The Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, Savannah, GA
November 2015

"Let the children come to me" Pgs 2,3
We often think of parents as the first teachers of faith formation for their children. Although that is true, we realize that children can also bring faith to their families. Children are open to new ideas, new activities and new opportunities. The Cathedral’s Children’s Religious Education (CRE) program opened their doors this school year with a renewed interest in children bringing faith formation to their families. Our catechists are dedicated to provide faith formation ideas, activities and opportunities for our parish children in an age appropriate and safe learning environment. Our goal is to create disciples of Jesus who will bring the Catholic faith to their families for generations to come.

Our CRE parents are role models for their children. As role models they live their Catholic faith at home, bring their children to faith formation classes and celebrate Mass with their children every weekend of the year. To celebrate the importance of Mass, we dedicate one Sunday Mass to our CRE children. This year, approximately 100 children and their families attended Mass together. The confirmation preparation students took up the gifts and read one of the readings. Father Schreck celebrated the Mass and welcomed the children and their parents to the Children’s Mass. He also took the opportunity to thank the teachers who devote their time and talent to provide faith formation for our parish children.

The Children’s Religious Education program started in September and will continue until the end of May. We have a large group of children this year from kindergarten to 9th grade, who are learning about the traditions and tenets of our Catholic faith from very talented and enthusiastic catechists. It is not too late to join the Sunday school program. We meet on Sundays from 8:45 until 9:50 in the Cathedral School building which is on Harris Street. If you would like to register your child simply bring him or her to class with a copy of their baptismal certificate and we will get them started.

In Mark’s Gospel he indicates that whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter. As a result we must listen to our children and pay attention to their faith since they know how to bring faith to their families.

Blessings to all members of our religious education program. I look forward to seeing you in class and at Mass.
B-29 pilot asked Pope to support Nagasaki atomic bomb victims

By Peter Paolucci as told by Marylyn Sweeney Howe

It all began with a note to Fr. Schreck from Marylyn Sweeney Howe, a Cathedral parishioner, requesting he translate the Latin inscription on a Papal Blessing — a blessing with an intriguing history.

Marylyn’s father, Major General Charles W. Sweeney (1919–2004) was a Captain in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II. He flew the instrument plane on the Hiroshima atomic mission and piloted the B-29 (Bock’s Car) that dropped the second atomic bomb (Fat Man) on Nagasaki on August 9, 1945.

Sweeney was a devout Catholic of Irish-American descent. During World War II, Francis Cardinal Spellman, acting as Military Vicar of the US Armed Forces, toured the Pacific Theater. As a boy Sweeney had caddied for the Archbishop in Quincy, Massachusetts, and they became re-acquainted when Spellman visited the island of Tinian in 1945.

Capt. Sweeney asked the Archbishop to do a “blessing of the fleet” of B29s before they engaged in their atomic missions.

In researching the story published in the Japan Times article of August 8, 2015, the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the bombing, a Kyodo News journalist became aware that General Sweeney always donated his speaking honoraria to Catholic orphanages in Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

The journalist contacted his daughter Marylyn and learned that her Father had visited with Pope John XXIII in the early 1960s. She had a Papal Blessing which was handed down to her; however, she didn’t understand the handwritten Latin inscription at the bottom. Marylyn asked Fr. Gerard Schreck to translate the inscription and passed the translation on to the journalist. Kyodo News took the story, in a direction never before published.

“In the early 1960s, Sweeney and his wife visited the Vatican and privately asked Pope John XXIII to offer support to the Diocese of Nagasaki and, in particular, Urakami Cathedral, the seat of Christianity in Japan, which had been destroyed in the atomic blast. They also discussed the future of atomic weapons and the importance of non-proliferation. In 1963 Pope John XXIII, who is known for his efforts that helped the United States and the Soviet Union avert a nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis, released ‘Pacem in terris,’ in which he appealed for the banning of nuclear weapons.”

According to Fr. Schreck, the handwritten Latin inscription said,

“His Holiness graciously granted the request. From the halls of the Vatican on the 9th of May, 1960.”

(Signed)
Archbishop Diego Venini
Titular Archbishop of Adana
Papal Almoner
Gen. Sweeney consistently claimed that the atomic bombing was necessary, as it brought World War II to an end. However, he was equally opposed to the future use of nuclear weapons. In his 1995 memoirs, Sweeney stated: “It is my fervent hope that there will never be another atomic mission. The bombs we dropped in 1945 were primitive in comparison to nuclear weapons today. As the man who commanded the last atomic mission, I pray that I retain that singular distinction.”

Marylyn feels her Father played an important role as an advisor to the Pontiff, and she is grateful to Fr. Schreck for helping to bring that significant part of her family’s history to light.

