

The Rule of St. Augustine with a focus on ‘community’ was the theme of this month’s “Conversations at the Center” in Brighton, MA. The presenter, Fr. Claude Grenache, A.A., superior of the local community, shared several citings from the Rule of St. Augustine which touch the hearts and minds of Assumptionists and the way they live on a daily basis. It was Fr. Emmanuel d’Alzon’s choice to adopt St. Augustine’s Rule when he founded his congregation of Augustinians of the Assumption.

Historically, the Rule is a compilation of letters to nuns which set forth rules and regulations to live by and two homilies he gave at the cathedral in Hippo where he lived in a community of friends who prayed, studied and shared faith. This life style was modeled on the Acts of the Apostles. Both men believed strongly that the common life gave witness to the Christian life.

In several of the citings presented by Fr. Claude, unity, harmony and prayer were hallmarks of St. Augustine’s rule. There is no substitute for the love of God and neighbor, lived in harmony together, with minds and hearts inhabited by the Holy Spirit.

During the discussion that followed, it was duly noted that there are at least two realities in the world today that make living St. Augustine’s rule particularly challenging. They would include the high value society places on individualism and the effects of disharmony or brokenness we experience in so many ways on a daily basis.

A lively discussion followed which broke open the richness of St. Augustine’s rule as an inspiration for everyone, not just for vowed religious. We pray that through his intersession, more young men and women will be drawn by his spirit to embrace his way of life.