks that they should see themselves as servants of Mother Church,⁴⁷ ready to go wherever needed. This is the criteria for knowing where it is that God would have us go.
20. Both in the selection of ministries and in the manner of ministering to them, it is important to provide a rhythm of life in accord with the condition of consecrated persons.⁴⁸ To achieve this, each community is to elaborate an "ordo domesticus" which should include the program for apostolic activities. The religious should participate in the elaboration, the execution, and evaluation of the pastoral plan. Each member of the community should feel co-responsible for the common task.⁴⁹

V. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AUGUSTINIAN RECOLLECT PASTORAL PLAN

21. The existential vision of St. Augustine was always profoundly human and cultured. For him, the first consideration was the interior life and never the superficial. He privileged the interpersonal relation rather than the functional. The primacy of love oriented his style of life⁵⁰ as well as his pastoral practice.⁵¹
22. The Recollection, faithful to the Augustinian theology of the Incarnation,⁵² maintains a distance from those accidental elements which might distort the understanding of

⁴³ "Due to the grace of God, the brothers lived united: this is not due to their efforts nor their merits but only to the peace of God". *En. In. Ps.* 132, 10.

⁴⁴ "And so to avoid saying that one could think that the branch can produce some fruit although little, after saying the 'this will give much fruit', don't say that without me little can you do but, rather, He said 'without me you can do nothing'". *In lo. Ev.* 81, 3.

⁴⁵ "When I think of the rest you have in Christ, I also rest in your charity even though I am engaged in multiple and difficult labors. We are but one body under one Head so that you are active in me and I might be contemplative in you". *Ep.* 48, 1.

⁴⁶ "The prior (preposito) must show himself as a model of good works. He should restrain the restless, support the wavering, comfort the weak, be patient towards all." *Reg.* 7, 3.

⁴⁷ "Do not place your rest in opposition to the needs of the Church since, if you did not have good ministers who opted to assist her when she gave birth, you would not have found the means of being born." *Ep.* 48, 2.

⁴⁸ "When we are here in the so-called 'bishop's house' we try to imitate in our lives, insofar as possible, the model of those saints about whom it has been written in the Acts of the Apostles that 'none ever claimed anything as their own: rather everything was held in common'". *S.* 355, 2.

⁴⁹ "It was there that God granted the blessing. And where was that? Among the brethren who lived in union". *En in ps.* 132, 13.

⁵⁰ "My love is my weight! I am borne about by it, wheresoever I am borne". *Conf.* 13, 9, 10.

⁵¹ "... (...) and thus holy love elevates to the heights and inspires in view of the eternal, attracting the soul to those things which do not pass away or die. It is as if all love would have its own strength and which cannot be passive in the soul of the lover for it is necessary that it attract". *En in ps.* 121, 1.

⁵² Cf. *S.* 294, 9; *S.* 186, 1; T. van Bavel, *Recherches sur la christologie de Saint Augustin. L'humain et le divin dans la Christ d'après Saint Augustin*, Fribourg 1954; H. Dobner, « Fonti teologiche e analisi della formula calcedoniana », in A. Ducay (ed.) *Il Concilio di Calcedonia 1550 anni dopo*, Città del Vaticano 2003, 42-58.

religious life and seeks to return to the original charism searching in all humility⁵³ and grace for the renewal of our own religious consecration. It is the goal of a Recollect to be a witness of the Gospel and an illuminating and unquestionable sign of the Kingdom.⁵⁴ For this very reason, the house of the religious is viewed and organized in such a fashion that it will shine forth as an indicator of the spiritual life which is enjoyed by its inhabitants. This should be evident in our ministries including the missions.⁵⁵

23. It is now possible to enumerate some of the constants of an Augustinian Recollect pastoral program such as:

- a) the primacy of love⁵⁶ and of unifying and fraternal interpersonal relations;
- b) the appreciation of the person as the center of attention of Augustinian Recollect pastoral action;
- c) hospitality as a personal attitude and a witnessing characteristic of a Church community;⁵⁷
- d) love for study and personal advancement;⁵⁸
- e) seek after excellence in offering those services required by the people of God;⁵⁹
- f) the promotion of the laity and its incorporation in the pastoral activities of the Order according to Augustinian ecclesiology;⁶⁰
- g) participation in sharing the charism on the part of the Augustinian Recollect Sisters;⁶¹

⁵³ “By His humility, which became obedient unto death, He raised you up (...) Is the Head humble and the member proud? In no way! He who loves pride does not desire to belong to a body which has a humble Head”. *S.* 354. 9.

