

“A Great Cloud of Witnesses”

A Historical Series of the Murals on the Walls of Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian Church

Saint Augustine (of Canterbury)

Seventh Century England



Nothing is known about the early life of St. Augustine. He was a Benedictine monk living in Rome who in 596 A.D. was sent by Pope Gregory the Great to evangelize England. England had been colonized by the Romans, and there were some pockets of Christians in existence, the result of earlier missionary efforts. Yet the country was still largely un-Baptized.

When St. Augustine arrived, he preached to the local king, whose wife was Christian. This scene is depicted in

the mural. The king gave him permission to preach Jesus Christ in his kingdom, and gave him some land with a small stone church in Canterbury. The king and many of his subjects were soon converted. St. Augustine reported these successes back to the pope who sent more help and a plan on establishing a working organization and hierarchy for the whole country. The pope advised St. Augustine to not destroy the pagan temples, but to Christianize and retain them. The pope also suggested that the pagan festivals were not to be eliminated, but to be replaced by the feasts of martyrs of the Church, for as the pope wrote, "he who would climb to a lofty height must go by steps, not leaps." St. Augustine labored in building a cathedral in Canterbury, and in Christianizing much of present-day England. Seven short years after his arrival, St. Augustine died in 604 AD. **His Feast day is May 27.**

This series will feature the murals painted on the walls of Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian Church along with history and commentary. You can also find this series on our website at www.hcscchurch.org.
Historical commentary researched and prepared by Anthony Lickteig (Seminarian).