



St. William Catholic Church

2300 Frederica Road
St. Simons Island, Georgia 31522
Office: 912-638-2647
Mon - Fri 8:30am-12:30pm or by appt.
Education Office: 638-2651
Fax: 638-7577
stwilliamschurch@comcast.net
www.stwill.net
Prayerline: 638-4287

Rev. Monsignor Christopher J. Schreck, *Pastor*

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

"We, the community of St. William's Parish, St. Simons Island, led by the power of the Holy Spirit, are committed to serving God and our brothers and sisters in Christ by living the message of the Gospel. We believe we are called to share our time, talents and our material gifts as an outward sign of the Treasure we hold in Jesus."

Mass Schedule

Weekdays: Monday - Saturday at 8:15 a.m., Tuesday at 6:00 p.m.
Saturday Vigil at 5:30 p.m. and Sunday at 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Adoration of Blessed Sacrament

Tuesday from 9 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. in chapel.

Reconciliation

Saturdays from 4:30 - 5:15 p.m. or by appointment.

Rosary

Monday - Saturday at 7:50 a.m. & after Mass.
Tuesday at 1:00 p.m.

The Grotto Religious Goods Shop

Open after weekend Masses. Call the office during the week.

Baptism

Parents are to be registered and attend preparation class.
Information may be found at stwill.net, or by contacting the
Director of Religious Education, 912-638-2651.

Marriage

Arrangements should be made six months in advance.

Creed Classes (PreK-8th Grade) - Sundays 9:00 - 10:15am.

Children's Liturgy - Sundays during 10:30am Mass.

CIA Youth Group (9th-12th Grade) - Sundays at 11:30a.m.

RCIA - Sundays at 9:00am, September thru Easter.

Parish Administrator

Stacey Bristol - 638-2647
stwilliamschurch@comcast.net

Director of Religious Education

Nancy Power - 638-2651
powernancy@comcast.net

Music Minister

Kate Hamer - 634-5040

Parish Engineer

Jim Spaeder - 399-7145

Parish Council

Burt Davitte - 269-0756

Finance Committee

Jack Welch - 571-0489

Grotto Religious Goods

Laura Nies - 638-1991

Adoration

Maureen Bowen - 222-6775

Adult Ed Bible Study

Tom McIntyre - 279-0526, 996-8752

Altar Servers

Mike Cherne - 223-9048

Bereavement

Laura Nies - 638-1991

Bloomers

Therese Raimondo - 230-7313

Coffee and Doughnuts

RaeAnn Allen - 404-791-1043

Council of Catholic Women

Joyce Callahan - 770-653-9509

Divine Mercy

First Saturday Devotion

Norma McIntyre - 279-0526

Twin Parish & Helping Hugs, Inc.

Aidine Kiernan - 912-399-6800

Manna House

Kevin & Joyce Callahan- 770-653-9509

Martial Arts Ministry - Kenpo

Jim Keane - 638-0763

Primetimers

Wayne Ciano - 914-419-6535

Spiritual Direction

Janice Capano - 770-500-5468

Outreach Ministries

Bill Horn - 638-4538

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Store- 262-6027
Sheila Ryan - 912-996-7755

Secular Franciscan Order

Lois Cutia - 912-580-8158

Tuesday Women's Discussion

Valerie Kehoe - 996-0723

Ushers

Ron Casler - 434-9635

MASS INTENTIONS

Liturgy of the Hours Week I

SAT., DEC. 17	8:15AM	+JOHN 'JACK' L. BENSON
	5:30PM	(L) BRYAN KRULL, M.D.
SUN., DEC. 18	8:00AM	PARISHIONERS
	10:30AM	(L) DR. MICHAEL BUTLER
MON., DEC. 19	8:15AM	+DIANE WATERMAN
TUES., DEC. 20	8:15AM	+JOHN REAGAN
	6:00PM	+EDWARD AARON HUNTER
WED., DEC. 21	8:15AM	+CECILIA KEMP
THURS., DEC. 22	8:15AM	+THERESA KENNEALLY
FRI., DEC. 23	8:15AM	+PAUL WOODBERRY
SAT., DEC. 24	4:00PM	+BARBARA PELLETIER
	8:00PM	+CRAIG BOLINT
SUN., DEC. 25	8:00AM	(L) JANICE CAPANO
	10:30AM	PARISHIONERS