⁵⁴ “But you, a chosen generation, weak things of the world, who have forsaken all things, so that you may follow the Lord, go after him, and confound the strong (...) run into every place, O you holy fires, you beautiful fires! You are the Light of the world, and you are not put under a measure. He to whom you have held fast has been exalted, and he has exalted you. Run forth, and make it known to all nations.” *Conf.* 13. 19. 25.

⁵⁵ Cf. *Const.* 283. “Those apostolic men situated themselves in the secure foundation of their house, not the material aspect of the same, but, rather, in the formal aspects of solid virtues, including a rigorous poverty and disregard for things, without having any other purpose but to seek God in prayer and to make him known through knowing him and loving him in words and example”. Fr. Andrés de san Nicolás, *Historia General de la Orden, Tomo I.* p. 416.

⁵⁶ “Before all else, beloved brothers, let us love God and then our neighbor, because these are the principal commandments given to us”. *Reg.* 1. 1.

⁵⁷ “St. Augustine always displayed an appreciation for hospitality”, *Vita* 22.

⁵⁸ “(St. Augustine) dedicated himself both to the discovery of new divine truths and to the dictation of truths already known as well as correcting those already dictated and copied”. *Vita* 24. “Such was his practice of working by day and meditating by night. *Vita* 24. After having believed with unbreakable faith in the Sacred Scriptures as witnesses totally worthy of faith, he sought to understand the same Scriptures through prayer, study, and righteous living so that, as far as possible, one could come to see with the mind what had been accepted by faith.” *De Trin.* 15, 27, 49.

⁵⁹ “For the same reason, it is not a difficult task to establish these matters as the object of faith which we ought to teach (...) not as if we should vary the exposition so that it would be, at times, more brief or , at times, more extended with such that it might be complete and perfect (...) In whatever case, that which we must always safeguard is to see what means are to be so used so that the catechist will always work with joy”. *De cat. Rud.* 3. 4.

⁶⁰ “And, thus, is the Church of God! Some saints make miracles, some proclaim the truth, some conserve virginity, others chaste matrimony; in some one thing and in others another. Each one realizes its proper function, but all live the same life”. *S.* 267. 4.

⁶¹ Writing to the nuns in Hippo, St. Augustine says (...)”also in order to once in awhile to find consolation (...) thinking in your numerical abundance, your chaste love, your holy life and in the generous grace that God has given you even to the point of not only of refusing carnal matrimony but also of electing to live in common in the same house with the goal of having one soul and one heart toward God”. *Ep.* 211. 2.

- h) attention to the family following the example of St. Augustine⁶² and St. Monica⁶³ and in agreement with the norms of the Church;
- i) concern for the youth so that, as with St. Augustine, they may seek Christ, experience his presence among them and bring others to know him as well.

24. Simplicity of life becomes a willingness to serve the needs of the Church⁶⁴ and, especially, the needs of the poor and doing so by avoiding any appearance of profit-seeking or fraud but, rather, by sharing, insofar as possible, the goods of the community with the needy.⁶⁵

25. Poverty implies not only austerity in the use of material goods,⁶⁶ but also a witness to simplicity of life-style and a generous response to the challenge of the Gospels.⁶⁷ The greatest wealth of a religious is Christ⁶⁸ and this is the primary and principal truth which the religious wishes to share with his companions.⁶⁹

VI. FORMATION OF COMMUNITIES

26. One of the principal objectives of an Augustinian Recollect pastoral plan is the formation of Christian communities⁷⁰ because God is a communion of persons and the Church is also a communion, a community of communities.⁷¹

27. In order to achieve this objective, the Augustinian Recollect community commits itself to attend to the following aspects of pastoral action:

- a) the union with God from the dispersion and paralysis caused by sin;⁷²
- b) unity among all social classes, rich and poor, in the same Church community;⁷³
- c) the integration of diverse cultures into the one family of God;⁷⁴

⁶² Cf. *Vita* 26.1.

⁶³ "Put this body away anywhere. Don't let care about it disturb you. I ask only this of you, that you remember me at the altar of the Lord, where ever you may be". *Conf.* 9. 11. 27.

⁶⁴ "We are sons of the Church and even more the weakest members whatever might be the place which we occupy in the same Church". *De op. monach.* 29. 37.

