

## "THE OBEDIENCE OF ST. JOSEPH TO THE WORD OF GOD. HOW DOES HIS MODEL MOTIVATE AUGUSTINIANS?"

Many Koreans are experiencing conflicts between generations. This can also be seen within congregations. Many people perceive that the lives of religious are meaningless. Christians may also find the rules of the monastery difficult. People also think that a loss of freedom comes by living in a monastery. So, in light of this reality, how should we look at the *Rule of Augustine*? A dictionary definition of obedience is *the act of obeying; dutiful or submissive behavior with respect to another person*. Then why should we obey? It's simple. Because the life of Jesus Christ was a life of obedience. Obedience to the father and obedience to Love are the images Jesus lived. Therefore, we should look at the meaning of obedience in his life.

Our teacher Augustine talks about this obedience.

*44. The superior should be obeyed as a father with respect due him so as not to offend God in his person, and, even more so, the priest who bears responsibility for you all.*

Fr. Joseph Farrell OSA explained this rule at the meeting for younger Augustinians in the Asia Pacific. Obedience is difficult for us, but it is meaningful. We don't always know how to follow God. We often don't know if our ideas are right. However, from the Order's Constitutions and church teachings, we can see the way of faith in which we should move forward. In the *Rule of Augustine* and the Bible, we learn that we find God's will in obedience.

The image of St. Joseph also clearly demonstrates this. We are celebrating this year as the year of St. Joseph. Many people meditate and think deeply about the Virgin Mary, but often ignore the life of Saint Joseph. We would also benefit to take a moment and think about St. Joseph. The Virgin Mary gave birth to Jesus. She must have at least had feelings of this child being her son. How did St. Joseph feel? His wife was not pregnant with Joseph's child. He couldn't have her as an ordinary wife. She was the one who conceived God. She was the chosen one. A normal family life could not be possible. Nevertheless, he welcomed her as his wife. He saved a single mother from death. If she hadn't married, she could have been stoned to death. He is head of the family, a husband, and a father. He was also a volunteer and a faithful servant of God. Therefore, the church honors him as the foster-father of Jesus. We honor him and celebrate him every March.

The reason is that his obedience was his participation in salvation. It is no different from the obedience of the Virgin Mary. It was Joseph's obedience that helped Mary obey. In a sense, Mary's obedience was possible because of Joseph's obedience. If it had not been for Joseph's obedience, there would have been many difficulties in making Mary's obedience a reality. He was able to be the husband of the Holy Mother and the foster-father of Jesus. The reason this was possible was because of his obedience. His life was unusual and noble. His obedience to

God's Word gave many people an opportunity to approach salvation.

Many people find this type of obedience difficult. The reason is that their point of view is different from God's. However, salvation is by our side when we understand and look at the world from God's point of view. This is what the life of St. Joseph teaches us. Eventually, this obedience tells religious people about life, but this is not just for religious but to all Christians. This is also the meaning of Augustine's obedience. Living with Jesus Christ is sometimes an acceptance of irrationality and unfairness. It is the life of Jesus Christ that shows it. Also, it was in the life of Saint Joseph that Jesus Christ had shown before. If you want to be a good monk, you should be a good Christian. To be a good Christian, you must see the teachings of Jesus in the Bible. His teaching and life are linked to obedience. This means that the way we should go is the way of obedience. We know Augustine's rules are very important. because we are Augustinians. It can also be seen that obedience is associated with the life of Jesus Christ. Therefore, this obedience is important to Christians and is more important to the religious who have dedicated their lives. We are living this year of St. Joseph. Also, now we are living in the Lenten season. I hope you will meditate on Joseph's life. Take time to reflect on obedience in the *Rule* of Augustine, discovering that obedience sometimes means giving up, but it can also mean that you can gain more from it.

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