

FEBRUARY 2010

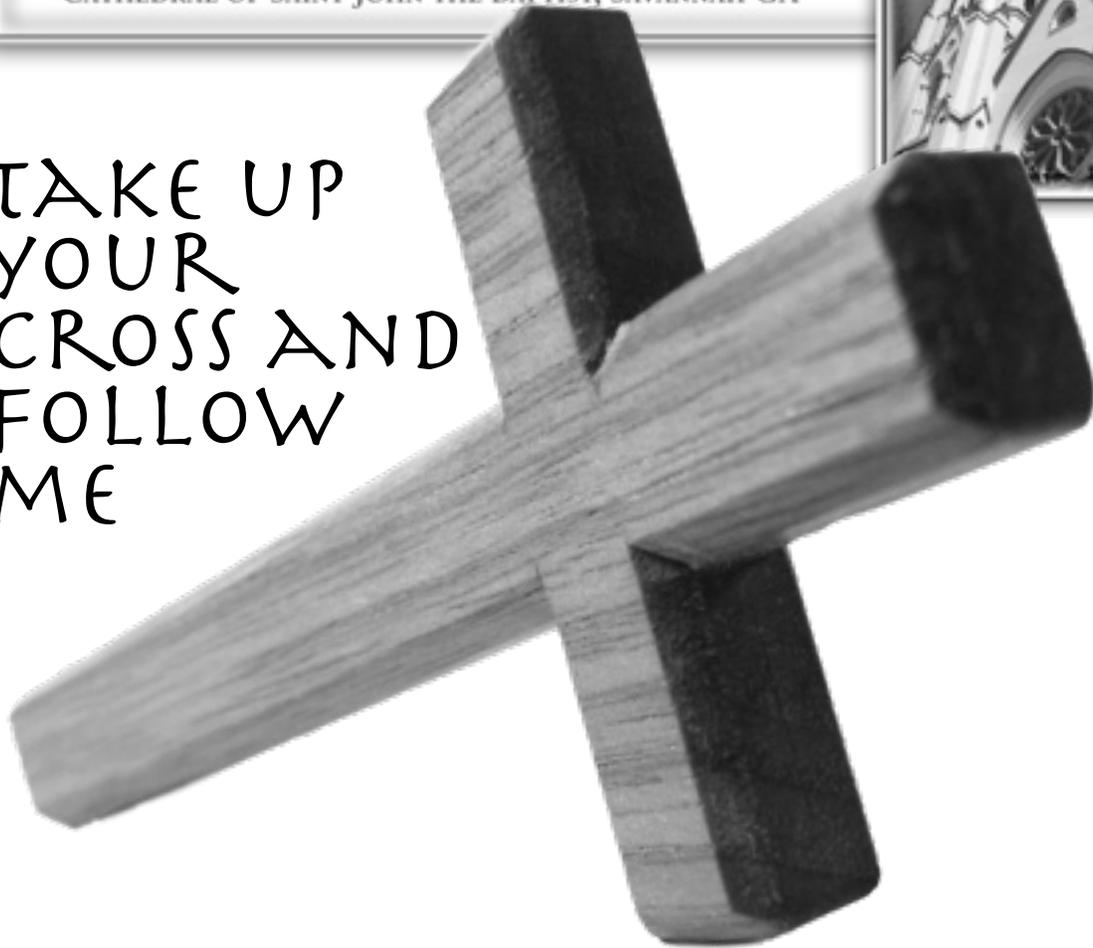
# THE TWIN SPIRES

VOLUME 13 NO.1

CATHEDRAL OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST, SAVANNAH GA



TAKE UP  
YOUR  
CROSS AND  
FOLLOW  
ME



Lent is a time of self-denial, spiritual reflection, renewed commitment, self-examination, and sacrifice. It is also a time of focusing on the things Jesus taught and a time to take up our cross and follow Him. Lent likely came into practice in the fourth century as an intense period of fasting and prayer for catechumens preparing for baptism at the Easter Vigil. It comes from Jesus' 40-day isolation and temptation in the desert. To observe Lent is to emulate Jesus' journey in the desert, where he spent 40 days fasting and meditating—and fending off worldly temptation.

Lent happens in the springtime when new life appears after the deadness of winter. It's a time when Christians get ready to spring to new life, too, as they slough off the past

year's mistakes and wrongdoings. They remember the times they've failed to be their best for Jesus and humbly ask for forgiveness and then anxiously wait for renewal.