⁶⁵ "Whatever exceeded that which might be necessary for their own sustenance and which came from the work of their hands together with the left-over from their moderation at meals, they shared with those in need and did so with a diligence which was expended in gathering that which was distributed". *De mor. Eccl. cath.* 1. 31.

⁶⁶ "Their clothing, footwear, and domestic furnishings were modest and practical neither too luxurious nor too shabby." *Vita* 22.

⁶⁷ Cf. *VC* 74.

⁶⁸ "I began to gather together those brothers of good will what might wish to be my companions in poverty just as I had nothing (...) it is so because the most abundant and greatest patrimony is God Himself". Cf. *S.* 355. 2.

⁶⁹ Cf. *NMI* 29; *VC* 93.

⁷⁰ "What is to be your occupation? To praise the one you love and to attract lovers to love Him together with you." *En. In ps.* 72, 34.

⁷¹ "If you are the member and the body of Christ, there on the table of the Lord is the mystery which you yourselves are and you receive this mystery which you are. To this you respond 'Amen' and, with your response you affirm it". *S* 272.

⁷² "Let no one look back, let no one rejoice in his first works, let no one depart from that which is ahead and look to the past: run until you arrive but keep in mind that we do not run with our feet but, rather, with our desire. May no one in this life say 'I have arrived'". Cf. *En in ps.* 83. 4.

⁷³ Cf. *Const.* 26: "We are servants of the Church of the Lord; and our principal duty is to those most in need, no matter what our condition or station may be among the members of this body.", *De op. mon.* 29, 37.

- d) give attention to those who have distanced themselves from the faith that they may return to the Christian community of which they are members;⁷⁵
 - e) the incorporation of the non-believers into the Mystical Body of Christ;⁷⁶
 - f) work on behalf of the unity of the Church⁷⁷.
28. The Augustinian Recollect community, following the spirit of Augustine, is a praying community,⁷⁸ a fraternal community⁷⁹ inculturated in the place where we exercise our ministry in conformity with the magisterium of the Church⁸⁰ and open to the most needy.⁸¹ Our religious, especially, those responsible for the apostolate, motivated by the charity of Christ,⁸² should draw others of open mind and heart and accommodate themselves in all simplicity to local customs.⁸³
29. The true pastor recognizes the need to seriously reflect on the teachings of St. Augustine on the Trinity,⁸⁴ as the source and model of both the Church and the community.⁸⁵ In the same way, such considerations would serve to appreciate the mystery of the human person as well as contribute to his integral development.
30. One of the pastoral priorities of the Church is the urgent need to form Christians both mature and free in their faith⁸⁶ and in their following of Christ. Such a goal, however, is not attained without a solid experience of community.⁸⁷

VII. LITURGY

⁷⁴ "Each one was speaking in all languages, a prefiguration of the Church which was to be present in all tongues". *S.* 266. 2. Cf. *Ep. Ad cath.* 11. 29.

⁷⁵ "If we are moved by a great pain, this pain has as its object those Christians, our brothers, who desire to enter the Church, those already present in body but whose hearts are elsewhere. All should be within. If that which a man sees is within why should that be outside which is seen by God?" *S.* 62. 17.

⁷⁶ "You should not only give good example only to the believers but also to the unbeliever with the object of glorifying God with the praises of your good works so that they may achieve salvations.." *De s. Dom. In monte*, 2. 2. 6. "Pay attention, brothers, to the pagans. At times, they discover good Christians who serve God and are admired and who attract and believe". *S.* 5. 8.

⁷⁷ "There are many men and one man alone: many Christians and one only Christ. These Christians, with the Head, who ascended to heaven, are one Christ... what is your body? His Church". *En in ps.* 127. 3.

⁷⁸ "Dedicate yourselves to prayer at the appointed hours and times". *Reg.* 2. 1.

⁷⁹ "Many of you know for having read about it in the Scriptures how it is we wish to live and how we are already living by the grace of God(...)The multitude of believers had but one mind and one heart(...) now you have heard what we desire, pray that we will be able to do it". *S.* 356. 1-2.

⁸⁰ "That which was confided to Pedro-feed my sheep-that which he was commanded to do was not heard only by Pedro. The other apostles also heard it (...) They heard it and transmitted it to us so that we too would listen to it". *S.* 296. 5.

⁸¹ "God will do with you, his beggars, that which you do for the beggar. Give, therefore, and it will be given to you". *S.* 350 B.

