

# THE TWIN SPIRES

**The Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, Savannah, GA  
September 2011**



# WE ARE ALL CALLED TO SERVE.

By Msgr. William O. O'Neill

As members of God's family we all have the responsibility to share fully in the life of our church. As followers of Christ we are called to let our good works bring light to the world. Active participation in the community of St. John the Baptist will enable each of us to enrich our relationships with other people and to increase our opportunity to love one another the same way Christ loves us.

When Jesus Christ was here with us on this earth He made it clear that we were all called to serve in some way. I made my decision to enter the priesthood many years ago and still serve in that capacity today. If we consider how well we have responded to His call and evaluate our overall relationship with God, "How are we doing?" Our Lord gave us some simple rules to guide us in this Life. "Love your God" and "Love your neighbor." On the first commandment, most of us would probably say, I go to church on Sunday and I say my prayers. But for the second commandment, are we as quick to say we are doing a good job on that one? Love of neighbor has two dimensions, service to others and service to

our parish community. There are numerous opportunities to be of service and we regularly ask for people to participate more fully in our faith community. Despite the many opportunities to serve, most of the time it's the same people who respond. Why is that? Sure, we are all so caught up in the hectic pace of everyday life that perhaps we don't hear the call of the Lord, but others live hectic lives too, and somehow find time to work with the Church.

Are you just a Sunday Catholic or do you seek the opportunity to be of service to others and your parish all week long?

There are many opportunities for everyone to be involved. God has given each of us special gifts to use in furthering Christ's work. Being an active member of the parish community will give you a chance to glorify God and also serve others. In addition to personal growth, you will have a sense of belonging, knowing that we are unique and contributing members of our parish faith community. Put your faith into action, consider how you can be of service and experience the joy of serving Christ as an active member of St. John the Baptist. Your parish community needs you!



## On a beautiful Savannah evening, June 26<sup>th</sup> we were all able to celebrate

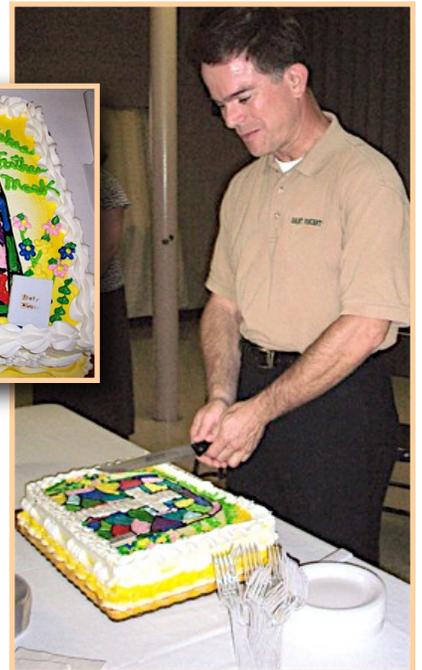
with Father Mark. Absolutely everyone at the Cathedral has grown to love Father Mark. It is no wonder he has been chosen to become the new Pastor in Thomasville. All who love him know he will be the center of the spiritual life of Thomasville.

CCCW member and our Parish Life representative for the Diocese, Noreen Buckstine coordinated the party. With her usual organizational skills she made everything look easy. And for all of the CCCW members she always makes the work fun.

Father Mark, Father Dan, Monsignor O'Neill and Bishop Boland, in addition to having a wonderful time, all spoke to the parishioners who came to wish Father Mark well.

Carol Day was dishing up the punch, and eleven other CCW members acted as hostesses for the party.

Even Father Mark helped with serving the cake to all who came to say goodbye and wish him well. We will all miss him!!



# COME TO THE FAIR!

By Peter Paolucci

In our last issue we reported that there are many opportunities to serve the Lord. Eight people, most relatively new to the parish, along with a couple of long time parishioners, shared their reasons for volunteering, as well as the joy and satisfaction they receive from being involved.

Some of their reasons are worth repeating:

"I do it because it makes me feel good to be doing something for people who really need some of the basics."

"Being in the Cathedral Choir has been a joyful experience."

"I really enjoy seeing the wonder on faces of the tourists as they come into the Cathedral. Telling them about our beautiful church is very gratifying."

"I believe that being a member of the church,

one should be willing to serve. So having been a Lector before, I signed up to read the Word again at the last Ministry Fair."

"Becoming a member of the CCW has been spiritually rewarding as I receive more than I give. I have grown spiritually by doing God's work. I feel more a part of the Cathedral parish family."

"Being an Extraordinary Minister has been an opportunity for great spiritual growth. When I raise the Host and declare, 'The Body of Christ', there is a moment of spiritual intimacy when two sets of eyes, focused on the Host, meet and the Communicant affirms our shared belief with an 'Amen'. I am so grateful and humbled to serve our parish in this capacity."

