

MAY 2010

# THE TWIN SPIRES

VOLUME 13 NO.2

CATHEDRAL OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST, SAVANNAH GA



## Chrism Mass Celebrated at Cathedral

The Mass takes its name from the most eminent of the three holy oils, the oil of chrim. All three are traditionally made of olive oil, however balsam is added to the oil of chrim, which gives it a sweet smell, intended to remind us all of the “odor of sanctity” which we are called to strive for.

During the Mass, Bishop Boland

Paul H. Camp

The Mass of Chrism, which comes once a year to the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, is a unique and special celebration. If you have never attended it, you are missing one of the most solemn and significant liturgies of our church. During the Mass, the holy oils, which signify the work of the Holy Spirit and symbolize that oil serves to sweeten, strengthen and render supple, are blessed and consecrated. The three holy oils are:

**The Oil of Catechumens** (“Oleum Catechumenorum” or “Oleum Sanctum”) used for adult catechumens and infants before they are baptized.

**The Oil of the Sick** (“Oleum Infirmorum”) used for anointing the sick.

**The Holy Chrism** (“Sanctum Chrisma” or “Oil of Gladness”) used at the ordination of priests and bishops, baptisms, confirmations, the consecration of altars and the blessing of churches.

During the Mass, Bishop Boland blessed the oil of catechumens, the oil of the sick, and consecrated the oil of chrim. All the priests present participated in the latter moment by extending their hands toward the vessel containing the chrim as Bishop Boland said the prayer of consecration. The oils are poured into smaller vessels and brought by the priests back to their parishes for use in the sacraments throughout the year. The remaining oil is kept in the ambry, at the cathedral, for replenishment as needed.

The Mass of Chrism gathers the faithful of the diocese with their shepherd at the mother church and provides an opportunity for them to show support for their priests. The Chrism Mass is usually the largest annual gathering of clergy and faithful in the diocese, where the priests renew their commitment of service to the church and to Christ made at their ordination. Bishop Boland exhorted the priests to stand tall and be heroes of the spiritual life and asked the people to pray for their priests, that they will be faithful ministers of Christ.

# Essay Contest Promotes Vocation Awareness



As we come to the end of the Year for Priests, it seems appropriate to focus on the work of the Serra Club in promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life. For the past five years, in order to promote vocation awareness at the elementary school level, the Serra Club of Savannah has sponsored a Vocation Essay Contest for 7th grade students in the Parochial schools and religious education programs of the Savannah Deanery. Consistent with the Holy Father's proclaiming this year, "The Year for Priests", the topic for this year's essay's contest was:

**"What can I do to make this year special for the priests in my parish?"**



**Alex Fanning**  
St. Michael's Catholic School

The Year for Priests is a special year for all Catholics. Our priests are the examples we look to for guidance and leadership in our faith. They have committed their lives to help us grow closer in our relationship with God as individuals and as a Catholic

community. Our priests should be honored and appreciated not only during this Year for Priests, but always. I realize the need to look within my heart and listen to God so that I can help to make this year and every year after special for the priests in my life.

One way that I show my appreciation for my parish's priests is by choosing to be an altar server, and I volunteer whenever I

The following winners have been selected:

**Parochial Schools:**

1. Place - Alex Fanning - St. Michael's School
2. Place - Hank Bartee - St. James School
3. Place - Brandon DeLoach - St. James School

**Religious Education Programs:**

- 1st Place Rachael Kinney - St. James Church
- 2nd Place - Madeleine Williams - Blessed Sacrament Church
- 3rd Place - Felicia Ojong - St. Boniface Church

The first place winners received a \$100.00 Savings bonds, as well as award certificates, which were presented to them at their schools and religious education classes. Award certificates and gift cards were presented to the 2nd and 3rd place winners.

am needed. I see the preparation and reverence that our priests devote to the Mass no matter the occasion. I listen to the word of God, not only in the readings and the Gospel, but also by listening to the homily. I make a point to listen to what the priest is saying, and I try to apply it in my daily life whenever possible.