⁸² "May the fire of charity enkindle your spirit and fill it with ardor spilling over in praise of God and in unsurpassable and most excellent customs". *S.* 234. 3.

⁸³ Cf. *Const.* 299.

⁸⁴ Cf. *De Trin.* 15. 28. 51.

⁸⁵ "...they had one soul and one heart, thus, your soul is not just your own but it is also that of your brothers and their souls are yours; better said, their souls and yours are not souls but, rather, they are the one only soul of Christ". *Ep.* 243.4.

⁸⁶ "If the Son liberates you, you will be truly liberated. Should I doubt, therefore, to serve that which, if it does not free me, I will forever remain in slavery without redemption?" *S.* 340 A. 3.

⁸⁷ "Behold, how good it is and how pleasant where the brethren dwell as one. This sound is so agreeable that even those who are ignorant of the Psalter sing this verse. It is so sweet when it is charity which makes it possible for the brothers to live in union". *En. In ps.* 132. 1.

31. Man was created to praise God.⁸⁸ The Augustinian Recollect joins with all of creation to bless the Lord with words and works.⁸⁹ As a consecrated person, he knows that his first duty is *the contemplation of divine truths and the constant union with God through prayer*.⁹⁰
32. The whole life of a religious becomes prayer; *your very desire is your prayer: if the desire is continued, your prayer will be continuous*.⁹¹ By living in union of mind and heart the religious mutually honor God in each other, whose temples you have become.⁹² At the same time, *prayer feeds a theological life and gives initiative and fecundity to the whole apostolate*.⁹³
33. St. Augustine was aware that liturgy awakens charity and builds the local church⁹⁴, thus, he celebrated the liturgical acts with dignity, especially, the Eucharist.
34. The first Recollect friars were also aware that their principal concern in manifesting the love of God was to be through *worship and praise, the celebration of the sacraments as well as the exercise of prayer and meditation*.⁹⁵ Thus, prayer and the liturgy ought to be considered as necessary means to be used in evangelization and in spiritual renewal.
35. It is in the Eucharist, above all, that the perfect union with God and with the brothers is realized.⁹⁶ The Eucharistic celebration is the most authentic and complete proof of the pastoral vitality of the community. Augustine defined the Eucharist as *the sacrament of piety, sign of unity, bond of charity*.⁹⁷ The Eucharist is, beyond all else, the creator of community and the source of all apostolic life.⁹⁸
36. The Church is seen as the Body of Christ, especially, in the Eucharistic celebration in which the faithful are nourished by that which, in reality, they themselves are. The Augustinian Recollect pastor, faithful to the practice of St. Augustine and the fervor of the primitive Recollection, serves as promoter of the spiritual and liturgical life of the community, particularly, on the Lord's Day.⁹⁹ The People of God have a right to expect him to be truly a leader of worship, a spiritual guide and a "man of God".¹⁰⁰
37. The Virgin Mary, Mother of God, chosen to fulfill the divine plan of salvation, has always been venerated in the Augustinian family. The Recollection invokes her under the title,

⁸⁸ "In that City (...) there will be found that to which we aspired (...) There our entire work will be to praise God and to rejoice in Him". *En in ps.* 86. 9.

⁸⁹ "Who is the one who praises God at all times?". *The humble of heart! En. In ps.* 33. II. 4.

⁹⁰ *CDC* 663. 1.

⁹¹ *En. In ps.* 37. 14.

⁹² *Cf. Reg.* 1. 8.

⁹³ *Const.* 65.

⁹⁴ "Such is the model given to us by the Lord Jesús Christ; how he wished we would be united in His Person; He consecrated on his table the symbolic mystery of peace and unity that ought to reign among us. Whoever receives the mystery of unity and does not and does not possess the bond of peace, does not receive a mystery for his benefit but, rather, a sacrament for his condemnation". *S.* 272.

⁹⁵ *FV* 1; *Const.* 76-77.

⁹⁶ "Behold what you have received! Just as a collection of many grains is transformed into one bread, may you also become one thing alone loving one another, keeping one faith, one hope and one love" *S.* 229. 2.

⁹⁷ *In. lo. Ev.* 26. 13.

⁹⁸ *Cf. PF* 249.

⁹⁹ *Cf. FV* 1; *C. ad.* 68.

¹⁰⁰ *Cf. NMI* 35-36.