Throughout his life, Sweeney made contributions to a Catholic orphanage in Nagasaki due to his concern for war orphans after visiting the city in September 1945. Marilyn often talked with her father about the orphans in Nagasaki and he suggested that she and her husband adopt a baby from Nagasaki but there was no legal infrastructure to do so at that time. In the 1970s, Marylyn and her husband adopted two baby girls — one from Catholic Charities in Charleston, SC, and an orphan from Bogota, Colombia, a country struggling with political instability after decades of civil war, leftist guerrillas, and drug mafias.

Sixteen years after her adoption and having been raised in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, their daughter Catherine, a beautiful Colombiana, became a SCAD student and a communicant at St. John the Baptist.
The Cathedral Council of Catholic Women, CCW, was busy this summer preparing for the Cathedral Rummage Sale. Committee Chairs Mary Downs, Carol Letcher and Anna Kaluzne, with the help of fellow CCW members, worked in partnership to organize and price the plethora of items which added to the success of this fundraiser.

Our Parishioners were most generous in donating wonderful things from their homes, including everything from household items, children’s toys, books and hand bags to furniture. We feel blessed to have the support of our wonderful Cathedral families.

On Saturday morning, September 12, treasure hunters started lining up at 7:15 AM and the line wrapped around the building. The doors opened at 8:00 AM to an opening crowd that we’ve never seen in years past.

There are always some truly unusual items donated to the sale and this year proved no different. The CCW received a great variety of furniture including an antique trunk. A popular section was the book tables which included many best-selling novels and travel books.

The most unusual item was a large red velvet crown which was used at Mardi Gras parties by our very own Brother Robert. “We always had King Cake and a festive gathering.” Brother Robert and Monsignor O’Neill came to pay us a visit at the Rummage sale, enjoying the day. It was a very successful Rummage Sale totaling over $3,500. Funds will be used for the many charities the Cathedral Council of Catholic Women support as well as our beloved Cathedral of St. John the Baptist.

A special thank you to our rector and advisor, Father Schreck, who supports and guides us in our many endeavors.

Interested in joining the Cathedral Council of Catholic Women and making a difference? Please contact the church office at 233-4709. Thank you.
On Saturday, September 19th, the Cathedral hosted the inaugural concert of our Sacred Music Series called “An Evening of Opera and Sacred Song”. Performers were Cathedral staff musicians Jillian Pashke, Rebecca Flaherty, Cyril Durant and Heidi Ordaz. This was a ticketed event; more than 150 people turned out to enjoy the 40 minute concert, and then moved to the Cathedral Plaza to enjoy a glass (or two!) of Prosecco and Italian home-made cookies. This concert was a benefit performance for our new Friends of Cathedral Music donors group; proceeds benefitted the Boland-Schreck Music Fund.

A Solemn Vespers Service was held on Sunday evening, November 1 at 5:00 p.m in Memory of All Souls with soloists singing selections from Mozart’s Requiem Mass. Loved ones were remembered at this service with a 7-day votive candle lit in their memory and their names printed in the program. The $5 donation benefitted the Boland-Schreck Music Fund.

Mark your calendars for the highlight of the holiday season and join us for the second annual Christmas at the Cathedral Concert on Sunday December 20, 2015 at 3:00 PM. Enjoy a program of all your Christmas favorites performed by the Cathedral Choir and Brass. And see the unveiling of the world-famous Cathedral crèche.

Upcoming Cathedral Choir Concerts in 2016

Vespers - A Liturgy of Light: Candlemas
January 31, 2016  5:00 PM

Tenebrae: A Service of Shadows
March 23, 2016  7:00 PM

Mary, Queen of Heaven Vespers
May 1, 2016  5:00 PM

Support the Friends of Cathedral Music and be part of our music history!
The 95th annual convention of the National Council of Catholic Women was held in Orlando, Florida from September 9th through 12th 2015. Two members of the Cathedral Council of Catholic Women attended. This was a first time for our council, and we really didn't know what to expect. Gigi Lacanilao and I set off to see what it was all about and what we could learn.

There was a full agenda so we split up; Gigi attended the Leadership Commission and Spirituality Commission sessions, while I headed for the Service Commission and Leadership Development training sessions.

The Service Commission session concentrated on Domestic Violence. The presentation focused on what we can do to help bring awareness to the scope of the problem. The NCCW has a program called “Domestic Violence — Women Healing the Wounds”. The purpose is to teach how to recognize when abuse is taking place, how to reach out to the abuse victims, and work with other organizations in the field to provide assistance.

