In June of this year, I moved to the Cathedral from Columbus, GA. I hadn’t moved anywhere for 24 years. In the process of packing, I began to realize just how much “stuff” I had accumulated over those years! Anyone who has moved knows the feeling.

At a recent conference I heard a statement which made great sense to me. The speaker said, and I’m paraphrasing: “The spiritual life has little to do with acquiring things, but everything to do with giving them away.” I would like to think that each year longer that I live, I am growing spiritually, that I am becoming more and more like Christ. But that may not be so. Every one of us would like to know how to grow spiritually. How does one do it, practically?

St. Paul says that “Jesus, though he was in the form of God, emptied himself and took the form of a slave.” Jesus himself reminds us again and again that if we want to “find” ourselves, we must be willing to “lose” ourselves. If we want to rank first, we must serve the rest.

I suppose when we are born, one could say that each of us has a “closet” full of gifts, given by God. He expects us to make good use of those gifts. At the end of my life, I should be able to open that closet and show God that it is practically empty, so much have I given those gifts away for the good of others. Though I am used to speaking about “my” money, “my” job, “my” home, “my” health, all of those things belong to God. They have only been “loaned” to me by God. He asks that I respect them as his gifts, and share them generously with others. When I do that, when I empty myself, I am growing spiritually and I am becoming more like Jesus Christ. I am becoming a good Steward.

We belong to the Cathedral parish. As a community of disciples, we want to grow spiritually. I encourage you to consider how you might put your God-given gifts to work this year. We need you and we need to be encouraged by your example. I especially want to encourage the younger members of our parish, and those who are new to our parish, to become involved in one of our ministries. How wonderful it will be, and what a great example for all, to see you offering yourselves in service to the Church. I invite you to share your gifts with the Church and with the community. I know that you will be glad that you did, and so will Jesus, the Lord.
SERVING OTHERS BRINGS JOY AND SATISFACTION

We will soon be holding our 5th Ministry Fair on November 3, 2013. Representatives of the various Cathedral Ministries will be available at booths on the Cathedral terrace after the 8:00, 10:00 and 11:30 AM Masses on that Sunday to highlight the many exciting opportunities to serve the parish. And there will be juice and doughnuts too.

A Ministry Fair is like a job fair but instead of employers, all the church ministries (Choir, Ushers, CCW, etc.) will be there to showcase what they do for our parish. A number of tables will be set up on the plaza in front of the Cathedral and after Mass you will have the opportunity to survey the many exciting service-related opportunities that are available both within our walls and beyond. 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? And many of them need your help.

Why is it that the same few people are doing most of the work to make this parish run?

Tom Stack, one of the Fair organizers commented, “Although the population of the parish has grown strongly over the past several years, the number of volunteers for various parish ministries hasn’t kept pace! We need more folks to volunteer to help.”

And Bill Wade of the Christian Service Committee observed, “Many parishioners who do volunteer to serve, quickly come to the realization that they get a significant return for their effort, by how good it makes them feel.”

As followers of Jesus, we recognize that God, as the origin of life and source of all things, has given each of us special gifts to use in furthering Christ’s work. We are grateful for those gifts and must use them to show our love for God and for one another.

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.

Being an active member of the parish community will not only give you a chance to glorify God by serving others, but you will experience personal growth as well as a sense of belonging, knowing that you are a unique and contributing member of our parish faith community. Put your faith into action and join a ministry to serve the Lord. Consider how you can be of service and experience the joy of serving Christ as an active member of the St. John the Baptist family. Your parish community needs you!
ANSWERING THE CALL

Council of Catholic Women
Anna Kaluzne

"Through each project the CCW fulfills, I feel closer to God. It is a wonderful and fulfilling way to give back to the church we all love. The friendships we have made along the way, are special and endearing. Join us!"

Tour Guide
John Pryor

"I love our Roman Catholic religion and its traditions. Being a Cathedral tour guide allows me to tell people about these things. I want visitors to feel welcome at the Cathedral and to be comfortable with our beliefs and traditions as well as come back to visit again. I feel good at the end of a tour. Being a tour guide is my way of giving a little back to the church.”

