

# St. Augustine catholic

*The official magazine of the Diocese of St. Augustine*

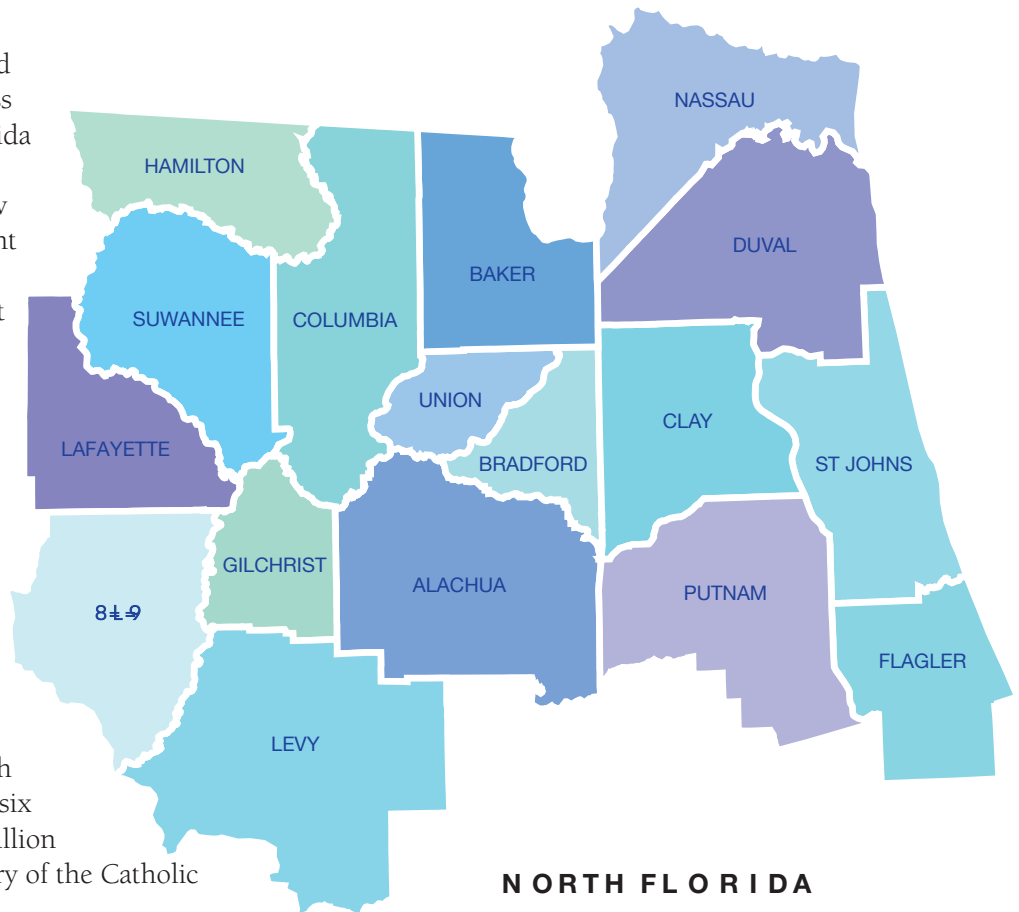
## HOME OF THE FIRST PARISH IN THE UNITED STATES

**O**n Sept. 8, 1565 a small band of Spaniards celebrated Mass on the shores of North Florida in preparation for starting a settlement there. They named their new home St. Augustine in honor of the saint on whose feast day they sighted land. Thus were the seeds of Christianity first sown in North America.

St. Augustine is the site of the first permanent parish church, now the Cathedral Basilica. The famed Santa Fe Trail originated here. It was from here that Franciscan missionaries began the trek North and West to proclaim the Good News. It was here that the first schools and hospitals were opened.

It was not until March 11, 1870 that Florida, east of the Apalachicola River, was designated as the Diocese of St. Augustine. The growth of the church in Florida from this Mother Diocese to six additional dioceses and more than 2 million Catholics is a significant part of the story of the Catholic Church in the United States.

Today, the Diocese of St. Augustine embraces 17 counties spanning the northeast section of Florida from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic Ocean. It covers 11,032 square miles and serves more than 142,440 registered Catholics.



**NORTH FLORIDA**

## DIOCESE OF SAINT AUGUSTINE STATISTICS

**Catholics in Diocese (registered) - 142,440**  
**Total Population - 2,163,676**  
**Priests in Diocese - 170**  
**Deacons in Diocese - 76**  
**Brothers in Diocese - 2**  
**Sisters in Diocese - 108**  
**Seminarians in Diocese - 29**  
**Diocesan Parishes - 52**  
**Diocesan Missions - 13**

**Diocesan High Schools - 4**  
**Diocesan Elementary Schools - 25**  
**Early Childhood Education School - 8**  
**Special Education School - 1**  
**Total Students Attending Catholic Schools - 11,048**  
**Students Enrolled in Religious Education Programs - 9,451**

