It was a beautiful Saturday morning, the kind of day that Savannah is graced with as spring approaches. The faithful Cathedral Gardening Group showed up, gloved, sun-screened and covered with bug-repellant, ready to work at the Villa Marie Center on Isle of Hope.

Sister Pat Brown, Director of Catholic Charities and Villa Marie Center Coordinator, had approached the Time and Talents Ministry with a gardening project to spruce up Villa Marie before the busy summer season. With more than 30 people who had expressed interest in gardening and home repair projects, we gathered a focus group at the All-Volunteer meeting on January 31 and brainstormed the possibilities. Then we met Sister Pat at the Center for a tour and to draft a plan. With the guidance of two very capable volunteers, Danielle Crawford and Linda Stephens, the plan became a call to action.

On that beautiful Saturday morning, March 12th, we gathered at Villa Marie to complete our work. Several volunteers had been working with Sister Pat to acquire the plants and some of the prep work had already been started but there was much to be done on that Saturday. After hours of hard work, a general clean-up was complete, flowers and shrubs had been added to the front of the main building, and a new vegetable garden was in the ground and carefully protected from the deer. We were dirty, sweaty and tired but happy at the outcome as we gathered for a picnic lunch in the main building. The many people who will visit the Villa Marie Center over the coming months will enjoy our handiwork. Thank you to Sister Pat for her constant encouragement and to the fabulous Cathedral Gardening Group for delivering on their promises. We are looking for new members as we take on other projects so if you’re interested, please contact the Parish Office at 233-4709 or fill out the volunteer form on the website.
The Cathedral of St. John the Baptist and The Knights of Columbus, Council 631, sponsored an Easter Egg Hunt in Lafayette Square Saturday, March 26, 2016. With a break in the weather on Saturday morning, volunteers were able to hide over 1,500 plastic eggs. Families gathered on the Cathedral Plaza, baskets in hand, to be greeted by Father Schreck and the Easter Bunny. The Easter Egg tradition began as a reminder of our own rebirth (hence the cracked egg) and the ultimate sacrifice our Lord has made for all of mankind.

Children three and under began the hunt gleefully in a special section of the square, secured by ribbon to ensure that this age group found Easter eggs. Moments later, all of the other children ran in search of those treasured eggs. What joy it was to witness the merriment and simplicity of these happy children.

After the Easter Egg Hunt, everyone was invited to have an ice cream cone from fellow K of C member and Bruster’s franchise owner, Pat Delerosa. The Bruster’s Ice Cream truck had a line immediately and was enjoyed by all. Bruster’s Ice Cream is located in the Whole Foods Shopping Center on Victory Dr. All of the families gathered in the Parish Hall for refreshments, Easter crafts and fellowship provided by the Knights of Columbus.

A special thank you to the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, the Cathedral Council of Catholic Women, the Knights of Columbus, Council 631 and their Women’s Auxiliary who planned a beautiful event. Interested in being part of these organizations and making a difference? Please call 233-4709.
Every day of the year a myriad of visitors enters our Cathedral. They come from all walks of life, backgrounds, nationalities and ages. Recently we have had an increase in schools requesting docent-led presentations.

In March, the World’s Religions class from Savannah Country Day paid a visit. They were invited to the choir loft by Kevin Cartwright, organ builder, for a presentation on our Noack Organ. He showed them the mechanics, inner workings and different sounds able to be produced by our instrument.

Kevin told the students that the organ is our voice in the church. With the capability of producing thousands of different sounds, our personalities burst into song. The sound of the flute is soft and pure; the strings are those of us who are easy going; the big reeds represent the loud and colorful among us while the strings celeste are purposely out of tune, making others sound more beautiful.

On Saturday, March 12, 2016, we welcomed The American Guild of Organists, Savannah Chapter. After a concert by Heidi Ordaz, they came to the loft for a description of our instrument, presented again by Mr. Cartwright. Before proceeding to the next concert, one of our docents gave them a short history of our church.

The art history class from SCAD paid us a visit to study and see firsthand the Gothic architectural features of the building. After a presentation by a docent on the history and furnishings of the Cathedral, their professor sent them combing the nave to find Gothic features that they would be tested on the following week.

Vidalia Heritage Academy, a Baptist school, attended Mass and the Stations of the Cross on Friday March 11. As part of their curriculum they must attend services at churches other than those of the Baptist persuasion. After Mass, Fr. Schreck spent time with them answering the many questions they had about the vestments he was wearing, the furnishings of a Catholic Church and their significance.