Anna Arbo, Mary Katherine Arens, Louise Barber Crosby, David Clarke, Lois Cutia, Mark Davis, Barbara DeRatto, Rebecca Gaylor, John Grimsley, Charlotte Guido, Mark Hanly, Cheryl & Larry Hutchinson, Veronica Joseph, Nadine Keane, Mark Kelso, Caroline K., Timothy Kite, Joni Klein, Ben Koreski, Kathleen Koreski, Jim Loisel, Denise Margavich, David Mathieu, Mary McCaughey, Nancy Moore, David Morton, Nina & Ralph Murphy, George Nies, Fran Owen, Patricia Reilly, Richard Sedlacek, Sheila Smith, Louise Viaggio, Kay Welch, Richard Wineman, **Gerry Youmans**, the priests serving St. William, and our service men and women.

BULLETIN PRAYER LIST

Help us keep our above prayer list current. You may add a name to the list by calling the church office at 638-2647 or e-mailing us at stwilliamschurch@comcast.net. *Names listed in bold are new to the prayer list. These names stay on the prayer list for one month unless otherwise requested.

TELEPHONE & EMAIL PRAYER LINE

St. William Prayer Line is a group of people who pray daily for the intentions received from voice mails left at 912-638-4287 or by email at stwilliamsprayerline@gmail.com.



PRIMETIMERS will meet on Thursday, January 5, at noon. We will have a pot luck lunch, so please bring something to be enjoyed by all. Our guest speaker will be Ms. M.C. Halbrook from the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension. She will be discussing lawns and gardens, and ways to make our little corners of St. Simons and Sea Island, more beautiful. She may even bring some flower seeds with her.



There will be no Coffee & Doughnuts on Christmas Day or on New Years Day.

If you would like to volunteer to help with the Coffee & Doughnuts Ministry, please call the office or RaeAnn Allen at 404-791-1043. We could sure use your help!

The nursery will **NOT** be available during Masses on Sunday, December 18, Christmas Eve, December 24 or Christmas Day, December 25.

STEWARDSHIP

DECEMBER 11, 2022 - \$41,677.85 (DECEMBER 12 - \$39,745.00)
PARISHIONER ENVELOPES/CHECKS - 258
CHRISTMAS FLOWERS - \$280.00
RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT - \$4,206.00
CHRISTMAS - \$860.50
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - \$1,288.00



CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES	DECEMBER 24
	• 4:00pm - Outdoors in the Parking Lot
	• 8:00pm in the Church (Carols at 7:30pm)
CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES	DECEMBER 25
	• 8:00am & 10:30am
NEW YEAR'S EVE MASSES	DECEMBER 31
	• 4:30pm Confessions
	• 5:30pm Vigil Mass
SOLEMNITY OF MARY MOTHER OF GOD NEW YEAR'S DAY	JANUARY 1
	• 8:00am & 10:30am

ONLY 8PM CHRISTMAS EVE WILL BE LIVE STREAMED

DEADLINE FOR BULLETIN ARTICLES

All articles for in the bulletins between December 24 and January 3rd, must be in the office by Monday, December 19 at noon. The office will be closed December 23 to January 3.

YOUR GENEROSITY HELPS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS POWER POTENTIAL BY

Preparing hearts,
Educating Minds,
Revealing Christ, and
Cultivating the Roman Catholic Tradition

Christmas Collection for our Catholic Schools
DECEMBER 24-25

You can also donate online at apps.diosav.org/catholic-schools-campaign

St. William Parish offices will be close at 12pm on Thursday, December 22 and reopen on January 3.

- If there is an emergency, please call the office and leave a message as they will be check daily.
- All Contributions for 2022 should be in the office, or postmarked, by December 31 to count toward this tax year.



Register now for your 2023 Georgia state tax credit that benefits Catholic education. GRACE Scholars provides scholarships to children from families with financial need in grades PreK-12 for use at participating Catholic schools located in the State of Georgia. You will receive a 100 percent state of Georgia tax credit for your donation. This gift helps deserving students in Georgia receive an excellent Catholic education at no cost to you! Visit www.gracescholars.org for more details and to register. Don't miss out on this tax credit opportunity. Register Early!

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHOLIC SCHOOL is looking for dynamic, creative, and energetic teachers to fill the following positions. If you want to serve in a Christian environment, have a love for students, and teach with passion, please contact us!

