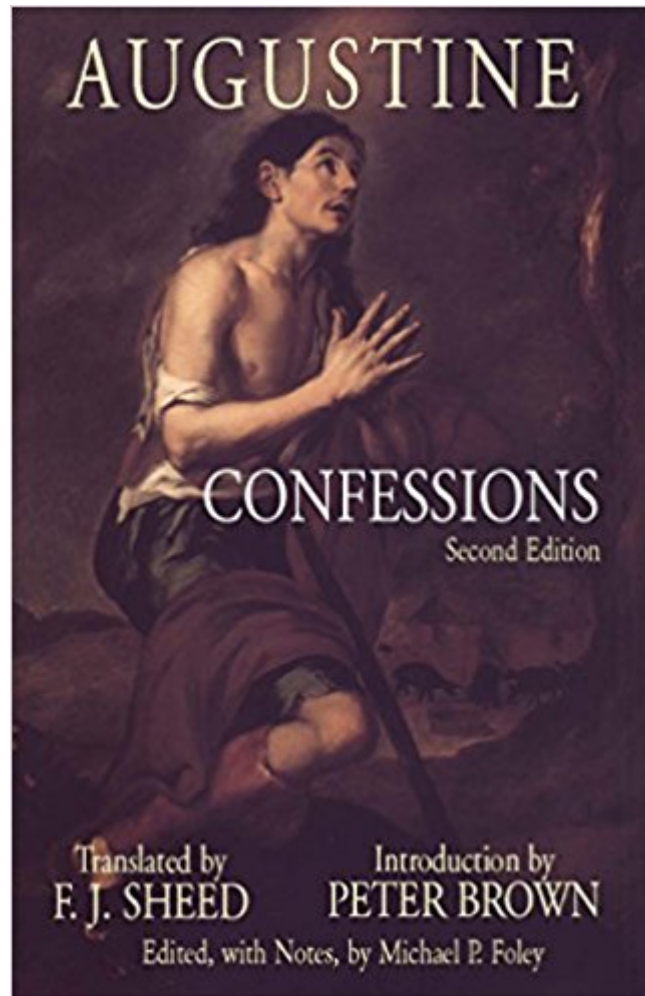




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# Confessions



## Synopsis

Like the first Hackett edition of the Augustine's Confessions, the second edition features F. J. Sheed's remarkable translation of this classic spiritual autobiography with an Introduction by noted historian of late antiquity Peter Brown. New to this edition are a wealth of notes on literary, philosophical, biblical, historical, and liturgical topics by Michael P. Foley, an Editor's Preface, a map, a timeline, paragraph numbers in the text, a glossary, and a thorough index. The text itself has been completely reset, with textual and explanatory notes placed at the foot of the page for easy reference.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Saint Augustine's Latin presents notable difficulties for translators. And even good English translations have usually dated badly. Frank Sheed's, which I read a mere fifty years ago, still shows no signs of dating. It captures Augustine's extraordinary combination of precise statement and poetic evocation as does no other. --Alasdair MacIntyre Augustine's sublime Confessions fairly ring with the music of a baroque eloquence, lavish and stately. F. J. Sheed's ear for that music makes this translation a memorable opportunity to hear Augustine's voice resonating down the years." --James O'Donnell

F. J. Sheed was co-founder of the publishing house of Sheed & Ward. Peter Brown is the Philip and Beulah Rollins Professor of History, Princeton University. Michael P. Foley is Assistant Professor of

Confessions essentially is a story of one man's spiritual journey from a life of sin (self-centered) to a life of faith (God-centered). It is simultaneously a personal narrative where Augustine of Hippo describes his quest from humble beginnings in North Africa to a position of authority in first century Milan, Italy. The reader is invited to join Augustine as he battles with his own war with sin and the different ideologies of the time, starting from youth and proceeding well into adulthood. Augustine begins as a true skeptic, raises a multitude of doubts about the Christian faith, and then systematically uses scientific, philosophical (he even draws up the ancient Greek philosophers), religious, and logical arguments to debunk alternative theories and finally reach the overriding conclusion that there is only one truth and that truth is found in God. Confessions ends up being love letter written by one man to his Creator. One of the biggest highlights in Confessions is Augustine's formulation of original sin, or a an act of free will rooted in a misdirection toward serving the self and not God and subsequently that act is what degraded and corrupted the will for all of humankind. Adam and Eve had fallen away from God, and sin was thus birthed into humanity, inescapably tainting each and every one of us with a corrupted will, a sinful nature, and an evil disposition. Augustine postulates that without God, we are free only to sin, and only with God are we free not to sin. Prior to the fall of man, Adam remained wholly good, and he had the power to do either good or evil. He unfortunately chose the latter. Augustine emphasized that the original sin was grounded in conceit and that human pride is the root of all sin. Arguably, Augustine is the most influential theologian of all-time and his ideology can be seen in the works of other great titans of Christian thought such as Luther, Calvin, and Niebuhr. Everyone should read this book, and if you are involved in any form of Christian ministry, you absolutely must read this book it will change how you view and interact with the world.