I plan to make a point of sharing with the priests how I plan to live the words of faith that they give to us during the Mass and daily. I want them to know that their devotion as disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ is where I look to help me live the life that is God's will for me. I hope that whenever I spend time doing something for my parish, family, community, or those in need, I will be a reflection of the priests that have influenced and shaped my life. I hope that by living by their example, I will make them feel special not only this year, but always.



**Rachel Kinney**  
St. James Catholic Church  
Religious Education

The priests in my parish are very important to me in my life and in helping me to grow closer to God through Jesus Christ. I think it is a great idea to make the priests feel special and important.

Pope Benedict XVI has proclaimed June 19, 2009 to June 19, 2010, as a "Year for Priests" and there are

many ways that each of us in the parish can make this year a special one for our priests. An easy way for us to make them feel special is to make an effort to speak with them when we see them. We should shake their hand. and smile.

After Mass we can stop and tell them thank you for the service we just attended and that we appreciate them sharing the word of God. If the homily was funny, then we can tell Father that it made us laugh and also helped us to better understand the gospel.

To me, the most important way to make the priests feel special is to tell them you love them.

In his message for the 47th World Day of Prayer for Vocations, that will be celebrated on 25 April, 2010 - Good Shepherd Sunday, Pope Benedict XVI stressed that

# WITNESS AWAKENS VOCATIONS

Here follow excerpts from the document:



“The fruitfulness of our efforts to promote vocations depends primarily on God’s free action, yet, as pastoral experience confirms, it is also helped by the quality and depth of the personal and communal witness of those who have already answered the Lord’s call to the ministerial priesthood and to the consecrated life, for their witness is then able to awaken in others a desire to respond generously to Christ’s call.

“In the Old Testament the prophets knew that they were called to witness by their own lives to the message they proclaimed, and were prepared to face misunderstanding, rejection and persecution. In the fullness of time, Jesus, sent by the Father, would bear witness to the love of God for all human beings, without distinction, with particular attention to the least ones, sinners, the outcast and the poor. Jesus is the supreme Witness to God and to his concern for the salvation of all.

“Similarly the calling of Peter occurred through the witness of his brother Andrew. This was also the case for Nathanael, Bartholomew, thanks to the witness of yet another disciple, Philip. God’s free and gracious initiative encounters and challenges the human responsibility of all those who accept his invitation to become, through their own witness, the instruments of his divine call. This occurs in the Church even today: the Lord makes use of the witness of priests who are faithful to their mission in order to awaken

new priestly and religious vocations for the service of the People of God.

“A fundamental element, one which can be seen in every vocation to the priesthood and the consecrated life, is friendship with Christ. If the priest is a “man of God“, one who belongs to God and helps others to know and love him, he cannot fail to cultivate a deep intimacy with God, abiding in his love and making space to hear his Word.

“In following Jesus, everyone called to a life of special consecration must do his utmost to testify that he has given himself completely to God. This is the source of his ability to give himself in turn to those whom Providence entrusts to him in his pastoral ministry with complete, constant and faithful devotion, enabling them too to become open to meeting Christ, so that his Word may become a light to their footsteps. The story of every vocation is almost always intertwined with the testimony of a priest who joyfully lives the gift of himself to his brothers and sisters for the sake of the Kingdom of God.

“A third aspect which necessarily characterizes the priest and the consecrated person is a life of communion. In a particular way the priest must be a man of communion, open to all, capable of gathering into one the pilgrim flock which the goodness of the Lord has entrusted to him, helping to overcome divisions, to heal rifts, to settle conflicts and misunderstandings, and to forgive offenses.

“If young people see priests who appear distant and sad, they will hardly feel encouraged to follow their example. They will remain hesitant if they are led to think that this is the life of a priest. Instead, they need to see the example of a communion of life which can reveal to them the beauty of being a priest.

“It can be said that priestly vocations are born of contact with priests, as a sort of precious legacy handed down by word, example and a whole way of life.