The Leadership Development training provided us with plenty of good ideas on how to make our CCW more effective. This session also concentrated on how to make the CCW more attractive to a broader range of women. We learned about some of the many projects and charities that the National Council is currently promoting, and we will be investigating ways in which our Cathedral CCW can become more involved.

The Spirituality Commission session offered suggestions on how to incorporate prayer and contemplation into our daily lives including our Council activities. We were also encouraged to become more active in the legislative process; to learn about our representatives and their beliefs and stance on issues; to attend our State Legislative Day at the Capitol; meet with legislators and bring up the issues that are relevant to our Catholic Faith.

There were several excellent speakers including:

Marybeth Hicks, author, media commentator, Marketing Director for Faith Catholic.

Dr. Caroline Woo, President and CEO, Catholic Relief Services.

Richard Doerflinger: Associate Director of the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Brandon Vogt: Author, blogger, Content Director for Bishop Robert Barron’s Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

Marybeth Hicks, author, media commentator, Marketing Director for Faith Catholic.

Topic: Make the Connection – Five Strategies to build a stronger Community of Catholic Women.

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Marybeth Hicks, author, media commentator, Marketing Director for Faith Catholic.

Topic: Common Good, Uncommon Excellence

Richard Doerflinger: Associate Director of the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Topic: Fighting Assisted Suicide: The Lives We Save may Be Our Own!

Brandon Vogt: Author, blogger, Content Director for Bishop Robert Barron’s Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

Topic: A Reason for Our Hope: 5 Keys to Sharing the Faith today.

It was well worth attending and we both came away with a new understanding of the work being done by the NCCW, and a determination to get our CCW more involved.

We would love to have you come and join us. All the ladies of the parish are invited to attend our meetings and see if this group might be a good fit for you. We meet on the 4th Wednesday of every Month from August through May. Please call Kate Haase (912) 604-9669 for more information.
The 15th Annual Cathedral Heritage Gala will be a wonderful event held on November 14, 2015, at the newly and beautifully renovated Catholic Pastoral Center on Victory Drive. The Gala will begin at 7:00 PM with cocktails and hors d’oeuvres plus music provided by New Arts Ensembles. The highlight of the evening will be the Live Auction led by John Wetherbee of WTOC News as our auctioneer. All guests will have the opportunity to bid on the following fun and valuable packages:

**St. Patrick’s Day “Luck of the Irish Package”** - Includes a priceless private parking spot for 24 hours during the 2016 St. Patrick's Day Parade plus four seats in the choir loft for Mass, and four seats on the front steps to watch the parade.

**French Wine Dinner** - Enjoy a wonderful Dinner for Eight (8) people with Father Schreck in the Cathedral Rectory. It will include a special menu with wine pairings from France's Bordeaux and Rhone regions.

**Play in the Rector’s Cup** - Bid on one of two foursomes with either Father Schreck or Father Firmin. Each foursome includes golf for three (3) golfers with all expenses and catered lunch included.

**Gulfstream Flight Simulator** - Fly at 45,000 feet without leaving the ground. Immerse yourself in the cockpit at the controls as you pilot one of the world’s leading business aircraft. No pilot experience necessary.

**Savannah Music Festival and Celebration Package** - This covers admission to one event of choice at The Savannah Music Festival plus dinner at The Olde Pink House and one night for two (2) at the Planters Inn.

**Italian Wine Dinner** - Join Father Schreck for a unique Dinner for Eight (8) in the Cathedral Rectory. It will include a special menu featuring wines from Italy's Tuscany region.

**Oil painting of the Cathedral by Mary L. Kennickell**

**SCAD 2016 Film Festival Silver Pass** - This package includes Four Silver Passes which cover admission to all film showings, workshops lectures, panels, plus the opening and closing receptions.

**Tybee Island Condominium** - Relax for a week at the beach in this condo with ocean front pool. This unit sleeps ten and has three bedroom, two baths, full kitchen, and large balcony.
There are many days throughout the year designated to recognize and honor special people in our lives. Did you know that we celebrate Father’s Day twice a year? In addition to the well-known Father’s Day celebrated on the third Sunday in June each year, the last Sunday in October is set aside to thank our spiritual fathers, our priests. Priesthood Sunday is a special day set to honor Priesthood in the United States. It is a call for parishioners to honor Christ as Priest and the men who were called to be his priests on Earth. It is also a day to honor all religious and to focus on the importance of vocations.

The first reason for celebrating Priesthood Sunday is to affirm the priesthood in the life of the Church. With the phenomenon of fewer priests, people see fewer priests. Therefore young people are not offered the opportunity learn about the vocation of priesthood and the life of their pastors. Priesthood Sunday seeks to reaffirm the Priesthood of Jesus Christ and its central place in the life of the Church.