Mother of Consolation, asking that she accompany her children¹⁰¹ in this journey toward the heavenly homeland.¹⁰² Other models of religious life, ardent charity and service to the People of God, are the saints of the Order.¹⁰³

VIII. WITNESSES AND GUIDES

38. Consecrated life, as such, is an outstanding witness to the kingdom of heaven both in the Church and in the world.¹⁰⁴ According to the Constitutions of the Order, *the consecrated life is, in itself, evangelizing and constitutes the particular manner of evangelization for the religious.*¹⁰⁵
39. St. Augustine stands out as one of the greatest pastors of the Church of all times.¹⁰⁶ The Recollection from the beginning assumed the Augustinian spirit of unconditional service to the Church¹⁰⁷ and projected the same spirit above all in the Philippines and Colombia.
40. St. Augustine dedicated himself to the study of the Word and found therein the grace which guided his pastoral activity.¹⁰⁸ The characteristic notes of his preaching were: *docere, delectare, flectere*¹⁰⁹ (to teach, to please, to move). Thus, the Augustinian Recollect pastor should also be a teacher of the faith. The study of the Sacred Scripture, particularly, should inspire his preaching and teaching.¹¹⁰
41. In imitation of St. Augustine, the Augustinian Recollect pastor ought to consider the interests of Christ and his Spouse, the Church, not his own.¹¹¹ For this reason, he advances consistently in his pastoral mission through the exercise of humility¹¹², charity¹¹³, remaining always in communion with his brothers.¹¹⁴
42. The faith of Christians and the consecrated life require, above all, witnesses. Augustine was exactly such in both his sincerity and transparency.¹¹⁵ He was close to his brothers as a result of his closeness to God.: *if I am frightened by what I am for you, I am also*

¹⁰¹ "(Mary) is certainly the mother of His members, and that is who we are, because she cooperated with His love in order that the faithful would be born in the Church, members of that Head of Whom she is really the mother of his Body". *De s. virg.* 6. 6.

¹⁰² Cf. *Const.* 78. "This city is the Body of Christ which has Christ as the Head. Our fellow citizens, the angels, are also members with the difference that we are pilgrims and we work while they wait in heaven for our arrival". *En. In. Ps.* 90, s. 2, 1.

¹⁰³ "Thus beloved brothers be lifted with joy on the feast days of the saints. Pray that you may follow in their footsteps. You are men and they, too, were but men (...) venerate the martyrs, praise them, love them, proclaim them, honor them, but adore the God of the martyrs". *S.* 273. 9.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. *VC* 93.

¹⁰⁵ *Const.* 281.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. John Paul II, *Augustinum Hipponensem*, chap. III.

¹⁰⁷ "If mother Church requests your cooperation, do not go about working with exalted pride nor should you flee from work with torpid laziness. Obey God with a humble heart..". *Ep.* 48. 2.

¹⁰⁸ "We are servants of the Word, not our own, but that of God our Lord". *S.* 114. 1.

¹⁰⁹ *De doct. Christ.* IV 12. 27.

¹¹⁰ "It so happened that I was ordained priest when I was planning a time of retreat in order to study the divine Scriptures and I had hoped to find free time for this task". *Ep.* 21. 3.

¹¹¹ *S.* 355. 1.

¹¹² "The humility of Christ teaches us to be humble for, by His death, He surrendered to the impious; by His elevation He raises us as well because through His resurrection He preceded the just". *S.* 206. 1.

¹¹³ "As long as one honestly loves men so much more does one love love itself". *De civ. Dei* 11. 28.

¹¹⁴ "In the Church there is an order of things: some precede and others follow. Those who precede serve as examples for those who follow and those who follow imitate those who precede". *En in ps.* 39. 6.

¹¹⁵ "Our life is before your eyes. We desire nothing from anyone other than your good works". *S.* 356 .12.