Traditionally, most of us have tried to fast, giving up something for Lent while others have given their time, energy and possessions for others, as Christ gave himself for us. Each of these exercises is a spiritual preparation for Easter. This sort of self-denial leads us to a deeper experience of God's presence in our lives. Self-denial, self-discipline, and self-control are exercises for our spiritual muscles.

The concept of denial and self-giving is not very popular these days in our greedy and indulgent culture. We prefer having fun and being happy over the disciplines of self-denial,

commitment, and sacrifice. We are spoiled by the trivial and sensual, and by living a life of doing things “pleasant for our bodies.” So during Lent, it is good to give up something in order to remember the holiness of the season and to put us into a different frame of mind to better approach God.

Every spring, Major League baseball players prepare for the season with spring training, and every spring, ordinary people prepare for summer by doing “spring cleaning.” So why shouldn’t Christians prepare for the most important events in Jesus’ ministry — what He did for us on Good Friday and Easter Sunday; what He did for us on the cross and at the empty tomb? If it helps you, think of Lent as a kind of Christian spring training and spring-cleaning.

In Lent, many people tend to give up something that gives them pleasure. Giving things up is more than just doing it for its own sake. There has to be meaning to our act of giving up. The real meaning of giving up should be understood as a discipline for learning self-control, to free our minds from the chase after material things, to identify with Christ’s sufferings that showed us great self-denial, and to remember what the true pleasures are for followers of Christ.

We need to focus less on what we are giving up and more on the reason for giving it up. The goal is to take on the mind of Christ. Everything that occupies our attention in any way fills up space and time that could otherwise be occupied by Jesus. Thus each little thing that we can give up makes room to spend more time with Jesus. True self-denial is the way in which we make room in our lives for the presence of God. So as you continue your Lenten practice, strive to think less about what you are giving up and more about for whom you are making room. Widen the spaces inside to accommodate the Lord who loves you. Furthermore, we should not remain in self-denial but use it as an exercise to take up our cross and follow Jesus.

During these forty days, we should not only give something up, but also should take up something too. Both Mark (8:34-35) and Luke (9:23-24) document Jesus’ message to us in their Gospels, “Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me!” To follow Jesus means to go where He goes and do what He does. Jesus tells us to follow His way, His will, and His example even when it may be unpopular, uncomfortable or inconvenient. Think about this! If Jesus hadn’t denied Himself and taken up

His own cross, but chose instead to live a long, convenient, and comfortable life, then salvation for us would not have happened.

Many Christians give up food, fellowship, or other entertainments as an expression of self-denial during the Lenten season. We might try giving up sweet snacks, coffee, cigarettes, or fast food. We might even try to forego television, gambling, impulse shopping or anything that most relates to a sin that’s especially sticky for us as well as the activities that provide us the opportunity to do them. However, there are more positive, aggressive, profound, and productive ways to observe the season of Lent. There are many other creative ways we can give up ourselves and take up Jesus’ cross.

Lent is not simply the period of time for the blues, self-punishment, or starvation. Lent is not all about giving things up that we love to do or to have. It’s also about adding good things to our lives or to others’ lives —the kind of good things that follow on what Jesus asks of us, especially that which relates to what we’re giving up. Lent is a time for us to reinforce the action of taking up Jesus’ cross as his disciple, in the journey of our faith.

Let us observe Lent in a more positive, aggressive, and creative way. Let us not only give up sweet food, television, and soda but also serve in a soup kitchen, visit someone who is lonely, shut-in or hospitalized, share more money with God and neighbors, and correct our wrong doing, bad behavior, and careless decisions. Let us ask ourselves not only “What do we give up for Lent?” but also

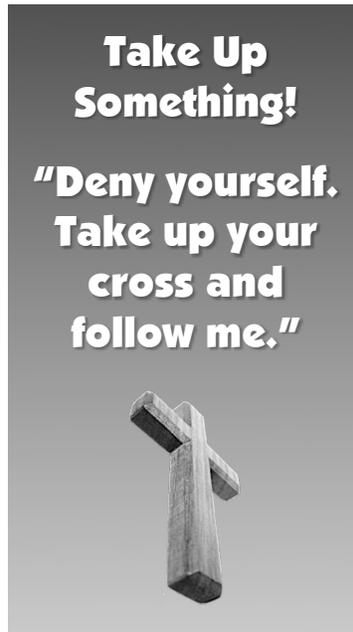
“What do we take up for Jesus in the journey of our lives?”