We owe our priests so much. They are present at all the special and important moments in our lives, at weddings, baptisms and other sacramental milestones as well being there to comfort those who suffer illness and loss. And they have the special privilege to preside over the Eucharistic Sacrifice each day as the representative of the people to God.

Even though we have passed this special day, it is not too late to pray for our priests, praising God for their courage and their generosity and make your appreciation for your priest known. They deserve our respect and thanks for giving so much that we may grow closer to God. A simple note, a smile or a phone call will assure him of your loving care and gratitude for his presence in your life and that of our Cathedral faith community. A thank you after Mass or “Nice sermon Father” will go a long way towards letting him know how much he’s appreciated. Another way to say thank you in a very meaningful way is to give your priest a spiritual bouquet. Send a card letting him know that you will set aside a day each week, once a month, etc. to pray for his protection and for God’s grace to help him fulfill his role of bringing people closer to God.

In addition to thanking your priest this year, remember to pray for more vocations to the priesthood. Let us ask the Lord of the Harvest to send more good priests to serve his Church.

“O God, hear our prayer and let our cry come unto You. Bless our Diocese of Savannah with many vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, and religious life. Give the men and women You call the light to understand Your gift and the love to follow always in the footsteps of Your priestly Son. Amen.”

Sunset Cruise for Twelve (12) - Enjoy a three hour cruise on the Intracoastal Waterway aboard luxurious 60 foot Hatteras private yacht with eleven of your friends.

Amelia Island Ritz Carlton - Make memories where southern charm, magnificent scenery and casually elegant surroundings exemplify the gentle ambience of this barrier island's luxury beachfront resort located on a stretch of pristine coastline.

Bishop's Dinner - Elegant 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.

Tickets are $150 per person and are available from the church office. For more information, call Catherine Kostilnik at 912-429-7612.
The second Annual Stewardship Appreciation Dinner was held on Sunday evening, October 11th, 2015 on Lafayette Square. The illuminated Cathedral served as a wonderful backdrop, creating a warm and intimate dining environment; as daylight diminished and the street lights came on, the square filled with the conversation of the 350+ parishioners in attendance.

It was a wonderful opportunity to meet and spend some time with one another. Those who volunteer as Ushers, Lectors and Faith Formation teachers mingled with Eucharistic Ministers, Tour Guides and CCW members, all basking in the warm glow of appreciation of their efforts to support the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist.

It is important that we all have a sense of who belongs to our faith community, with whom they share the mission of the Cathedral parish. Since many of our parishioners come from different parts of the deanery to attend a particular Mass at the Cathedral on Sunday, a good number of them may not be aware of their fellow parishioners who attend a different Mass.

There are hundreds of volunteers here at the Cathedral serving in many ministries and on many committees. Being a volunteer gives each individual a stake in our parish community, allows them the opportunity to get to know and befriend more parishioners and as a result we become a more welcoming and friendly parish.

Many of our clergy were in attendance including Bishops Hartmayer and Boland, Fathers Schreck, Firmin and Migone plus Deacon Smith and Brother Robert.

Jim Gallagher, Parish Council Chairman, asked the attendees to personally thank our clergy individually for all they do for our parish. Then he offered a special prayer of thanks and appreciation in recognition of their hard work throughout the year.

The Knights of Columbus Council 631 prepared a hearty meal including hamburgers, veggie burgers and bratwurst plus sides and it was topped off by some delicious frosty treats from Leopold’s Ice Cream. A special thank you to the Parish Life Committee and the Cathedral Council of Catholic Women who organized the event plus the Blessed Sacrament 8th Grade students, who helped out too.

Live music provided by the Equinox Jazz Quintet rounded out this uniquely Savannah event. Anyone interested in joining the K of C Council 631 please call Ted Franks at 404-388-5499. For more information about the Parish Life Committee call 272-0205.

Fr. Schreck expressed his appreciation to all, “Thank you to our faithful parishioners who contribute so generously to the Cathedral and share their time and talent for the good of the parish and the wider community. You are amazing volunteers! I appreciate all that you do to support the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist. May God bless you each and every day.”
For the past several weeks members of the Stewardship Committee and various Cathedral Ministries have been out on the plaza after most of the Masses inviting you to become more involved in your parish community by volunteering in one of our ministries. There are many opportunities to serve the church; your time and talents are what we need. If you haven’t had the chance to sign up yet it is not too late. Please contact Melanie Brooks at Brooks508@aol.com, Moira Novack at threenovacks@gmail.com or the Parish Office at info@savannahcathedral.org if you would like to volunteer and contribute your time and talent. There is still a piece of pie waiting for you. Come and grab your piece and sign up for one of the Cathedral ministries.