*consoled by what I am with you. For you, I am a bishop, with you I am a Christian. That name expresses a duty, the other a grace; the first is a danger, the second is salvation.*¹¹⁶

IX. SERVING THE CHURCH

43. Serving others in the Church is inseparable from serving God; one is a consequence of the other.¹¹⁷ It is a double ministry which flows from the same fountain, the love of Christ who came *not to be served by others, but to serve, to give his own life as a ransom for the many.*¹¹⁸ St. Augustine quoted this text quite often in reference to the pastoral ministry.¹¹⁹
44. Recently converted, Augustine sacrificed various personal projects, some very cherished, in order to serve the Church.¹²⁰ He put the needs of the Church ahead of his own interests. He did not renounce, however, his long-term desire to live with a community of brothers similar to the community of the primitive Church of Jerusalem.¹²¹ He thought of such a community centered in the very heart of the Church,¹²² and spread from there to all men.¹²³ Just as the Church, the religious community lives to evangelize and, *always sensitive to the needs of the Church, seeks the place and the manner in which it will be most useful in the service of God.*¹²⁴
45. All human beings are invited to receive the fruits of the salvation¹²⁵ St. Augustine recognized the universality of the merits of Christ and discovered that they were also seeds of revelation outside the Church.¹²⁶ On this basis, the Augustinian Recollect is also open to ecumenism and to the mission *ad gentes*.

X. MISSIONARY SPIRIT

46- The very origin of the Church is to be found in the mission of the Son and the action of the Holy Spirit in accordance with the proposition of God the Father.¹²⁷ To be *sent by God to the nations to be the universal sacrament of salvation*¹²⁸ at all times and in all places,¹²⁹ is essentially

¹¹⁶ “¿What would be of us without you? One thing is what we are for ourselves and another is what we are for you. We are Christians for ourselves: we are clerics and bishops for you”. S. 301. A.

¹¹⁷ “We are servants of the Lord’s Church and we dedicate ourselves principally to the weakest no matter what position we hold among the members of the Church”. *De op. mon.* 29. 37.

¹¹⁸ *Mt.* 20. 28

¹¹⁹ Cf. S. 340. A. 3; *In lo ev.* 51. 12.; S. 265. f. 1. S. *Dolbeau*, 2. 9. 10.

¹²⁰ Cf. *Conf.* 10. 43. 70.

¹²¹ Cf. S. 356. 1.

¹²² “For this reason, my exhortation is directed to you (...)to those who hold a more elevated position, that is, those who have a more prominent place in the same Body of Christ, by his gift”. S. 354. 1.

¹²³ “Do not try to be wise for yourselves along. Receive the Spirit! In your there ought to be a fountain from which there is something to share never just a deposit where things accumulate”. S. 101. 6.

¹²⁴ Cf. *Const.* 25; Cf. *Const.* 305.

¹²⁵ “The Redeemer came and paid the price: He shed His Blood and purchased the whole world. You ask: What did He buy? See what He gave and you will know what he bought. The Blood of Christ is the price (...) What was it worth? The whole world and all its peoples”. *En. In ps.* 95. 5.

¹²⁶ Cf. *De civ. Dei* 8. 11.

¹²⁷ Cf. *AG* 2.

¹²⁸ *AG* 1.

¹²⁹ Cf. *Mt* 28. 19.; *Mc* 16. 15; *Lc.* 10. 16.; *Jn.* 20. 21; *Hech.* 1. 8; *Rm.* 10. 14ss.

missionary and agent of evangelization.¹³⁰ The Church is called to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom and to implant it in history. For this reason, the Order, *as a part of the pilgrim Church, is missionary.*¹³¹

47. The Augustinian Recollection, following the example of St. Augustine, initiated its mission with all the fervor of a new-born institute.¹³² The institute *did not desire nor would it remove itself from the evangelizing demands of the time in which it came into being.*¹³³ Although our charism was not explicitly missionary in the origins of the institute, it was so in its initial inspiration and in its historical development.¹³⁴
48. Given adequate means, the Augustinian Recollect religious, in particular, as a missionary:
- a) proclaims the Gospel and establishes the foundations of faith and of Christian customs by means of an exemplary life¹³⁵ and by ministry of the Word¹³⁶;
 - b) appreciates and lives the religious and communitarian dimensions of his vocation¹³⁷ and of the charismatic identity of the Order¹³⁸;
 - c) is himself evangelized¹³⁹ and, in turn, evangelizes, receiving and giving with joy¹⁴⁰, listening and sharing¹⁴¹;
 - d) catechizing¹⁴² and celebrating the faith with the Christian community;
 - e) chooses, preferentially, to accompany the poorest¹⁴³ and those most in need¹⁴⁴;

¹³⁰ “Spread the Gospel: that which you received in your hearts sow the same everywhere with your voice. May all peoples listen and believe! May the peoples grow and may the spouse, clothed in purple for the Lord, be born of the blood of martyrs!” S 116. 7.

¹³¹ *Const.* 290. Cf. *Est. Mis.* 8.

