Easter Egg Hunt
Article and Photos by Carol Herb

The Cathedral Parish along with the Knights of Columbus, Council 631, held their annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 31, at 10 o’clock in Lafayette Square. The families began gathering very early that morning on the Cathedral plaza, anxiously waiting for all the planned Easter activities to begin. Fr. Schreck greeted the crowd of families on the plaza and wished them a very Happy Easter and good luck with the hunting.

With baskets in tow, the children were escorted by age groups to Lafayette Square to begin their search for over 600 hidden eggs. The Easter bunny arrived and mingled with the children in the park taking time to greet them individually and have photos taken with them. Many of the children were so excited to talk to and get hugs from the Easter bunny while others appreciated him only from a distance.

Following the hunt, lunch was available in the Parish Hall. More than 100 guests were served hot dogs, chips, drinks, and ice cream treats from Bruster’s. The Women’s Auxiliary from Council 631 had tables set up for children to make Easter crafts and a Peter Rabbit video was running for the children to view while they were waiting for or finishing their lunches. It was such a beautiful spring day and a wonderful way for families to gather together and usher in Easter with their youngsters.
On January 19, a total of 31 pilgrims, including adults, students and families representing 8 churches plus members of the College Campus Ministry, boarded a bus bound for the 2018 Atlanta March for Life. One of the students was attending the march for the first time and other pilgrims drove from as far away as Ridgeland, SC and Guyton, GA to join us.

The joy-filled group prayed and sang away the miles on the 4 hour journey up Interstate 16, sharing a breakfast provided by group members and Jayne Stefanic, of the Family Life office at the Pastoral Center. Chilly temperatures awaited us in Atlanta, but in spite of the threat of worse conditions, the little snow and ice we encountered melted as the day progressed.

Our first stop was a visit to Atlanta’s oldest church building, the Catholic Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, designated by the National Register of Historic Places as the first Catholic Church in Atlanta. Built in 1848, the original structure was a square, wood-framed church dedicated to the Virgin Mary and named the Immaculate Conception in her honor.

Pastor Fr. Thomas O’Reilly, a native Irishman and Confederate Chaplain, persuaded General William Tecumseh Sherman to spare the building and the surrounding neighborhood. Legend has it that Fr. O’Reilly told Sherman, “If you burn down the Catholic Church, all the Catholics in the ranks of the Union Army will mutiny!” (Somehow, upon hearing this tale, Monsignor O’Neill came to mind, and the idea of him facing down the general in a like manner was not hard to imagine.)

The cornerstone of the current building was laid on September 1, 1869 by Bishop Verot of Savannah, but it was not until 1873 that the huge church was finally completed and dedication ceremonies were held.

The prayer rally preceding the March for Life was held at Liberty Plaza behind the State Capitol Building. The keynote Speaker for the event was Dr. James Merritt, a well-known Christian speaker, author and the pastor at Cross Pointe Church in Duluth, GA. Dr. Merritt said, “There is no more noble cause in America than the efforts of pro-life advocates on behalf of the pre-born. I am excited to be speaking truth to one of the greatest moral issues of our day.”

After the prayer service concluded, the attendees, including the college students from SCAD and Armstrong, joined in a silent one-mile march through the streets of downtown Atlanta.

While the students prayed the Rosary together, their passion for life was palpable. They raised their original posters high. One read “Fetus is Latin for ‘young child,’” and another said, “Thank your mom, she chose Life.” As we prayed and walked, the tragic loss of life of so many of God’s children, in the 45 years succeeding Roe v. Wade, stayed in the forefront of all our minds.

Soon the group boarded the bus for the return trip to Savannah, praying the Rosary again and watching inspiring films such as one about the sacrificial life of Mother Theresa. The time sped by.

The day trip to Atlanta lasted less than 12 hours. It was a prayerful and fulfilling experience and, while we hope the trip will not be necessary next year, our travelers are prepared to march again in 2019. The bus seats 56, so there is room for more supporters. Please consider joining the Savannah Deanery Respect Life Ministry in the March for Life next January.
As Catholics, most of us have some devotion to the Virgin Mary. Whether we pray a daily Rosary, wear a Miraculous Medal, or keep a statue of the Blessed Mother on our desk, we all recognize to some degree her unique position as the Mother of God.

By relying on her intercession, we achieve greater spiritual depth and a closer relationship with her Son, Jesus Christ. This February, the Women’s Group from SCAD Creed Campus Ministry dove deeper into their devotion by consecrating themselves to Jesus through Mary.