1. Primary grade teacher for the remainder of the 2022-23 school year
2. Middle school math teacher for the 2023-24 school year

Interested candidates should send a brief letter of interest and a resume to Dr. Terry Mermann, principal, at tmermann@sfxcs.org

PARISH ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK


MASS SCHEDULE

WEEKDAYS: MONDAY - SATURDAY AT 8:15 AM,
TUESDAY AT 6 PM

SATURDAY VIGIL AT 5:30 PM & SUNDAY AT 8 AM & 10:30 AM

SUN., DEC. 18 **4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL COLL.
Coffee & Doughnuts after Masses
9am - Adult Ed Bible Study
9am - RCIA
6pm - Sea Scouts
MON., DEC. 19
9am - Manna House
6pm - Kenpo
TUES., DEC. 20
9am - Adoration
10:30am-Tuesday Morning Women's Disc
11am - Yoga
1pm - Rosary for Peace
WED., DEC. 21
6:30pm - Choir Rehearsal
THURS., DEC. 22
OFFICE CLOSSES AT NOON
3pm - Bell Choir Rehearsal
6pm - Kenpo
FRI., DEC. 23
3pm - Hour of Great Mercy
SAT., DEC. 24
11am - Kenpo
4:30pm - Reconciliation
SUN., DEC. 25
CHRISTMAS DAY!
DIOCESAN SCHOOL COLLECTION

LIVE STREAMING MASS!

Live streaming of weekend Masses is available either by clicking the **red** YouTube icon to the right, or **STWILLIAMONSSI**, or by going to our parish website, stwill.net. 

We thank you for your continued support of our parish church through use of donation boxes, the **ONLINE GIVING** icon, on our website and via mail.

THE GROTTO IS OPEN!

The Grotto religious goods shop, in the breezeway to the parish hall, is open after all weekend Masses.

A wonderful selection of Advent wreaths and candles as well as Christmas merchandise is available.



MSGR. JOHN A. KENNEALLY SCHOLARSHIP

Contributions to the Monsignor Kenneally Scholarship can be added to at any time. The funds received are invested in the Catholic Foundation of South Georgia and will continue to grow to help support students entering the 6-8th grade at St. Francis Xavier Catholic School who showed a financial need. If you would like to make a contribution, envelopes are available in the back of the church, in the office, on our website, stwill.net, or [here](#).



Special Blessings



Special Blessings is an exciting new fundraising project of Helping Hugs, Inc., for St. William's twin parish, St. Joseph in Haiti. Through the eyes of Janou, the boy in the story, this little book will help a child see the deep impact that a financial gift has on the Haitian community of Cotes-de-Fer. The book is written by a loving grandparent who wants to impart the 'spirit of giving' to her family. **Special Blessings** will be available after Mass on Sunday in the parish hall for a donation of \$10.

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - DECEMBER 18, 2022



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

As our Advent preparations draw to a close and Christmas fast approaches, it is fitting that today's readings demonstrate the intensity of the Father's perfect and passionate love for each of us, culminating in the gift of His own Son, Jesus Christ, on Christmas Day.

In response to such an overwhelming gift, what can we do except offer our lives as gift in return, embracing a stewardship way of life with all the love and strength we have to give?

In our Gospel passage from Matthew, we find an unparalleled example of one who embraced this way of life in St. Joseph, as he obeys God's call to him through the message of an angel.

We never hear St. Joseph speak, but the Scriptures tell us he was always listening, attentive to the leading of the Holy Spirit for his family. It was Joseph who found the stable where the baby Jesus would be born. No doubt it was Joseph who cleaned it up and prepared it for Mary and Jesus since we know that Mary was about to give birth. Joseph protected the family, guarded them, and tended to their safety, their comfort, and their well-being at the expense of his own plans and preferences. Though we do not hear any words from St. Joseph his actions clearly show that he offered himself, his whole life, as a gift to his family through his strong guidance, protection, and service.

Let us imitate St. Joseph, then, as good stewards, giving our very lives to those around us in love and gratitude to God, who has given us everything we have, especially His own Son, Jesus Christ.

Stewardship Reflections by [Catholic Stewardship Consultants](#)

Saturday, January 7, from 6:30-11:30am, St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church will be having a **"MEN'S DAY RETREAT."** This retreat is being put on by the men of St. Francis, and all men of St. William are also invited to attend. Please join them for faith and fellowship at the beginning of the new year. Learn more about our faith and challenge each other to grow closer to Christ so as to be better men.