Gala Committee
Gretchen Reese

“In my retirement, it never occurred to me how God planned for me to use my past life experience. Serving on the Cathedral Heritage Gala Committee since 2005 has proved one of the most interesting and fulfilling aspects of my life. Anyone who wants to help preserve the architectural soundness, integrity and beauty of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist as a symbol of our faith for future generations should consider joining the Gala Committee.”

Respect for Life
Geraldine Pufahl

“Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta believed the dignity of every human life is seeing Jesus in each person. She exemplified the Gospel of Life by cherishing life from conception to natural death. I volunteer for this ministry to be a voice for the voiceless not for any reward but to follow the Gospel of St. Matthew 25:40-45, "...whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me.”

Christian Service Committee
Deborah Wade

“Serving on the CSC is very spiritually rewarding yet sometime heartbreaking. We are so proud of our parishioners response to donate food when shelves are empty, collecting hygiene items for hot showers, saving ‘bonus’ gift bags for women at Safe Shelter, collecting baby items for Savannah Care and donating special ‘Item of the Month’ requests. Giving of our time and talent is a treasure.”

Religious Education
Sherri Rachael

“I became involved with CRE because I wanted to give back to the programs that were forming the Catholic building blocks for my son and daughter! Subsequently, I helped develop a structured learning time for our older nursery kids. It is such a blessing to watch faith come alive through the innocent world of a child.”
Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion
Marty Bockhold
"Being so close to the Eucharist and having the ability to be an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist has truly been an honor! One that I will always hold close to my heart."

Usher
Paul Kaluzne
“I was raised in Savannah and attended Cathedral Day School and on to Benedictine Military High School. I was an alter server and now, having the opportunity to participate as an Usher allows me to continue to give to the church, which is fulfilling.”

Parish Council
Roger Haneline
“As a member of the Parish Council and representative to the Finance Committee, I’ve had the opportunity to work with many outstanding Council members on projects aimed at making this a more progressive parish, beneficial to all parishioners, while preserving the financial well-being of the Cathedral Parish. I urge all parishioners to consider volunteering for a position on a parish committee. You will find it very rewarding.”

Choir
Jean Hassett
“I joined the Cathedral Choir because it filled the church with music in a prayerful way. The choir members are a great group of people who enjoy singing and music, plus we have fun too. Our director is very talented and passionate about the music, so we are learning continuously. I really enjoy being part of the Choir. It’s like praying with my voice. If you like music, come serve the Lord by joining the Choir.”

Lector
Lou Waldhour
“Over the past 25 years as a lector, I have become familiar with readings from the old and new testaments of the Bible and that familiarity has encouraged me to read and study more. Serving as a lector has been an honor for me and a wonderful way to serve the Cathedral family by reading the inspired word of God. We are always seeking new lectors so if you have an interest, please volunteer.”
The Cathedral Council of Catholic Women held their 8th annual Rummage Sale on Saturday, September 7, 2013. This energetic group of dedicated women turned the Parish Center into a shopper’s paradise. The ladies gathered in prayer for peace in Syria before opening the doors. The doors opened promptly at 8AM, and shoppers were lined up outside waiting eagerly to rush in and find a treasure. Through donations from our generous parishioners, shoppers found a plethora of treasures from household items such as kitchen pots and pans to holiday decorations. Popular items this year were DVDs, books, and furniture. This year’s sale brought in close to $5,000. At the end of the sale, toys, children’s books and sporting equipment were donated to the May Street YMCA. All remaining rummage sale items were donated to the Humane Society Thrift Store. Special thank you to the priests, office staff and most importantly the parishioners of the Cathedral. The CCW will be skipping a year so all parishioners are asked to hold their treasures for our next Rummage Sale in September 2015.