We will soon be holding our 4th Ministry Fair on October 2, 2011. Representatives of the various Cathedral Ministries will be available at booths on the Cathedral terrace after all the Masses on that Sunday to highlight the many exciting opportunities to serve. What is a Ministry Fair, you might ask? It's like a job fair but instead of employ-

ers, all the church ministries (Choir, Ushers, CCW, etc.) will be there to showcase what they do for our parish. A number of booths will be set up on the terrace in front of the Cathedral. After every Mass you will have the opportunity to survey the many excit-

ing service-related opportunities at work both within our walls and beyond. They will be displayed in creative ways to communicate information about individual ministries and opportunities to serve at the Cathedral. Representatives from each ministry will be on hand to answer your questions and to share with you what the experience has meant to them as they serve alongside other members of our faith community. Did you know that there are almost 25 ministries here at the



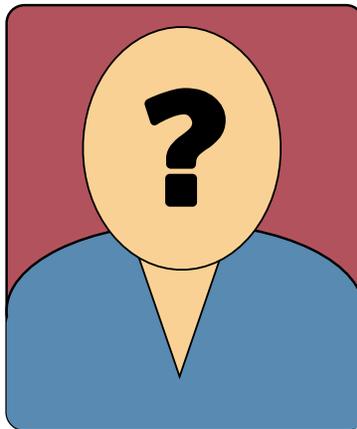
Cathedral? Many of them need your help.

God doesn't want us to merely exist. He created each one of us to serve! According to Scripture, "He has called us to serve."

Serving can satisfy the God-given hunger for fulfillment and fruitfulness. It has been said that "The only really happy people are those who have learned how to serve." Serving has the potential to give joy that lasts for eternity. It's a joy that benefits both the giver and the receiver. The comments expressed above by the featured volunteers certainly bear out this point.

Our last Ministry Fair was a big success. The weather cooperated and many parishioners lingered after Mass, enjoyed some juice and doughnuts and browsed the ministry booths. We have all been given various gifts from God. He wants us to use our gifts and talents; so put your faith into action, become more involved in our parish and join a ministry to serve the Lord.

Next year you could be in this picture!



# “Let the children come to me”

Janee Przybyl

Although the primary responsibility for spiritual growth and development of the children rests with their parents, others may share the responsibility with them, but they do not relinquish it. The Children's Religious Education (CRE) Program at the Cathedral is dedicated to assisting parents in the faith formation of their children in order to make them life-long disciples of Jesus through various Christian formation/religious education activities. The classes meet throughout the school year on Sunday mornings from 8:45 to 9:50 a.m. The children are taught to believe and trust in a loving God and receive age-appropriate instruction in Catholic doctrine and practice, including Sacramental Preparation for children about to receive First Eucharist and Reconciliation, as well as Confirmation, by dedicated Catechists to about 40 students in a safe and caring environment.

During the 2010/2011 school year, nine children received First Reconciliation and First Communion during the month of May. Leslee Holtzclaw and Joan Schaaf prepared these students and Father Mark administered the sacraments. Another three students received the Sacrament of Confirmation in a deanery ceremony on May 11<sup>th</sup> organized by the Diocesan Faith Formation staff and as always the Bishop presented a thought-inspiring sermon. Our students were thoroughly prepared by William Gill.

As Director of Religious Education, I was really pleased with the a very successful class presentation for the families which was held in April.

Approximately 25 family members attended. Each parent attending received a Parent Appreciation letter and saw their child present a faith formation topic that was covered during the year. The event received may positive comments from the parents and the teachers. We intend to repeat this event again in the coming year. Fortunately all catechists and substitutes have agreed to return next year. We are also working to make the Chil-



dren's Religious Education program a more visible part of the parish community and are planning to hold a Children's Mass during the next school year. We are grateful for all of the diverse participants in our program — our beautiful children, their loving parents and guardians, our devoted catechists and volunteers who give so generously of their time and talents every week in order to provide our students with the love and commitment that serves as a living example of Christian beliefs, and the wonderful pastoral staff who support us in all we do! We are a family together in Jesus.

Exciting things are happening in the Cathedral Children's Religious Education Program due to our dedicated teachers. We thank them for their service.

*"Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."*

*Mk 10:14*

# New Words... Deeper Meaning... Same Mass



Over the past several years, you have heard much through newspapers, blog postings and Twitter about the forthcoming revised translation of the Roman Missal. You may be wondering, “What is the Roman Missal, and how does this translation affect us?” The red book that the priest uses most often during Eucharistic liturgies, which contains the texts of the Mass, is called The Roman Missal. All of the prayers we say at Mass, including the Order of Mass, prayers for a feast day, solemn blessings and Eucharistic prayers, are found in this volume. The majority of the prayers we recite or sing at Mass are contained in this book and it is these prayers that have been retranslated from the original Latin into English.