Right here in our Cathedral Parish there are numerous opportunities to do something positive for Lent such as:

- Participate in the Food Drive
- Come to the Parish Mission
- Attend the Holy Hour for Priests
- Pray the Stations of the Cross
- Go to Confession

During the solemn and hopeful season of Lent, we all need to do something to prepare our hearts for the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and the message of hope that Easter Sunday brings. And we should take up His cross not only during Lent, but 365 days out of every year, making this a way of life.

*Adapted from a sermon by Reverend Kyung Mo Koo*



# Social Apostolate Food Drive



will appear in the Bulletin every week. You'll find a Food Drive insert in the Sunday bulletin. Please put the bulletin insert on your refrigerator and bring a bag of groceries to church every week. Non-perishable food items such as canned foods, rice, macaroni, peanut butter and jelly are always needed for this worthy cause.

Here is an opportunity to fulfill your Lenten responsibility for almsgiving before we get to Easter. The Food Drive is a chance to be of service to your fellow man. Remember, "From those to whom much is given, much is expected."

Please be generous.

Lent offers an opportunity to rediscover the mercy of God and become more merciful toward our brothers and sisters. Almsgiving helps us respond to our neighbor's needs and share with others whatever we possess through divine goodness.

Each month one of the parishes in Savannah is designated to contribute food to the Savannah Social Apostolate Food Basket Program which provides meals to the needy of our city. During the month of March, the Cathedral Parish will be responsible for contributing food to the Food Basket Program.

"The need is even greater this year in these dire economic times," according to Bill Wade, Chairman of the Christian Service Committee. "A can of soup is welcome but a bag of groceries is preferred. If you bring a bag of groceries to church every week, the basket will be overflowing with food every Sunday in March," commented Bill.

The drive starts Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, and runs through the entire month of March. Collection baskets will be maintained in the vestibule throughout the month and a reminder notice

## MISSION planned for March 1-3

Fr. Andrew Struzzieri of St. Matthew's Parish in Brooklyn, NY will lead 3 day mission for the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist during the beginning of Lent. He will preach first at all Masses on the weekend of February 27 and 28 and preside over the Mission on Monday through Wednesday, the first week in March.

The topic selected by Fr. Struzzieri is "The Tenting Place of God," and his subtitle will be "The Bible, the Temple and Prayer." The evening sessions will emphasize the following tenets of our Faith:

The Word of God becomes flesh  
God journeys with us  
God is revealed in Scripture

The meetings will be held in the main sanctuary from 7-9:00 p.m. Participants should bring their own personal Holy Bibles to the evening proceedings.

Please join us for an uplifting spiritual experience during the Lenten season



## *❧* Farewell to Fr. Clark *❧*

Cathedral Parishioners came out in force for the January Covered Dish Supper to express their gratitude to Fr. Clark for his almost 14 years of ministry in the Cathedral Parish. Over 100 people crammed into the hall as extra tables and chairs had to be brought in to seat them all. "This was the biggest crowd we've ever had at a Parish Supper" said Sherry Wallace, head of the Parish Life committee. "It was a fine testimony to Fr. Clark."

A Special Edition of *Twin Spires* on all the tables recounted Fr. Clark's faith journey which began in Dayton, Ohio in 1949 where he was born and raised a Methodist. He was received into the Catholic Church in 1968, while attending the College of William and Mary. He entered the seminary program for the Diocese of Savannah in 1972 and studied for the priesthood at North American College in Rome. He was ordained at the Cathedral four years later.

Over the years Fr. Clark has had many and varied assignments beginning as assistant pastor at St. Teresa's Parish in Albany, GA. He then became Director of Adult Education and Dean of the Permanent Diaconate Program for the diocese, Pastor of St. Anne's Parish in Richmond Hill and Campus Minister at Pacelli High School in Columbus,

where he taught Religion and Latin. In 1996 he was appointed Editor of *The Southern Cross* and took up residence at the Cathedral.

Monsignor O'Neill thanked Fr. Clark for his dedication during almost 14 years of service to the Cathedral Parish, noting that they came at the same time in 1996. He credited Fr. Clark with helping him build up the Cathedral Parish from a relatively unfriendly place with fewer than 500 families, to a vibrant faith community of almost 1000 registered households.

In his comments, Fr. Clark said it was a good 14 years and he has enjoyed being here at the Cathedral. Although he is pleased to be appointed a Pastor again, he will miss all of us. However, Port Wentworth is only about 8 miles away so he'll be seeing us often.

During his time with us, we have all come to appreciate Fr. Clark's erudite sermons and insightful bible study. His editorial direction of *The Southern Cross* has been superb. We wish Fr. Clark many blessings in his new assignment as the Pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Port Wentworth, GA. The Cathedral faith community will miss him very much.