In addition to those in the accompanying photos, tours are also given to groups and individuals that come to visit on their own. If you enjoy meeting people from all over the world as well as sharing your appreciation of the beauty of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, consider joining the Cathedral docents team. Please contact the rectory: (912) 233-4709
Human Trafficking - Modern Day Slavery

By Joyce Piersanti

The National Council of Catholic Woman’s (NCCW) is focused on fighting the scourge of human trafficking. Several local Council of Catholic Woman (CCW) chapters are working in conjunction with the NCCW to help save the lives of vulnerable children trapped in the scourge of slavery. This crime is happening very close to you right now, well within your circle of influence. Whether you live in metropolitan or rural America, there are children chained or locked inside a shack, an apartment, or a house right now. They are controlled by drugs, beatings and threats. Some agencies report that there are 300,000 new children forced into the criminal underground every year. One to three percent of the children are kidnapped, 30 to 35% are sold or bartered by their own families, and 60% are lured in, mostly through a very sophisticated network of professionals.

Human trafficking is modern day slavery that subjects children, women, and men to force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of exploitation. This horrific practice can include prostitution, pornography, and sex tourism as well as domestic servitude, factory work, migrant farming and mining. Human trafficking is not the same as smuggling; it does not require movement across borders. This is happening right here in our diocese and throughout the country. There is a sex trafficking circuit that goes through Atlanta, Macon, Augusta, Savannah, and Columbus, Georgia. The traffickers move the children they enslave from place to place in order to avoid being detected. While the problem is widespread and growing it is not hopeless. There are many areas where our education, outreach and prevention activities make a very big difference.

The NCCW is the “boots on the ground” between the Catholic Church and our communities on contemporary society issues such as human trafficking, domestic abuse, and food for the poor and more. We have started a volunteer group to bring education and awareness to the problem of human trafficking. In September 2015, in conjunction with the Mayor of Savannah and the Georgia Attorney General we held a training session for the local police department that certified 600 law enforcement officers with the POST Training on Human Trafficking. Georgia now has some of the toughest laws against child sex trafficking in the United States. It is their goal to spread this training effort throughout the state. The training is packaged and readily available on line. We also hosted an Awareness and Educational Outreach program attended by a cross section of over 300 Savannah citizens. This program served to educate the public on how to spot human trafficking and what steps could be taken to prevent it from occurring.

This proactive group has members throughout the diocese. They meet at the Pastoral Center and also use telephone and video conferencing to communicate with members who are not local. They are organized and ready to make a difference and are hoping you will join them. All are welcome. They need everything from social media advice, to clerical work, to public relations efforts and fundraising skills. If you have an interest in helping these victims please consider joining this volunteer committee. Please contact Joyce Piersanti at Jpiersanti@aol.com or 912-201-1520.
According to the USCCB, “Knowledge of faith is possible only in the Holy Spirit: to be in touch with Christ, we must first have been touched by the Holy Spirit. He comes to meet us and kindle faith in us.”

We are all familiar with the prayer:

*Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love.*

V. *Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.*

R. *And you shall renew the face of the earth.*

Let us pray. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant us in the same Spirit to be truly wise and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Continued
The event of Pentecost, marks the birth of the Church and the Church’s public manifestation: two things strike us: the Church is one that surprises us and stirs things up.

“All were filled with the Spirit” (Acts 2:4).

Speaking to the Apostles at the Last Supper, Jesus said that, after his departure from this world, that he would send them the gift of the Father, that is, the Holy Spirit (cf. John 15:26). This promise is fulfilled with power on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples gathered in the cenacle. That outpouring, while extraordinary, did not remain unique and limited to that moment, but is an event that is renewed and continues to be renewed. Christ glorified at the right hand of the Father continues to realize his promise, sending the Church the vivifying Spirit, who teaches us and reminds us and makes us speak.

The Holy Spirit teaches us: he is the interior Teacher. He guides us along the right path, through the situations of life. He teaches us the path, the way. In the early Church, Christianity was called “the Way” (Cf. Acts 9:2), and Jesus himself is the way. The Holy Spirit teaches us to follow him, to walk in his footsteps. More than a teacher of doctrine, the Holy Spirit is a teacher of life. Certainly knowing is a part of life but within the wider and harmonious horizon of Christian existence.

The Holy Spirit reminds us, he reminds us of everything that Jesus said. He is the living memory of the Church. And while he helps us to remember, he helps us understand the Lord’s words. This remembering in the Spirit and thanks to the Spirit is not simply a mnemonic but an essential aspect of the presence of Christ in us and in his Church. The Spirit of truth and charity reminds us everything that Christ said, he makes us enter ever more deeply into the meaning of his words. We all have this experience: one moment, in any situation, there is an idea and then another links it with a passage of Scripture. It is the Holy Spirit that leads us down this road, the road of the living memory of the Church. And this solicits a response from us. The more generous our response, the more Jesus’ words become life in us, become attitudes, choices, deeds, witness. In substance, the Holy Spirit reminds us of the commandment of love and calls us to live it.