“The same can be said with regard to the consecrated life. The very life of men and women religious proclaims the love of Christ whenever they follow him in complete fidelity to the Gospel and joyfully make their own its criteria for judgment and conduct. They become “signs of contradiction” for the world, whose thinking is often inspired by materialism, self-centeredness and individualism.

“By letting them be won over by God through self-renunciation, their fidelity and the power of their witness constantly awoken in the hearts of many young people the desire to follow Christ in their turn, in a way that is generous

and complete. To imitate Christ, chaste, poor and obedient, and to identify with him: this is the ideal of the consecrated life, a witness to the absolute primacy of God in human life and history.

“Every priest, every consecrated person, faithful to his or her vocation, radiates the joy of serving Christ and draws all Christians to respond to the universal call to holiness. Consequently, in order to foster vocations to the ministerial priesthood and the consecrated life, and to be more effective in promoting the discernment of vocations, we cannot do without the example of those who have already said “yes” to God and to his plan for the life of each individual. Personal witness, in the form of concrete existential choices, will encourage young people for their part to make demanding decisions affecting their future.

“May this World Day of Prayer for Vocations once again offer many young people a precious opportunity to reflect on their own vocation and to be faithful to it in simplicity, trust and complete openness.”

## **The Tenting Place of God — The Bible, The Temple and Prayer**

### **Lenten Mission**

By Gretchen K. Reese

This year, the members of our parish were guided on their Lenten Journey through the books of the Old and New Testament, affording a fresh perspective on the Word of God in Holy Scripture. The source of this inspiration was the featured speaker during our Lenten Mission, Father Andrew Struzzieri of Brooklyn, NY. Father’s skills as a dynamic preacher were brought to the attention of Parish Council by Cathedral parishioner Jean Dorsinville, who was a member of Father Andy’s parish in Brooklyn prior to relocating to Savannah. And Father did not disappoint!

Ordained for the Diocese of Brooklyn, NY in 1975, Father Struzzieri has served as pastor of St. Matthew Parish in Brooklyn for the last 10 years. His deep love of Holy Scripture and charismatic renewal led him to earn a Doctor of Ministry Degree in 1999. In his role as pastor, he has earned a reputation for living life as an adventure, a journey of faith, hope and love. As Jean Dorsinville assured us, Father Andy’s skills as a speaker reflect a true gift for connecting with people and inspiring them in a more fervent practice of prayer and worship.



**Father Andrew Struzzieri**

For our three-day mission On March 1-3, Fr. Andy chose a scriptural theme: “The Tenting Place of God—The Bible, The

Temple and Prayer.” This title reflects one of the major themes of Holy Scripture found in John 1:14: “And the Word was made flesh and made his dwelling place among us.”

Father explained that the Greek word for “dwelling” in this verse is “tent” or “tenting place.” So “the Word,” which is how God manifested himself in the world (. . . and God said, “let there be light” . . .) was first evident in God’s creation, for everything he created resulted from his will, expressed as his “word.” (See Genesis, Chapter 1.) Therefore, it was no accident that John identified Jesus as “the Word made flesh.”

Father explained that “the Word” interacted with the people of the Old Testament in many ways. In the Garden of Eden, God spoke face to face with man. But when Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate of the forbidden fruit, violating the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, they and future generations were ejected from the Garden lest they eat also of the Tree of Life.

This separation from God would last until “the Word” dwelt among us in the person of Jesus, who died on the wood of yet another tree that formed the cross to save us. This separation, healed by Jesus, would ultimately become the impetus for all human beings of every nation to seek to become one with God through His creation, the Church.

In Moses’ day, God spoke out of a burning bush as well as in visions. He later resided in a cloud of smoke when he led Moses and his Chosen People out of Egypt. Then, “the Word” took up residence in a tent. Finally, God resided in the Holy of Holies in Solomon’s Temple. There his presence was evoked once a year by the High Priest, who was the only individual permitted access. The entry way to the Holy of Holies was

divided from the rest of the Temple by a huge woven tapestry or “veil” with Cherubim woven into the fabric. These were images of the angels that prevented Adam and Eve from returning to the Garden after they were ejected for disobeying God.