Looking for a way to make a difference? Come join the Cathedral Council of Catholic Women as we make sandwiches for the Social Apostolate monthly, help serve at Parish suppers and receptions, gather for fundraisers such as the Rummage Sale, Holiday Bake Sale, Christmas Angel trees, assist in holiday decorating, and Potty for a Price on St. Patrick’s Day. Look for the next CCW meeting time in the Cathedral church bulletin. God bless our parish family as we all find ways to share our time and talent.
God Blesses Them
Our Children, Our Future
By Janee Przybyl, Director of Religious Education

God blesses children with supportive Catholic families and a Cathedral parish community full of people who willingly enhance their faith formation. The Cathedral’s children are back in the classroom each Sunday attending religious education. The first day of classes for this school year started on September 22 and will continue until May 18th. Each student is in a class with other children learning about their faith which includes the Trinity, Sacraments, the Commandments, how to pray the Rosary and how to live their Catholic faith on a daily basis. Each classroom is headed by a Catechist who ensures the education is presented in a safe, interactive environment at an age appropriate level.

The annual Children’s Mass was held after our second week of classes on September 29th. The children brought up the gifts and assisted by serving at the Mass. Our Rector, Father Schreck celebrated the Mass. He took this opportunity to bless all the children participating in the religious education program and their families. He also mentioned the joyful attitude he has observed from the students and their parents. Father Schreck will be an active member of the religious education program this year during his frequent classroom visits and while conveying the sacraments of Reconciliation and first Eucharist to those who are prepared throughout the year. The children thoroughly enjoy his visits and although piously shy so far, they will certainly become much more vocal as the year progresses.

We would not have a successful children’s religious education program without dedicated catechists who are members of our parish community. They are: Julie Estvander teaching Pre-K, K and 1st grade, Sherri Rachael teaching 2nd graders preparing for Eucharist and Reconciliation, Betsy Blalock teaching 3rd and 4th graders, Amy Schuler teaching 5th and 6th graders and William Gill teaching Confirmation Preparations. Shannon Lancaster will be also preparing students for Eucharist and Reconciliation and Jenna Nobles is a substitute catechist this year. We are so blessed with our catechists and a supportive Rector who ensures we have the supplies and updated classroom space.

Faith formation starts at home but continues through formal education throughout a child’s life. It is important that children attend classes even if they are not preparing to receive their sacraments during the upcoming year. If your child is in Kindergarten through 8th grade and not enrolled in formal Catholic religious education please enroll them in the Cathedral’s program. To enroll arrive with your child at the start of our Sunday school classes at 8:45 and bring along their baptismal certificate if they were not baptized at the Cathedral. Or call me at 335-1852 with questions.

God Blesses Them All!

Photos by Peter Paolucci
After almost 10 months, the scaffolding on the Cathedral steeples has finally come down. It is wonderful to see the twin spires of this iconic landmark, visible once again in all their glory, on the Savannah skyline.

The cracks which threatened the steeples have been repaired, many of the old porous Savannah Gray bricks had deteriorated badly and the mortar in the joints was also in poor condition throughout the structure.

Space age technology was used to accomplish much of the rehabilitation. The entire surface was covered with a five-layer system of epoxy resin, woven fiber, a second layer of epoxy, a second layer of woven fiber placed 90 degrees to the first, then a third and final layer of epoxy resin. Once the resin cured, the entire surface was covered with new stucco.

On the inside of the steeples, structural steel reinforcement was installed at the base of each tower and attached to the existing steel framing that extends to the top of each tower completing the repair. The total cost will be about $1,750,000.
The 13th Annual Cathedral Heritage Gala will be held on Saturday evening, November 23, 2013. Once again, the Telfair’s Jepson Center for the Arts is the marvelous venue for this signature event. This joyful event features a cocktail party with heavy hors d’oeuvres catered by Savannah’s finest, served to you as you wander through the three floors of the stunning Jepson Center, plus you will have the opportunity to view a great art exhibit entitled Spanish Sojourns: Robert Henri and the Spirit of Spain. You will mingle with other guests as we raise funds to preserve and restore our beloved Cathedral. In addition to being an historical and architecturally significant church, the Cathedral provides a glorious setting to worship God.

The highlight of the evening is the Live Auction led by John Wetherbee of WTOC News as our auctioneer. Everyone will find something to enjoy – golf with two Bishops, fine dining experiences, a sunset cruise, exclusive parking spaces, and much more! All guests will have the opportunity to bid on these fun, valuable packages.