Summing up: the Holy Spirit teaches us life; he reminds us of the words of Jesus; he makes us pray and say “Father” to God, he makes us speak to men in fraternal dialogue and makes us speak in prophecy.

The day of Pentecost, when the disciples “were filled with the Holy Spirit,” was the baptism of the Church, which was born and went out to proclaim to everyone the Good News. Mother Church who goes off to serve. Let us remember the other Mother, our Mother who departed promptly in order to serve. Mother Church and Mother Mary: both are virgins, both are mothers, both are women. Jesus was preemptory with the Apostles: they must not leave Jerusalem before receiving the power of the Holy Spirit from above (cf. Acts 1:4, 8). Without him there is no mission, there is no evangelization. For this reason, with the whole Church, our Mother the Catholic Church we call out: Come, Holy Spirit!
P.A.C.K. (People of Action Caring for Kids) meets the first Sunday of each month to fill bags for children in need. Some of the bags go to schools for weekend backpacks; some go to the Pediatric Chemo Center; some to the Ronald McDonald House. The volunteers come from all over Savannah — some are from church groups (we worked with the CYO from Blessed Sacrament), some are corporate groups, some are individuals who just want to help. In under an hour, over 800 bags were packed and will be distributed as needed during the coming month. Each school bag contains:

- 2 15 oz. cans of protein (beef stew, ravioli, spagettios, macaroni and cheese)
- 1 15 oz. can of vegetables/soup
- 2 single serve boxes of non-perishable milk
- 2 single serve cans of fruit
- 2 breakfast items (oatmeal, grits, cereal bars, single serve cereal)
- 2 snacks (single serve packs of crackers, fruit snacks, granola bars, etc.)

The bags that go to the Chemo Center are called Fidget Bags and include water, snacks, word games, puzzles, etc. to help pass the time while waiting on chemo drugs to infuse and lab results to be returned. Bags are also provided to the patient's parents or caregivers.

All bags are blessed when packing is complete and stored in climate-controlled warehouses until the distribution date. Volunteers then deliver the bags to their destinations and other volunteers distribute them to the recipients. Everything about P.A.C.K. is a team effort. You are welcome to become part of this team on the first Sunday of each month. This is a great family-friendly activity. For more information, contact Melanie Brooks at brooks508@aol.com.
On Sunday, April 17th, “Good Shepherd Sunday,” the 53rd Anniversary of the World Day of Prayer for Vocations was observed. On that day we publicly fulfilled the Lord’s instruction to, “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest” (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2).

It is very heartening that here at the Cathedral we say the Diocesan Prayer for Vocations at every Mass every day. It is important that we pray that young men and women bear and respond generously to the Lord’s call. Our prayers continually offered affirm the primacy of faith and grace in all that concerns vocations. On the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, the entire Church concentrated its attention on vocations to the ordained ministries (priesthood and diaconate), to the Religious life in all its forms (male and female, contemplative and apostolic), to societies of apostolic life, to secular institutes in their diversity of services and membership, and to the missionary life.

In his message this year for World Day of Prayer for Vocations Pope Francis said,

“It is my great hope that, during the course of this Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, all the baptized may experience the joy of belonging to the Church and rediscover that the Christian vocation, just like every particular vocation, is born from within the People of God, and is a gift of divine mercy. The Church is the house of mercy, and it is the soil where vocations take root, mature and bear fruit.

“On this day, dedicated to prayer for vocations, I urge all the faithful to assume their responsibility for the care and discernment of vocations. From the moment a vocation begins to become evident, it is necessary to have an adequate sense of the Church. Among those involved in pastoral activity, priests are especially important. In their ministry, they fulfill the words of Jesus, who said: ‘I am the gate of the sheepfold […] I am the good shepherd’ (Jn 10: 7, 11). The pastoral care of vocations is a fundamental part of their ministry. Priests accompany those who are discerning a vocation, as well as those who have already dedicated their lives to the service of God and of the community.

“All the faithful are also called to appreciate the ecclesial dynamism of vocations, so that communities of faith can become, after the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, like a mother’s womb which welcomes the gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. Lk 1: 35-38). The motherhood of the Church finds expression in constant prayer for vocations and in the work of educating and accompanying all those who perceive God’s call. This motherhood is also expressed through a careful selection of candidates for the ordained ministry and for the consecrated life. Finally, the Church is the mother of vocations in her continual support of those who have dedicated their lives to the service of others.