So why is the liturgy changing and how will these changes affect the way we worship?

The new translation employs a more formal style than we use in ordinary conversation. Many sentences will be longer and the vocabulary will be broader. The guiding principle was to achieve a translation that better evokes what the Latin says. Many Latin prayers are quite lovely and the

beauty of the language proclaimed the beauty of God. Because that principle has been applied to the entire Missal, some changes are smaller than others. When the translation is used, you will notice slight changes in the prayers we hear and say at Mass. Being faithful to the original Latin prayers will enhance the meaning of the texts. They will be more poetic and there will be a more obvious connection to the scriptural roots of our prayers. There is an old axiom, “the law of prayer is the law of faith” or “that which we pray is that which we believe.” The words of our prayers are what we believe as a Church and form us as the body of Christ. It is precisely because the prayers of the Church are so important, that the process of revising the English translation was undertaken. Experts are enthusiastic about these changes to the Roman Missal and think the alterations are improvements, which will lead to a deeper spiritual experience.

In Advent 2011, the way we pray as a community at Mass will change throughout the English-speaking Catholic world. The changes in the parts of the Mass for the laity are minimal. Most of the changes are

in priest’s part of the Mass, which may be difficult for some of the priests to relearn. “We have been using the current translation since 1973 so it is very familiar to me and the responses are almost second nature. However, I have been practicing the new translation for some time and will be ready by the First Sunday of Advent,” said Monsignor O’Neill.

In preparation for the implementation of the new Roman Missal, Bishop Boland has recommended that all parishes publish bulletin inserts each week, beginning September 25, 2011, describing the changes in all parts of the Mass. Please read them to become familiar with the forthcoming changes.

The entire Church in the United States has been blessed with this opportunity to deepen its understanding of the Sacred Liturgy and to appreciate its meaning and importance in our lives. This new translation acknowledges the majesty of God and should help to deepen our faith through the renewal of our worship and the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy.

—Peter Paolucci

# For Crying Out Loud, Lord, Give Me Patience!

By Mark Bandy

A couple of Sundays ago, I was murmuring that prayer in my head repeatedly as I listened to the cries and squeals of children during Mass said by Bishop Boland. It was not just one child, there appeared to be a chorus with one picking up when another one stopped. After Mass, everyone I spoke with all the way to the car commented on the noise. It certainly was not unprecedented but it was definitely louder, longer and more piercing than normal.

I am prompted to write this piece because I love Christ, his Church and the Mass. Yet some Sunday Masses are more of a penance than a joy. Masses today are invariably much noisier than in the past and many broader societal issues beyond the scope of this article can be blamed. The more pressing question that must be asked and answered is, "What can we, as Catholics, do right now to restore a sense of the sacred to our Sunday Masses?"

First, we must recognize Mass for what it truly is. The Mass is more than just an occasion to gather, sing songs and read Scripture. Unlike our Protestant brethren, we, as Catholics, have the privilege of celebrating the Eucharist and sharing in the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, participating in the unending worship of God

through Jesus Christ in the heavens, surrounded by the communion of saints and countless throngs of angels and archangels. When we begin to understand that this is what we are "doing" at Mass, then we will come to recognize that we do God no favors by attending Mass but rather we are given an awesome privilege.

Second, we need to take seriously our call to participate in the Mass. Since Vatican II, the Church has stressed the hope that the congregation would participate in the Mass. But participating in the Mass does not simply entail singing or responding to prayers. It also involves praying reverently with the priest throughout the Mass. When anyone, adult or child, disrupts the Mass, he is preventing others from joining in that prayer.

Parents should be respectful of the fact that those around them are attempting to engage in prayer with God at Mass and recognize that their child's noise might be a distraction. While Christ welcomed the little children and the Church encourages large families in her teachings, neither of these facts necessitates an indulgence of disruptive children. The Mass may not be the best environment for really young children and parents should gauge whether their child has the requisite temperament

to participate in Mass.

In addition to a deeper appreciation of the reality of the Mass and our call to participate in it, parishioners and visitors need to be regularly reminded of the expectation to behave reverently during the Mass. An announcement at Mass as to the available nursery services and a regular notice in the bulletin should plainly reiterate the expectation. Ushers should politely request that parents of disruptive children please step outside. Most importantly, our priests need to emphasize the sacred nature of our worship both in their homilies and in the way in which they celebrate the Mass.

In all matters, truth and charity should moderate how we grapple with problems as a parish family. We should joyously acknowledge that every Mass is the most sacred, solemn form of worship that mortal men have ever offered to God in the history of the world. Recognizing that truth, we must charitably request that everyone respect the sacred nature of the Mass and allow their fellow parishioners to participate in it without prolonged or on-going distraction whether from a child or cell phone.