Dear Friends of St. William Parish,

It is with a sense of deep gratitude that I write these simple words of thanks to you as Christmas approaches.

The year 2022 is coming to an end. It has been a difficult year for Haiti with months of no fuel, food crises, not to mention the scourge of insecurity and armed gangs. It has been a year that has seen many families mourn. But in spite of everything, we have resisted **and we keep our faith in the One who will come to shine his light of peace on the world.**

During this difficult year you have reached out to us with your fervent prayers and your generosity. Acts of charity are signs of God's presence in the world. They bring consolation and comfort. That is why, on behalf of St. Joseph Parish of Cotes-de-Fer, I want to thank the donors, the parishioners, the members of the Helping Hugs Committee and Msgr. Schreck. Without your support the year 2022 would be more bitter.

We pray for you that God will protect your life and that He will always be by your side. St. Joseph Parish wishes you a Merry Christmas 2022 and a Happy New Year 2023.

What you have done to one of these little ones who are my brothers, you have done to me.

Father Islaire Faustin



Sympathy & prayers ...

To Thuy & George Gonzalez and family, Chau and Charlie Gaziano Sifka, Thuyet Nguyen, and friends upon the death of their mother, TUE NGUYEN.

May her soul and all the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace.



December 11, 2022
Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday)

Dear Friends in Christ,

*Magnificat anima mea Dominum,
et exsultavit spiritus meus in Deo salvatore meo.*

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
my spirit rejoices in God my savior.*

LUKE 1:46-47

Today, as we celebrate Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday, I am moved to reflect upon the beautiful account of the Visitation from the Gospel of Luke. After the announcement by the angel Gabriel, Mary goes in haste to visit her relative, Elizabeth, who rejoices in seeing her. Even the child in Elizabeth's womb, John the Baptist, leaps with joy at the sound of Mary's voice. This simple encounter between Mary, Elizabeth, and the children they are carrying *in utero* brings a special focus to the gifts of faith, presence, and relationship. As women of faith, their daily lives are centered on God and in accomplishing His will. Present not only to one another but to the Almighty, the Spirit reveals to Elizabeth what words cannot – Mary's extraordinary maternity. Their familial relationship gives them a common history and a shared concern for their future, both as kinfolk and as Jews.

Mary's response to Elizabeth's initial greeting is known as the *Magnificat*. A humble witness to the grandeur and greatness of God, the Blessed Mother responds to joy with joy, rejoicing in God her savior. Joy is a feeling that is beyond mere happiness: joy elevates the spirit and leads us closer to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

On this Third Sunday of Advent, we can look to the encounter between these women to guide us during this season of preparation, and indeed, throughout our lives. Through the Visitation, Mary and Elizabeth come to a greater realization of their roles in the fulfillment of God's plan.

Mary's visit to Elizabeth, in fact, is a prelude to Jesus' mission and, in co-operating from the beginning of her motherhood in the Son's redeeming work, she becomes the model for those in the Church who set out to bring Christ's light and joy to the people of every time and place.

POPE SAINT JOHN PAUL II, GENERAL AUDIENCE, 2 OCTOBER 1996

Called into a personal relationship with the Almighty, it is impossible for Mary and Elizabeth to keep the Good News to themselves! Faith is something that is embraced individually, but it naturally has a communal dimension which elicits the reflection of the light of Christ and the emotion of the joy of Christ. As people of faith, Mary and Elizabeth are models of individual holiness and spiritual fellowship in community. During their time of accompaniment in the Hill Country of Judea, I am confident that they pondered God's presence in their lives, what His Revelation would

DIOCESE OF SAVANNAH † OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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mean, and how His plan would unfold, rejoicing in their hopes and dreams for the people of God. Through their intercession, may each of us contemplate the light and joy of Christ – Emmanuel, God is with us – and share these gifts as witnesses of peace and hope.

THE PAST AS PROLOGUE: FAITH, PRESENCE, RELATIONSHIP

A little over 18 months ago, our Diocesan family embarked on a missionary journey throughout the vast geography of South Georgia. Announced in my pastoral letter of Pentecost Sunday, May 23, 2021, the *Reflect+Renew+Rejoice* planning initiative was designed to assess what we as the local Church were doing well, where we needed improvement, and how to best focus our resources over the next five years. Coincidentally, in October of 2021, the universal Church under the leadership of Pope Francis commenced the world-wide *Synod on Synodality*, a three-year journey of dialogue and listening which corresponded well with our own *Reflect+Renew+Rejoice* initiative.