“We ask the Lord to grant to all those who are on a vocational journey a deep sense of belonging to the Church; and that the Holy Spirit may strengthen among Pastors, and all of the faithful, a deeper sense of communion, discernment and spiritual fatherhood and motherhood.”

We are very blessed, God willing, to have two ordinations scheduled for this June. Deacon John Wright of St. James Parish right here in Savannah and Deacon Brian O’Shaughnessy of Our Lady, Star of the Sea, St. Mary’s, Ga. will both be ordained by Bishop Gregory Hartmayer on Saturday, June 4, at 10:00 AM in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist. Please join us for this blessed occasion to witness the Lord of the harvest answering our prayers.
One of the most devastating and consequential events in the history of the Cathedral was the fire on February 6, 1898 which destroyed essentially everything within its four walls. Unfortunately we have very few images of the church before the fire. We all know that the St. Cecelia and St. Agnes window in the far corner Our Lady’s Chapel was an original window that survived the fire and although it does not have a glassmakers mark, we have determined that it was also made by the Tyrolese Art Glass Company (TGA) of Innsbruck, Austria.

It has also been documented that the three large stained glass windows in the apse behind the high altar, representing scenes from the life of St. John the Baptist, formerly contained other images depicting Our Lady of Perpetual Help, St. John the Baptist and St. Patrick.

And two of the most beautiful windows in the Cathedral, the Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the north transept and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the south transept, contained images that previously depicted The Adoration of the Wise Men and The Crucifixion. We obtained copies of the original cartoons of the Our Lady of Perpetual Help center apse window and the Adoration of the Wise Men north transept window which were previously published in the December 2011 issue of Twin Spires.

But what of the windows that were in the walls along the north and south aisles? Gernot Fussenegger of TGA was kind enough to supply copies of the original cartoons for nine of these stained glass windows which depicted numerous saints who may or may not be pictured in the Cathedral today. But some of the images are familiar since they have been repeated in the post 1900 decorative scheme either as a window or in a mural.

**LEFT:** This cartoon of St. Patrick and St. Lawrence is definitely for an aisle window. But we know that one of the three pre fire apse windows also depicted St. Patrick, so perhaps there were two. St. Patrick is currently displayed in the second window on the south aisle, without a snake. While St. Lawrence is pictured as the central figure the Five Martyrs mural on the north wall above the center aisle.

**CENTER:** The next cartoon displays St. Nicholas and St. George. The image of St. George appears in the Cathedral today as a lancet window in the south transept and is the subject of the 2016 Christmas ornament. St. Nicholas, an icon of the popular Christmas culture, is not depicted anywhere in the Cathedral.

**RIGHT:** The cartoon of St. Peter in the Sea is not a window or mural in the post fire Cathedral but the arrangement of the figures closely resembles the window of Jesus giving the Keys of the Kingdom to St. Peter on the north aisle wall.

Continued
LEFT: Sts. Henry and Margaret are not in our current windows. St. Henry of Bavaria is pictured in the Four Kings mural above the north center aisle. St. Margaret of Antioch, Virgin-Martyr and Vanquisher of Demons, often shown with a serpent, is not in the Cathedral.

CENTER: Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, Patron of those who practice devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is found talking to Jesus in the window in the Sacred Heart Chapel.

RIGHT: Sts. Peter and Paul, authorities in the ancient church, are pictured in this cartoon. St. Peter (R) can be found in the Keys to the Kingdom and Ascension windows as well as the Apostles and Pentecost murals. Saint Paul (L) was not shown in the Cathedral until after the 2000 restoration, when wood carvings of both Sts. Peter and Paul were added to the Bishop’s Chair.

BELOW

LEFT: The Prodigal Son cartoon looks quite familiar as we currently have a mural in the north transept depicting this scene as well as the etched glass panel below in the center door of the Confessional that also shows this image.

CENTER: St. Antonius is distinguished from all other saints named Anthony by various epithets: Anthony the Great, Anthony of Egypt, Anthony the Abbot. For his importance among the Desert Fathers and to all later Christian monasticism, he is also known as the Father of All Monks. He is not pictured in the Cathedral while St. Anthony of Padua is represented in a window and a mural in the south transept.

RIGHT: And lastly, this cartoon depicts Bishop Francis X. Gartland, 1st Bishop of Savannah who died in a yellow fever epidemic of 1854, accompanied by an angel holding his episcopal coat of arms.
Above: A birthday cake is delivered to Jim Taglioli, our oldest parishioner, celebrating his 100th birthday. The Serving Seniors ministry plans to deliver birthday cakes to parishioners celebrating their 80th birthday but this one we felt was a little special!

Below: Fifteen volunteers attended a Virtus training session held at the Cathedral on Tuesday, March 9th. Virtus is required for all working in a ministry that may involve children.