- **French Wine Dinner** - Wonderful French Wine Dinner for Eight (8) people with Father J. Gerard Schreck, Rector of The Cathedral of St. John the Baptist. Includes a special menu with wine pairings and private tour of the Cathedral.
- **Italian Dinner** - Join Father Schreck for a Dinner for Eight (8) with Italian culinary creations and Live Italian Opera Selections performed by Cathedral Music Director Mac Fogle & Friends.
- **St. Patrick's Day Parking Spot** – A Priceless Private Parking Spot for One (1) Vehicle for 24 hours during 2014
- **St. Patrick's Day Parade Festivities.**
- **One (1) Year Parking Spot** – A Reserved, Exclusive Parking Spot for One (1) Vehicle for One (1) Year in the Cathedral lot. Your Name will be on the sign!
- **Play the First Annual Bishop's Cup** – A Day of Golf for Twelve (12) with Bishop Hartmayer, Bishop Boland, Father Schreck and Father Firmin.
- **Hollis Stacy Golf Package** - Play the links at Skidaway Island with retired Professional Golfer, Hollis Stacy. Package for Three (3) golfers.
- **Aurora Glass Panel** - A one of a kind decorative glass panel, 22 X 50", mounted in a frame, handcrafted using shards of stained glass obtained from damaged Cathedral windows. A masterpiece creation by local artist, Jon Erickson.
- **Bishop's Dinner** - Dinner for Ten (10) with Bishop Gregory Hartmayer at his Abercorn Street residence.
- **Bishop's Mystery Item** - A Mystery Item provided by Bishop Gregory Hartmayer, OFM.
- **Sunset Cocktail Cruise** – Dinner Cruise for Twelve (12) with O.C. Welch

Tickets for the event are $150.00 per person and include valet parking, delicious food, cocktails, live auction, and admission to the art collection. Dress in your elegant evening attire and enjoy this wonderful event! For ticket information, email savannahcathedralgala@gmail.com or call (912) 233-4709.

Join us at the Gala!
A few months ago, we were all pleased to learn that the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist had been rated 6th on TripAdvisor’s list of top US landmarks for 2013. Although the beauty and elegance of the Cathedral are principally responsible for this accolade, a couple of members of our hospitality team who greet our visitors everyday, docents Peggy Baker and John Woods, deserve some credit for this acknowledgment, due to their constant and welcoming presence.

Peggy and John have been doing this for the past 18 and 16 years respectively, so they’ve see it all. They get a chance to meet visitors from all over the world and answer many questions regarding the Cathedral, our Catholic Faith and the City of Savannah. Although visitors regularly praise the beauty of our church, with WOW! being the often heard exclamation, they are often asked the same questions including:

- Is this a Baptist Church?
- How do we get to the City Market?
- Where is a good place to eat?
- Do you have a bathroom?

Despite the repetitive nature of many inquiries, their grace and patience in handling any question, helps create a positive visitor experience.

Thank you Peggy and John for a job well done!
First Parish Supper Welcomes All

On September 25th, Norene Buckstine, Parish Life Chair, welcomed Fr. Schreck and all returning parishioners to the first Potluck Supper of the year. Enjoying delicious food with good friends is a very nourishing experience on many levels. Bishop Hartmayer, Monsignor O’Neill and Fr. Firmin joined the fun. Come to the next supper and partake of the fellowship of our parish family.

Photos by Peter Paolucci
In honor of the 96th Anniversary of the Miracle of the Sun, performed by Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal on October 13, 1917, a ceremony was held on Saturday, October 12, 2013 at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist acknowledging our gracious Mother and asking her intercession for our human frailty, particularly our indifference to the Law of God pertaining to the dignity of human life.

We were in good company as Pope Francis consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on October 13th as part of the Marian Day celebration that will involve the iconic statue of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima.

The attendees recited the Living Rosary, with one person representing each bead of the Rosary, reciting the appropriate prayer. After the Rosary was finished, all the participants processed around the Cathedral singing Marian hymns, up to the statue of Our Lady which was in the sanctuary area, in front of the Marian Chapel. The statue of Mary was crowned with a rosebud wreath by a child in the audience and the children placed flowers around the statue at the feet of Mary.

Afterwards, attendees had the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation followed by the Noon Mass.

**Living Rosary Honors the Blessed Mother**