¹³² “Do not permit me to silence the charity of Christ for Whom I desire to win all men insofar as such might depend upon my will”. *Ep.* 105. 1. 1.

¹³³ *AO* 18 (1980) pág. 27.

¹³⁴ “The Recollect provincial, P. Fray Juan of St. Jerome, had previously petitioned the King of Spain requesting permission to go to the Philippines which petition was granted and, on this approval, the provincial chapter (1605) declared in the following terms: ‘It seemed to us to be an opportunity to offer a great service to God and all members of the Definitorium decided that such should be done’. Cf. *Historia General OAR* 1. 399.

¹³⁵ “Keep going, run your race and persevere to the end and, by the example of your lives and your preaching of the Word bring as many as you can to join the race”. *De bono vid.* 23. 28.

¹³⁶ Cf. *Const.* 298; *Est. Mis.* 14.

¹³⁷ “Behold, how good it is and how pleasant where brothers live as one! (...) These words of the Psalter, this sweet sound, is a pleasing melody both in song as in understanding, has been the origin of monasteries. Inspired by this voice, the brothers sought to live as one”. *En. In. Ps.* 132. 2.

¹³⁸ Cf. *Const.* 295.

¹³⁹ “I, too, wish to read it; it pleases me more to be a reader of the word than to explain my own words”. S. 356. 1.

¹⁴⁰ “God loves the one who gives joyfully. If you become sad giving the bread, you lose both the bread and the reward. It is better to give with a generous spirit”, *En. In. Ps.* 42. 8.

¹⁴¹ “Pay attention! Let yourself be drawn by the Father toward the Son. Let the Father teach you. Listen to His Word”. *In lo. Ev.* 26. 8.

¹⁴² “Why do you want to talk rather than listen? You always want to be outside and refuse to go within. When you teach you reach out to those who are outside. It is in the interior where we learn the truth but we speak to those who are outside the heart”. *En. In ps.* 139. 15.

¹⁴³ “Remember those who are in need because you, too, are needy. Remember the poor because you, too, are poor”. S. 339. 3.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. *PC* 13, *GS* 76, *AG* 12, *PO* 17.

- f) promotes an evangelization respectful of cultures¹⁴⁵ and the integral development of peoples¹⁴⁶;
- g) awakens and stimulates a mission awareness among the laity through prayer, reflection and solidarity¹⁴⁷;
- h) makes known the life of the community and of the Church through the various means of social communication¹⁴⁸.

XI AUGUSTINIAN HUMANISM

49. St. Augustine made known the fact that his heart was nothing other than a human heart¹⁴⁹ which caused him to make his own the concerns of humanity. One of the constants of his life was the love of communion, his desire to be loved and to love.¹⁵⁰ He sought friendship and organized fraternal communities for the sharing of material and spiritual goods and fought against the temptations to power and individualism.¹⁵¹
50. Love of Jesus Christ, love of the Church and love of the faithful were, for Augustine, the center of his pastoral activity. Charity constituted the soul of his activity as a pastor and became the nourishment for his faithful.
51. As a consequence, the Augustinian Recollect pastor rejoices in the common life and projects to the Church community the values of peace and concord among the brothers. He will always cultivate the spirit of Church. He respects and loves the people among whom he lives and accompanies them in their hopes as well as in their anxieties.¹⁵² He promotes the civilization of love, justice, and peace in the midst of a fractured world. In brief, he is motivated in all that he does and thinks by pastoral charity.¹⁵³

XII. LOVE OF TRUTH AND OF CULTURE

52. The intellectual activity of St. Augustine, motivated by pastoral charity, was both extensive and profound.¹⁵⁴ He dedicated himself tirelessly to the search for the truth and the study of the faith in service and in defense of the Church: *Crede ut intellegas, intellege ut credas*, believe that you may understand and understand that you may believe.¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁵ “In view of the fact, that I could not provide the required diligence that I thought should be applied, I decided to consecrate a bishop and assign him to that place. With this in mind, I searched for an appropriate candidate for the place, one, who would also be knowledgeable of the punic language.” *Ep.* 209. 2.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. *Enc. Mis. II*, mensaje ; cf. *Const.* 299.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. *AG* 41.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. *Const.* 322.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. *De Trin.* IV, prólogo 1.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. *Conf.* 2. 2. 2.

¹⁵¹ Cf. *De mor. Eccl. cath.* 31. 67.