Beginning on January 9, they began reading *33 Days to Morning Glory* by Fr. Michael E. Gaitley, MIC, a guide to Marian consecration based on the classic personal retreat *True Devotion to Mary* by St. Louis de Montfort. Offering an updated, informational, and reflective path to Marian consecration, *33 Days to Morning Glory* takes the reader through a series of daily meditations, preparing them for their consecration day. On this day, they profess their devotion to Mary, giving themselves entirely to her.

The Creed Women’s Group embarked on this journey with enthusiasm and fervor. Meeting each Thursday, they discussed the development of their devotion to Mary, offered fellowship to one another, and fostered a community together. Despite juggling classes and extracurricular activities, they persevered toward their goal.

On February 11, 2018, on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, Brianna Hansen, Elizabeth Delos Reyes, Katie Collins, Madeline Walz, and Jillian Wenner, above L to R, consecrated themselves to Jesus through Mary. (Not pictured is Carolina Carreira, a SCAD student who transferred to Atlanta this quarter. She would call in via Skype during the women’s group meetings and although she wasn’t able to attend the Mass, did complete her consecration in Atlanta.)

Fr. Pablo Migone celebrated Mass for them in the Chapel of Our Lady beneath the Cathedral, where they prayed St. Maximilian Kolbe’s consecration prayer to Mary together. Afterwards, they enjoyed a reception organized by Krystyna Swierczewski, and exchanged Miraculous Medals, prayer cards, and consecration chains.

It is impossible to maintain our faith alone; Christ himself encourages us to seek community when he proclaims, “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matthew 18:20). The women of SCAD Creed excelled throughout their consecration journey because they were there to lift each other up in Christ. Those who contributed to their consecration, such as Fr. Pablo and Krystyna, were also an invaluable part of their formation and cannot be thanked enough. I highly recommend Marian consecration and I hope everyone will join the SCAD Creed Women’s Group in this “short, easy, secure, and perfect” path to sainthood.
A 1,000 pound marble statue of the Crucified Christ and Mary, part of the collection of the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences since before the turn of the century, has been given to the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist.

The six-foot work of art with a historic background will move from the west wing of the Telfair this morning to the left hand parlor of the Cathedral rectory. It took 4 men and the ingenuity of a local marble firm to move the half ton statue.

The statue “La Pieta” depicts in white marble about three-feet high the Crucified Christ cradled in the arms of the Madonna. It is similar to the famed “Pieta” by Michelangelo.

“La Pieta” was brought to America from Italy by Charles Green, who built and resided in the mansion that is now St. John’s Episcopal Church Parish House or the Green-Meldrim House.

It was in the mansion as late as 1870 when the home was sold. The statue was given to the Telfair Academy by the late Mrs. William Mackall, daughter of Charles Green. The statue was first placed in the front hall of the Telfair and later moved to the rear hall in the west wing.

Mrs. Lester Karow, granddaughter of Charles Green and daughter of Mrs. Mackall recently suggested “La Pieta” be placed in a more religious setting where it could be better seen. Mrs. Charles Bush was instrumental in arranging a new home for the statue. It was accepted on behalf of the Cathedral by rector, Rt. Rev. Msgr. T. James McNamara.

Editor’s note: Although the article claims the statue was part of the Telfair collection since before the turn of the century, the minutes of the April 17, 1908 meeting of the Georgia Historical Society Board of Curators, (the Telfair Academy of Arts and Sciences was owned by the Georgia Historical Society from 1883-1920,) stated that “Mrs. Aminta E. Green of Baltimore, MD, who had recently died, the widow of the late Charles Green of Savannah, bequeathed to the Academy, a group statue, ‘La Pieta’.” In addition, the Savannah Evening Press article also claimed that the donor was Mrs. William Mackall, daughter of Charles Green, which seems logical that Mrs. Mackall would be carrying out her mother’s wishes.