A story that is in print for 1600 years must have something to say to every generation. And this translation surely augments this great work. For any that are new to this dynamic account, expect to find your story in its pages. This is what makes it an ever-contemporary narrative. If it were not for man's persistent pride we'd not be surprised at the relevance of Augustine's naked admissions. His errors are our errors. His emptiness is ours. What he came to see and embrace is ours to confront and enfold. The cause of Augustine's emptiness and that which filled the hollow in his heart is told to us that we too might cease struggling to no purpose.

I am surprised that the reviews here appear to be for another edition, particularly an English translation. This is not an English translation!!! This is the Latin text of books 1-4 of Confessions, with some notes and commentary. What kept me from giving this 5 stars is the text reflects classical orthography, "u" in place of "v" and other things. In the 4th century the spoken language had already changed to reflect what today is often called "ecclesiastical pronunciation" or more correctly, "later latin pronunciation". If one is good with classical orthography it is not too much of a challenge, nevertheless it is not accurate to how Augustine would have spoken in the 4th century AD. Apart from that, the text is very readable and the notes are very helpful in breaking down complex constructions that Augustine uses as well as explaining obscure vocabula. This is great to fill in a gap for Latin students, namely moving from classical Latin to ecclesiastical writers. Augustine's Latin is very important for reading medieval and scholastic Latin, since apart from the Vulgate, Augustine is the writer, more than any other, around whom later writers would base their composition and style. Augustine is the last gasp of major intellectual thought in the Roman Empire, and his rhetoric and argument is as strong for us today as it was in his own day. There are a few drawbacks, depending on one's level of Latin. There is no facing vocabulary or a vocabulary in the back, which is not a handicap for someone who knows Latin well but can be for an intermediate student looking to move to better reading fluency. The pain of having to look up certain words can affect the enjoyment of the work, but on the other hand the student should be doing/already have done this work. For an instructor it merely creates the headache of having to make a worksheet or emphasize vocabulary based on what kind of instruction the student has received in the past. My attitude to facing vocabulary is that it is basically like training wheels and may even make the student lazy rather than force him to appropriate necessary vocabulary. Be that as it may, another shortcoming is the fact that the notes are not next to the text but are in the back. This means that you have to keep your finger in two places, or after reading a bit you must flip to the back for certain explanations which interrupts the flow of the reading, rather than glancing quickly to the next page before continuing. Again, for someone at an advanced or instructional level, this is not so difficult, but again, for an intermediate student it can become a handicap. On the whole, however, this text is very good for filling the gap of reading early and medieval Church Latin. The primacy on classics is unfortunate given that Latin continued as a language for 2 thousand years after the age of Augustus, and a lot of texts and instruction would leave one at a loss to read for example, legal Latin of the middle ages and early modern period, theological Latin whether of the Church Fathers or medieval scholastic theologians, or early Latin writings of protestant writers like Calvin and

Luther, etc. Given that at the least 1/3rd of those studying Latin are doing so out of an interest in the tradition of the Latin Church, this is a major gap that eventually needs to be filled.

absolutely beautifully written. he is a complicated person and does not try to hide that (as the title states, this is a book of his confessions). he struggles through many situations and his relationship with his mother in ways that are extremely applicable to anyone's life nowadays. an absolute mustread to help you think about who you are

Our Book Club chose this book as our current selection and we love the size of the book, the clarity of the print and especially the translation. Saint Augustine wrote his own "tell all" biography which also includes the story of his mother, St. Monica. They lived incredible lives!

Excellent Novel!

very nice

Among the antique treasures of Catholic literature is this inspired biography of a Saint and Doctor of the Holy Church. I cannot add to that!

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