¹⁵² Cf. *GS* 1.

¹⁵³ “Keep in mind that charity ought to be the goal of all that you say, explain what you teach the person to whom you speak in such a way that listening he may believe, that believing he may hope, and that hoping he may love”. *De cat. rud.* 4. 8 .

¹⁵⁴ “He left to the Church numerous clergy and monasteries full of monks and nuns (...) with libraries provided with books and treatises of other saints; in all of this is reflected the singular greatness of this man given by God to the Church and there the faithful find him alive and immortal”. *Vita* 31.

¹⁵⁵ *S.* 43. 7. 9.

53. St. Augustine investigated countless problems presented to him by the Church and the society of his time. He also encouraged the study of all sciences and languages¹⁵⁶ as well the refined use of language.¹⁵⁷ But his outstanding gifts did not separate him from ordinary people.¹⁵⁸ Above all, his sermons were accessible even to the most simple of the flock.
54. His great work, *The City of God*, is an outstanding example of his erudition and an invitation to appreciate cultural formation as a means of evangelization.
55. In imitation of St. Augustine; an Augustinian Recollect religious;
- a) should commit himself to contemplation, to study and to the diffusion of the truth¹⁵⁹;
 - b) should strive to receive a solid cultural background¹⁶⁰; appreciate the diversity of cultures; and insert himself into the culture of the place to which he is assigned¹⁶¹ This is necessary to respond to the challenges of his time and to the mission which the Church has given to the Order, an opportunity to share the fruits of his labor with generosity.¹⁶²
 - c) By means of program of continuous formation, understood as an integral life time process of formation which embraces both living and doing, a religious makes a gift of self in service to the Church.¹⁶³
 - d) Dedication to the study of the human and ecclesiastical sciences should be a personal and community responsibility¹⁶⁴. A religious should participate with prayer, word and action in ecumenical initiatives;¹⁶⁵ should engage in dialogue all among those with whom he lives and works.¹⁶⁶ He, thus, responds to the challenges of the new evangelization making use of the new technologies and other appropriate means of communication.¹⁶⁷

CONCLUSION

Finally, the Order of Augustinian Recollects has a pastoral ideology which requires an attitude of closeness to the concerns and the realities faced by the Church and by humanity in the contemporary world. Some of these concerns are as follows:

¹⁵⁶ Cf. *De doct. Christ.* 11. 11. 16.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. *ib.* 2. 31. 48-49; 35. 53; 37. 55.

¹⁵⁸ “What are we without you? One thing is what we are by ourselves and another what we are for you.

Christians we are by ourselves: we are clerics and bishops for you”. *S.* 301. A.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. *Const.* 320.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. *Ep.* 21. 3.

¹⁶¹ St. Augustine quoted a punic refrain: “there is a celebrated punic proverb which I will give to you in Latin since all of you do not know that language. The proverb is very ancient: ‘the nuisance is looking for a coin, give him two and he will go away’. Does it not seem to you that this proverb came from the Gospels?” *S.* 167. 4.

¹⁶² Cf. *S.* 101. 6.

¹⁶³ Cf. *Const.* 258.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. *Const.* 271. “(St. Augustine) dedicated himself to the discovery of new divine truths and to the dictation of truths already known as well as correcting those already dictated and copied. Such was his practice of working by day and meditating by night”. *Vita* 24.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. *Const.* 321

¹⁶⁶ “In Carthage, a discussion took place with an Arian palace functionary in the presence of honored persons and nobles”. *Vita* 17.

¹⁶⁷ “And Augustine was the most important member of the Body of Christ, always solicitous and vigilant to work for the good of the Church”. *Vita* 18.

- the dialogue between faith and culture;¹⁶⁸
- understanding among civilizations;
- ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue;¹⁶⁹
- family life;¹⁷⁰
- poverty in the world;¹⁷¹
- emigration and immigration;
- new forms of religious life in the Church ;¹⁷²
- new ecclesial movements;
- means of communication and use of the new technologies;
- the phenomenon of globalization;
- bioethics and ecology.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. *S.* 43. 7. 9.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. *Vita* 17.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. *Ep.* 262.

¹⁷¹ “It is one thing to sin by reason of necessity and another by reason of abundance. The poor beggar robs something in which case the evil arises from necessity. But the rich have an abundance of riches, why should they steal what belongs to another” *En. In ps.* 72. 12.

¹⁷² Cf. *En. In ps.* 132.

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