**R! O! DOUBLE S - I T-E-R spells**

**ROSSITER!**

By Joan Schaaf

I recently sat down with Dr. Frank P. Rossiter, Jr. the Honorary Chairman of the 2011 Cathedral Heritage Ball, to get to know him a little better. In our discussion, Dr. Rossiter came across as a very informative, approachable and congenial individual. A Savannahian by birth, he has the manners and bearing of a Southern gentleman. Yet, from the directness of his gaze, one sees the searching physician shining through his eyes. Dr. Rossiter knows his city's historical background and people very well. Never at a loss for words, which makes him an excellent conversationalist, he is able to relate the topic of conversation to an occurrence in his life or the community in which he was raised.

The Rossiter Family has been associated with the Cathedral dating to 1850, when his paternal great grandfather Patrick Rossiter, came to Savannah alone from Wexford, Ireland, at the age of fifteen and made his home in the Old Fort. Dr. Frank's grandfather, Joseph Rossiter, was born in this country and his parents were Frank and Inez Rossiter. Frank Sr. created "City Beat," a daily column in Savannah Morning News, containing a mixture of interesting, touching, inspiring, fun and solemn life events, and served as Savannah's Mayor-Pro Tem for thirteen years until his death in 1983. The street around Emmet Park was named Rossiter Place, after Frank Rossiter Sr., to honor his service to the City of Savannah.

Dr. Frank is a product of Savannah's parochial school system, having graduated from Benedictine Military School. He then attended Armstrong College, the University of Georgia, and the Medical College of Georgia. He married Glenda Nelson Rossiter in the Cathedral over forty-seven years ago and they have three children plus five grandchildren. To quote the doctor: "The Cathedral

has been the home church for the Rossiter family for multiple Sacraments since 1850 and all deceased family members were buried in the Catholic Cemetery after their funerals at the Cathedral."

Dr. Rossiter served nine years on active duty in the United States Army Medical Corps between 1965-1974. After his honorable



discharge in 1974, with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, Frank served twenty years in the Georgia Army National Guard Medical Corps (1980-2000) and was honored at retirement with the rank of Brigadier General.

Dr. Rossiter had his own private medical practice, served on the staffs of the three hospitals in Savannah and as a pediatric consultant at Georgia Regional Hospital. He retired from medical practice in June 2003 and currently serves on the Mercer University School of Medicine-Savannah Board of Governors. Dr. Rossiter also

serves on the Diocese of Savannah Finance Council and is Chairman of the Rourke Foundation. He was a candidate for Mayor of Savannah in 2003, finishing third in a field of six candidates. A Past President of the Chatham Artillery Association and the Hibernian Society, Dr. Frank singles out serving as the 2008 Grand Marshal of the Savannah St. Patrick's Day Parade as the highlight of his life as an Irishman in Savannah. As he passed his family along the parade route, gathered at their traditional spot on Rossiter Place, the lane circling Emmet Park, he was proud to proclaim, "R-O-double-S-I-T-E-R spells Rossiter! Proud of all the Irish blood that's in me!"

We are proud to have Dr. Frank P. Rossiter, Jr., as the Honorary Chairman of the 2011 Cathedral Heritage Ball.

Recently, Peter Connelly, one of the Cathedral Tour Guides asked me about the tolling of the bells. "Is there some pattern to when they toll and how long? Clearly they seem to ring on the hour but also ring at other times for a different duration. What is the significance of the timing and duration of the tolling of the bells?" Pete asked.

According to Monsignor O'Neill, "The Angelus bell is rung at 6:00 AM (but not here) and at 12:00 Noon and 6:00 PM. It begins with three triple tolls in honor of the Father, Son and Spirit and continues with swinging bell nine times in honor of the nine months of pregnancy but here at the Cathedral we have 27 swings, that is 3 times the 9. The bell is also tolled for funerals; correctly done it should be tolled three times, followed by a pause while reciting the Lord's Prayer, then be repeated. The tolling begins as the funeral cortege arrives and continues until the coffin enters the church. After the funeral the bells toll until the funeral procession moves away from the church."

## For Whom the Bell Tolls

And at the end of your life,  
"It tolls for thee."

These famous words by John Donne (1572-1631), were not originally written as a poem. The passage is taken from the 1624 Meditation 17, from "Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions" (1623) and is prose. The words of the original passage are as follows:

"Perchance he for whom this bell tolls may be so ill, as that he knows not it tolls for him; and perchance I may think myself so much better than I am, as that they who are about me, and see my state, may have caused it to toll for me, and I know not that.

"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; *it tolls for thee.*"

—Peter Paolucci

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