When “the Word” was made flesh in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, man was finally reconciled with the Father by the death and Resurrection of Our Lord.

At the death of Jesus, the veil separating the people from the Holy of Holies in the great temple in Jerusalem was torn, from top to bottom. God Himself tore the veil that separated Him from His people and came to dwell among us in our hearts and in our lives.

Fr. Andy explained that Baptism, Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist change each of us into tabernacles, or “tenting places” of the Holy Spirit. Now we who are redeemed are obliged to carry Christ, the Word, into the world. Father also explained that priests and other clergy exist to invite us into unity with God, our true vocation as His adopted sons and daughters.

Over the course of our three day mission, participants were privileged to experience Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on the first evening, the Sacrament of Reconciliation on the second evening and Mass on the third, following a lovely meal provided by the Parish Life Committee and parishioners.

For this Mission and the opportunity to deepen our faith during Lent, members of Cathedral Parish are deeply grateful to Fr. Andy and his insightful teaching. We are also grateful to Monsignor for making the Mission possible.

Hurry back, Fr. Andy!

## Good job, Cathedral Parish

The Christian Service Committee cannot thank you enough for your overwhelming generosity in donating food, money and gift certificates every week during the Cathedral March Food Drive.

The need was even greater this year in these dire economic times and it was heartening that so many of you heeded Bill Wade’s request to bring a bag of groceries to church each week, as the baskets were overflowing with food every Sunday.

Carloads have been taken to the Social Apostolate. Sister’s eyes just light up when she sees the cases of canned meats, jars of peanut butter and jelly, canned vegetables, boxes of pasta and bags of rice. Money collected provides hams for the families. Children in one family said, “Look, this is real food!” The families are so appreciative for this assistance, especially during these difficult times. You made a difference in the health, nutrition and hope of some of the city’s poorest families by responding generously to your neighbor’s needs and sharing with others whatever you had through divine goodness.

Let us be mindful of the words to the hymn, *Christ Be Our Light*: “Longing for food, many are hungry; longing for water, many still thirst; make us your bread, broken for others; share until all are fed.”

Thank you once again for your generous hearts. God bless you.

# Pentecost

## The Birthday of the Church



There are three major feasts celebrated during the Liturgical Year. The first two, Christmas and Easter, are well known to all. As we approach the end of the Easter season, it is timely to reflect upon the meaning and significance of the major third observance, Pentecost, the feast of the Holy Spirit. God the Father's wonderful Christmas gift of His one and only Son, and Christ's Easter triumph over the power of sin, death and the devil would be of no benefit to us if the Holy Spirit did not give us the gift of saving faith.

Through the Word and Sacraments, the Holy Spirit gives us the power to believe and trust in Christ as our Savior. This precious gift of faith in the saving work of our Lord Jesus Christ is the reason Pentecost, the third major feast of the church, is celebrated with such joy and thanksgiving.

Pentecost, dedicated to the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, so called because it is fifty days after the Resurrection of Christ on Easter. The Feast of Pentecost marks the birth of the Christian church by the power of the Holy Spirit and gave rise to the Christian faith on earth.

Ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven, the twelve apostles, Jesus' mother and family, as well as many other of His disciples, gathered together in Jerusalem for the Jewish harvest festival that was celebrated on the fiftieth day of Passover. While they were indoors praying, a sound like that of a rushing wind filled the house and tongues of fire descended and rested over each of their heads. This was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on human flesh promised by God through the prophets: "And

afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people..... I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground ... A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and observe and carry out my judgements" (Joel 2: 28; Is, 44:3; Ezek. 11:19-20).

The disciples were suddenly empowered to proclaim the gospel of the risen Christ. They went out into the streets of Jerusalem and began preaching to the crowds gathered for the festival. Not only did the disciples preach with boldness and vigor, but also by a miracle of the Holy Spirit, they spoke in the native languages of the people present, many who had come from all corners of the Roman Empire.