On a different note, since the statue was in the Green Mansion until 1870, when the home was sold, most likely it was there and viewed by General William Tecumseh Sherman during his sojourn in Savannah, from December, 1864 to January, 1865, when he stayed in the house. In his vivid narrative, “Sherman’s March,” the author Burke Davis, seems to confirm this possibility when he describes the Green Mansion as one of the city’s most striking houses, “a blend of Georgian and Victorian Gothic, with battlements, a cast-iron porch and stained-glass windows, its rooms filled with Italian sculpture and European canvases.”
From TripAdvisor

America’s 20 Most Beautiful Churches, Cathedrals and Basilicas Worth Visiting

While Europe is rightfully known for its rich history and religious sites, the United States also boasts plenty of sacred landmarks worth visiting. None may be more profound than the stunning churches dotted across the country, with jaw-dropping architecture and interior designs. We’ve rounded up 20 of the most beautiful churches in America, plus cathedrals, basilicas, and temples for good measure.

There are tours available for many of these attractions—so you can get the best experience ever. Oh, and don’t forget your camera!

So says TripAdvisor, which recently announced that the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist was among America’s 20 Most Beautiful Churches, Cathedrals and Basilicas worth visiting. The list included a total of 11 Catholic Churches as follows; Cathedral Basilicas 2, Cathedrals 5, Basilicas 2, Chapel 1, Mission 1

TripAdvisor described our Cathedral as follows:

“A stop at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist is a must when wandering through the charming cobblestone streets of Savannah, Georgia. After admiring the striking white and gold facade, spend time observing the stained glass that overlooks the altar.

If you’re lucky, the nave will be filled with the sound of the church’s iconic pipe organ. See the cathedral at your own pace with the hop-on, hop-off trolley tour of historic Savannah.”

Although TripAdvisor indicated that the churches were not listed in rank order, after reviewing the announcement in more detail, a couple of significant patterns seemed apparent.

While nine churches had less than 800 reviews, their numbers ranging from 23-802 and averaging only 376 reviews, the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist had 7,502 reviews, 3rd only to St. Patrick’s Cathedral in NYC with 10,804 and the Chapel of the Holy Cross in Sedona, AZ with 8,111. (Count as of our viewing.)

And of all the churches rated, the Cathedral was one of three that received a 5.0 excellent rating, indicated by all green circles; only two other churches, the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis and the Basilica of St. Joseph also had all green circles, however with only 2,542 and 648 reviews respectively.

Visitors regularly refer to the Cathedral as stunning, awesome, magnificent and amazing. If you wish to see the entire list go to:

https://www.tripadvisor.com/blog/most-beautiful-churches-cathedrals-basilicas-usa-america/
It was 20 years ago in May of 1998 that we published the first issue of Twin Spires. It started out modestly as a 4 page black and white publication with no name. The Name the Newsletter Contest was the theme of that issue, Twin Spires was the winning entry and the rest is history.

Happy Anniversary Twin Spires
By Peter Paolucci

We started the newsletter as a result of a parish study which called for better communications within the Cathedral Parish family. Our newsletter objective was to communicate with all parishioners to provide information on parish activities, invite participation of everyone in those activities and create a closer sense of community.

But over the years it has become so much more. Hopefully we all gained a deeper understanding of our faith from articles about a liturgical practice, feature or mystery as well as an enhanced regard for this landmark building from the various stories about the Cathedral’s artistic and architectural features. Moving to a color format a few years ago has enhanced the quality of our message especially in the articles about our Christmas crèche.

One of our principal objectives was to inform our parishioners. One of my favorite stories concerns the Sistine of the South issue we published in August 2015. A long time parishioner called after he had read the issue and said, “I have been coming to the Cathedral for 50 years and never knew that there were hidden murals in the Scared Heart Chapel.” Mission accomplished.

Looking through past issues recently, the one thing that struck me, was the faces of the many people pictured in the various stories over the years, happily smiling out at the reader. Whether it was from one of the many Heritage Ball or parish supper stories or the articles about our children receiving the sacraments, it is evident that the Cathedral Parish is a happy place. However there was also a bittersweet element to those reminiscences, as several of the people pictured are no longer with us, but we know they are with the Lord.

Through these past 20 years what was evident on the pages of Twin Spires is that the Cathedral parish is a vibrant community of faith. The two golden crosses atop the lofty twin spires dominating the Savannah skyline proclaim the fulfillment of the establishment of the Catholic Faith in Georgia.
The diocesan process for the beatification of Friar Pedro de Corpa and Companions, or the Georgia Martyrs, is complete. Father Giovangiuseppe Califano, OFM, the Postulator of the Cause, is overseeing the redaction of the final historical document which will be presented to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints next year.

There is currently a need for greater devotion to these martyrs. Please pick up a prayer card at the rear of the Cathedral and pray that their heroic sacrifice may be recognized by the church.