Deborah Wade accepts the award on behalf of the CSC from Gretchen Reese.

The Christian Service Committee (CSC) was formed in 2005 to Promote awareness of social ministry in the parish and encourage involvement and participation from all parishioners to help others in need. Over the past five years the Committee has been guided by Christ's entreaty, "Whatsoever you do for the least of my brothers, that you do unto me."

Before the CSC came into being, the only service initiative here at the Cathedral was the Annual Food Drive for the Social Apostolate. While a golf tournament, the Cathedral Classic, was held for a few years, it is now a Social Apostolate fundraiser. Initially we tried to build on and expand the effort to aid the Social Apostolate by adding an Item of the Month to regularly collect something that Sr. Pauline needed most. The Committee next decided to put together Personal Hygiene Packets, containing individual size soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush and a washcloth, etc. for the Social Apostolate. According to Sister Pauline, these packets are much needed by the people they serve. Parishioners were asked to bring in individual sized shampoos, small soaps, etc. which they have been collecting over the years from hotels on their travels.

## Christian Service to others can bring us closer to God

Several downtown hotels were most generous in donating items. Notices soliciting contributions, placed in several publications out at the Landings, were very effective at generating additional supplies and the Landings Company graciously accepted the contributions at a drop-off point.

At the end of its first year in October 2006, the committee held the first Ministry Fair to give parishioners the chance to learn more about the many opportunities to serve the Lord by committing their time and talent for the good of the community. Representatives of the various Cathedral ministries were available at booths on the Cathedral terrace after all the Masses to highlight the many exciting opportunities to serve, describe their ministry and answer questions. Over the years, the three Ministry Fairs that have been held resulted in many people signing up for various parish ministries. The CSC has also regularly assisted Sharon Wallace and the Parish Life Committee with the Annual Priests Appreciation Dinner.

A new initiative was added last year to provide diaper bag packets containing a few diapers, wipes, powder, shampoo, lotion, small bottle, receiving blankets and sleeping gowns to the Savannah Care Center, which helps pregnant women explore alternatives to abortion and encourages them to carry their babies to term. This effort was recently recognized

at a Parish Council Meeting as the CSC was presented an award from the Savannah Care Center for commendable service by donation of packets for the diaper bags. "The Christian Service Committee of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist has done an outstanding job of supporting the work of Savannah Care Center," said Chairman of the Board of Directors Gretchen Reese. "

What is so commendable about this effort is that they have consistently provided diaper bag packets, for the better part of a year, contributing personal time and even member financing where donations are insufficient, with very little recognition. May God continue to bless them and their efforts with various excellent projects on behalf of Our Savior and Lord," she concluded.

Most recently, the Committee received approval from the Parish Council to initiate a program to welcome our new parishioners. A "Cathedral Welcome Packet" containing information about how to get involved in the Cathedral Parish will be put together and a procedure for making calls to personally welcome new members will be developed. Tom Stack is leading this effort..

"We have an exciting prospect for our committee," commented Chairman Bill Wade. "This is what Christ asked us to do." Please join this effort or contact Bill Wade for more information on any ministry. His phone is 912-507-1212 and E mail is [bwade13@hargay.com](mailto:bwade13@hargay.com).

## TEN THINGS THAT PROMOTE VOCATIONS



In light of the recent transfer of Fr. Clark from the Cathedral we have become more aware of the shortage of priests and the need for more Vocations. To encourage Catholics to foster vocations, Father David Toups, interim director of the Office of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) offers “Ten Things” Catholics can do to promote vocations to priesthood and religious life.

For all Catholics:

