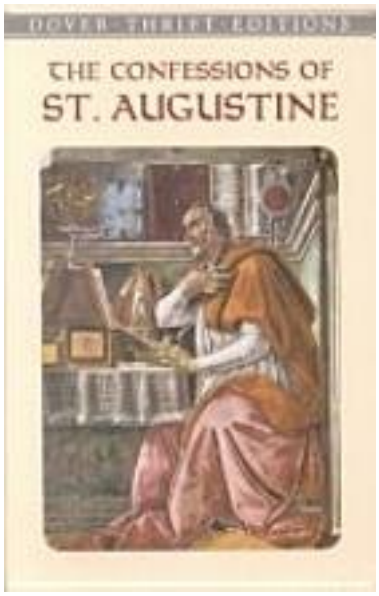


Assumptionists Present at Conference on St. Augustine's *Confessions*
by Prof. Glenn Arbery

On April 8 and 9, 2011, the d'Alzon Chair of Liberal Education and the Ecumenical Institute co-sponsored "St. Augustine's *Confessions* and Its Influences," a well-attended conference featuring Assumption College faculty and administrators.



On Friday, April 8, Prof. Marc LePain's keynote address, "Reading Augustine Reading," explored the crucial place of the act of reading in Augustine's *Confessions*. Prof. LePain showed the first impetus toward philosophy that Cicero's
Hortensius
gave Augustine, the intellectual preparation for his conversion from reading the Neo-Platonists, and the conversion of his will that came through reading St. Paul. Much of Prof. LePain's lecture focused on Books XI- XIII, often neglected, and in particular, Prof. LePain argued that in Augustine's allegorical reading of the first chapter of Genesis, "Augustine's own story, told in the

first ten books, is presented as part of the larger story of God's Spirit at work redeeming the world through Christ and His Church."



On Saturday, April 9, 2011 the conference continued with two panels. In the first, "Aspects of the *Confessions*," Fr. Barry Bercier, A.A. spoke on "The Mind of Augustine and the Rhetoric of God," exploring how Scripture reveals the "rhetoric" of God as it breaks into speech in creation and history; Fr. Roger Corriveau, A.A. delved into the phenomena of time and memory in "Memory: The Once and Future Self in *Confessions* X"; and Prof. Gavin Colvert, in "Assessing Augustine," showed the inadequacy of current models of education next to the paradigms of conversion in the *Confessions*. In the second panel, "Modern Influences of the Confessions," Dean Eloise Knowlton developed the parallels between Augustine and James Joyce in "Joyce's Middle Name"; Prof. Glenn Arbery showed in "At the Still Point: T.S. Eliot and the *Confessions*" how the Augustinian treatment of time in the *Confessions* informs T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*; and in "Augustine And Rousseau: On Changing the Subject," Prof. Rick Sorenson compared and contrasted the crucial moments of insight in the *Confessions* of Augustine and the *Confessions* of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.