The apostle Peter seized the moment and addressed the crowd, preaching to them about Jesus' death and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins. The result was that about three thousand converts were baptized that day.

Pope Benedict XVI has said, "On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended with power upon the Apostles; thus began the mission of the Church in the world. The mystery of Pentecost is that the Holy Spirit illuminates the human spirit and by revealing Christ Crucified and Risen, indicates the way to become more like him, that is, to be the image and instrument of the love, which flows from Christ. The Church, gathered with Mary as at her birth, on this day implores: "Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love!"

# Irish choir performs at Cathedral



Dick Rechiene

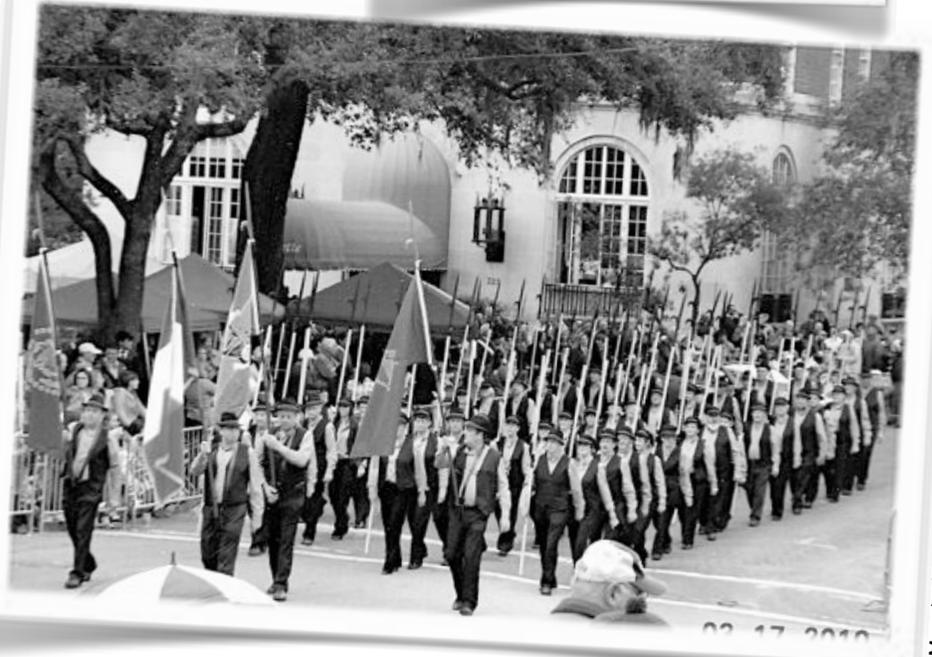
The Carrigbyrne Pike Choir from County Wexford, Ireland gave a one-hour concert in the Cathedral on the evening of March 15. The program included a selection of favorite Irish and American songs of both traditional and modern nature. Several members of the choir were delayed on the trip to Savannah by inclement weather in Newark. Due to the efforts of Congressman Jack Kingston, they arrived at the Cathedral just in time for the concert.

For those of you who did not attend the concert, you missed a special treat as Monsignor O'Neill accompanied the choir on the Button Accordion. Selections included "The Rose of Arranmore" and "The Wild Colonial Boy." Afterwards, Monsignor O'Neill commented, "I learned to play the accordion as a child from a neighbor who taught all my brothers and sister. My uncles also played both fiddle and accordion. As children, we sat around the farmhouse fire during the long winter nights with our neighbors, playing for hours. We also played on the roadside in groups in the summer evenings. In the mid 1980s, I had an accident in Columbus, GA and lost the use of my right index finger. This is a very important finger for the accordion, so my playing has been severely handicapped as a result since then."

The entire Pike Choir appeared at the Jasper Green ceremony on March 16, and also marched in the parade on St. Patrick's Day.



Mary Clark Rechiene



Maggie Jealous Lane



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