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THE Confessions OF St. Augustine

*Translated, with an introduction and notes, by
John K. Ryan*

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THE CONFESSIONS OF ST. AUGUSTINE

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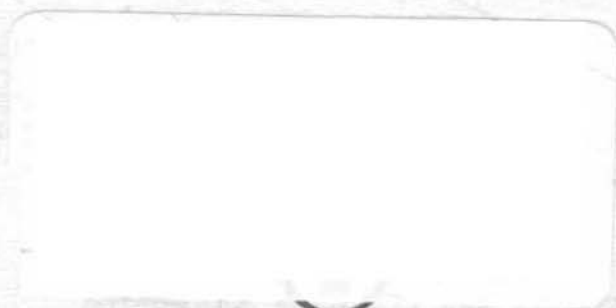


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The Confessions of St. Augustine have been translated into more languages than any Latin writings except Virgil's. Eloquent, deeply felt, and beautifully written, they have been praised throughout the centuries by men of many different faiths and walks of life as the greatest spiritual autobiography of all time. Now this great classic appears in a distinguished new translation for the modern reader by John K. Ryan, whose translation of St. Francis de Sales's *Introduction to the Devout Life* was widely praised by reviewers of all faiths as the finest modern translation of that book.

St. Augustine is a master of a Latin style that ranges from bare simplicity to most elaborate rhetoric and from the utmost compression to very full and detailed expression. But whether he is writing in one way or another, and no matter what is his immediate subject, his great concern in making his confession to God and before men is complete and exact truth. Every page that he writes is charged with such emotions as he alone could give to them. Yet feeling and art are everywhere subject to depth and precision of thought.

Monsignor Ryan's main purpose in the present translation is to give a clear and accurate rendering of the *Confessions*. His method in translating this work has been first to try to determine what St. Augustine thought, and then to state those thoughts in clearly understandable English for the modern reader. He has resisted temptations "to paraphrase and to substitute current expressions that correspond, more or less, to those that St. Augustine set down."

How successful Monsignor Ryan has been in capturing the thought and flavor of St. Augustine's writing will be immediately apparent to the reader of the present translation.