1. *Pray* for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. Jesus says in Matthew 9:38 “to beg the master of the harvest to send laborers into the vineyard.” If we want more priests, sisters and brothers, we all need to ask.
  2. *Teach* young people how to pray. Pope Benedict XVI said that unless we teach our youth how to pray, they will never hear God calling them into a deeper relationship with Him and into the discipleship of the Church.
  3. *Invite* active young adults and teens to consider a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life. A simple, sincere comment should not be underestimated. An easy way to do this can be remembered by four letters: ICNU. “John, I see in you (ICNU) the qualities that would make a good priest, and I want to encourage you to pray about it.” It is a non-invasive way to encourage *openness* to a religious vocation.
  4. *Make it attractive*. Show the priesthood for what it truly is – a call to be a spiritual father to the whole family of faith. Similarly, the consecrated life for a young woman is a call to be united to Christ in a unique way, and to be a spiritual mother to those she encounters in her life and service. The challenge for priests and religious is to be joyful models of their vocations.
  5. *Preach it, brother!* Vocations must be talked about regularly if a “vocation culture” is to take root in parishes and homes. This means, first and foremost, the people need to hear about vocations from priests through homilies, prayers of the faithful, and discussions in the classroom. Vocations kept out of sight are out of mind.
- For those considering a vocation:
6. *Practice the faith*. We all need to be reminded that the whole point of our lives is to grow in a deep, intimate and loving relationship with God. This is the first step for any young person desiring to discern any call in life.
  7. *Enter into the Silence*. Silence is key to sanity and wholeness. We can only “hear” the *voice* of God if we are quiet. Take out the ear buds of your iPhone, iPod, and iTunes and listen to God, the great I AM. Young people should try to spend 15 minutes of quiet prayer each day – this is where you can begin to receive clear direction in your lives.
  8. *Be a good disciple*. Some bishops say, “We do not have a vocation crisis; we have a discipleship crisis.” Young people can become true followers of Jesus Christ by serving those around them. By discovering your call to discipleship, you also discover your particular call within the Church.
  9. *Ask God*. Ask God what He wants for your life and know He only wants what is good for you. If, in fact, you are called to the priesthood or consecrated life, it will be the path to great joy and contentment.
  10. In the immortal words of a famous sneaker manufacturer: *“Just do it!”* If you feel that God is inviting you to “try it out,” apply to the seminary or religious order. Remember, the seminary or convent is a place of discernment. You will not be ordained or asked to profess vows for many years, providing ample opportunity to explore the possibility of a call to priesthood or religious life.

# March a Matter of Perseverance

By Gretchen K. Reese



How many people showed up in Washington for the Life March this January? It is a frequently asked question, and a reply of “at least 200,000” or “300,000 or more” hardly satisfies. A simple statistic fails to describe the crowd that shows up to walk, visit members of Congress and voice objection to anti-life legislation, and pray at the Basilica for a renewed Culture of Life in America.

This year I settled on a new answer to the “how many” question. In order to portray the crowds in more concrete terms, I describe an experience we had. The March route of about 2 miles is an ellipse or elongated circle. It passes up Constitution Avenue, and angles sharply right to pass between the Supreme Court and the Capitol. There the March itself officially ends, but the marchers are funneled back down to the National Mall via Independence Avenue. With a large crowd, the route takes approximately one hour to walk. So, when our group returned, what do you suppose we beheld on the National Mall where the March started an hour earlier? For more than 30 minutes after we finished the march, many thousands of orderly citizens continued to file out onto Constitution Avenue to *begin* their walk! Yes, there was an impressive crowd this year!

Curiously, even such a huge throng of American citizenry failed to impress the secular media. Once again they shamefully

ignored the March for Life. However, we who travel to Washington every year for this event expect nothing else. Unlike our “newby” Tea Party brethren, we are not alarmed when neither the newspapers nor TV networks deign to mention our presence. Our annual March and the growing numbers who attend represent a threat to the entrenched mindset in Washington. To acknowledge our numbers and our persistence would be to acknowledge a consistently troubling response to the Roe v. Wade decision foisted on Americans in 1973 by the Supreme Court.

But God smiled on us regardless of our reception from the nation’s Capital. Instead of the predicted sleet and frozen temperatures, the weather for the 37<sup>th</sup> March for Life was mild for a wintery January day, and the sun actually shone for over two hours in the afternoon. We never saw a flake, and the pond that hosted many ice skaters last year was populated by swimming waterfowl instead.

You see, God will not be mocked (Gal. 6:7-8). His people will proclaim the Good News in season and out of season without fail (Mark 13:13; Acts 5:41-42; 1 Cor. 4:12-13; 2 Cor. 4:16-17). *Non vincit nisi veritas* (The truth alone triumphs)! His will be done!



## THE ANNUNCIATION 2010 CATHEDRAL ORDAMENT

This window is located, just inside Our Lady's Chapel.  
It depicts Gabriel, The Archangel, announcing to Mary  
that she is to be the Mother of God.

Gabriel floats between heaven and earth.

The Holy Spirit, represented by the dove,  
hovers over Mary. She is clothed in the royal blue of  
a queen mother. Her arms are folded  
in prayer. The lilies symbolize her purity and faithfulness.

Gabriel approaches from  
the left bearing the messenger's staff topped by a fleur de lis.

Donation \$15

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