The first phase of our planning process, *Reflect*, included 22 Listening Sessions held throughout our Diocese in the fall of 2021. The thoughts, feelings, and hopes expressed in these sessions were then assimilated in small group conversations during the *Renew* phase. An overview of the accompaniment carried out in these phases was presented in our Diocesan Synthesis for the Synod, submitted to the episcopal conference in June of this year. (To review all materials referenced as part of *Reflect+Renew+Rejoice* and the *Synod on Synodality*, visit www.diosav.org/reflect-renew-rejoice.)

Much was gleaned from the listening sessions and the small groups, and I would like to thank everyone who participated in and prayed for the success of the planning initiative. Like Mary and Elizabeth, we were brought together by the bonds of faith, by our common history and by our concern for the future. We were able to be present to and for one another, open to the Holy Spirit and to the fulfillment of God's plan. I look forward to continuing our journey together. Let us go forth to share the Good News, trusting in God's providential love for our Diocesan family.

OUR CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

In reviewing the summary of the *Reflect+Renew+Rejoice* initiative as presented in the Diocesan Synthesis for the Synod, I believe you will conclude that all of us share a desire for a deeper relationship with God. As individuals, we yearn for an intimate relationship with Christ, the Word made flesh. As the Church, we celebrate our Catholic faith in communion, called together in this time and in this place to love one another as He loves us.

Today I wish to share with you a brief framework to help you deepen your personal call to discipleship, and then *Five Areas of Focus* that we will be concentrating on to help us grow together as a Diocesan family.

First, our call to discipleship is rooted in the person of Jesus Christ. As stated in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

In all of his life Jesus presents himself as our model. He is “the perfect man”, who invites us to become his disciples and follow him. In humbling himself, he has given us an example to imitate, through his prayer he draws us to pray, and by his poverty he calls us to accept freely the privation and persecutions that may come our way. (CCC 520)

By virtue of our Baptism, our personal and intimate relationship with Christ is primary in fulfilling our mission to be disciples on earth and future citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, as Christ's followers we are invited to direct our thoughts, words, and actions toward Him who is our model and sacrificial example.

Christ's disciples are to conform themselves to him until he is formed in them (cf. Gal 4:19). "For this reason we, who have been made like to him, who have died with him and risen with him, are taken up into the mysteries of his life, until we reign together with him." (LG 7 § 4). (CCC 562)

If we are serious about our call to discipleship, then we must acknowledge our love and reverence for Christ and be committed to knowing, loving, and serving Him through prayer and action.

DISCIPLESHIP: SEEKING GOD PERSONALLY

While the journey of discipleship is different for every person, it has at its heart the desire to seek the face of God, who is the source of all Beauty, Truth, and Goodness. Through Word and Sacrament, we strengthen our relationship with Christ and the Church. Specifically, during this time of Eucharistic Renewal, we are given the opportunity to deepen our love for the mystery of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist through the *Truth* of our teaching, the *Beauty* of our worship, and the sheer *Goodness* of our accompaniment of persons in poverty and those who are vulnerable. As your Shepherd, I encourage you to seek God by taking the opportunity every day to:

DISCOVER BEAUTY...BY ENTERING INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

- Acknowledge the gift of mystery
- Relish His precious gift of grace
- Marvel at His mercy and compassion
- Talk to Him conversationally in prayer

How does the Church help to *Discover Beauty*? Through a commitment to *Liturgy and Worship* that brings light and joy to the heart, mind, and soul.

UNDERSTAND TRUTH...BY UNDERSTANDING THE FAITH.

- Relate God to daily life in hopes of being a future citizen of heaven
- Form a faith-based conscience through spiritual reading and the study of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- Devote time to the reading of Sacred Scripture

How does the Church help to *Understand Truth*? Through the ministries of *Formation and Catechesis* that uncover the beauty and richness of our Catholic faith.

INSPIRE GOODNESS...BY FOSTERING RELATIONSHIPS OF FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY.

- Respect the God-given dignity of every human life from conception until natural death
- Care for the least, the last, and the lost
- Practice good stewardship of God's gifts and honor His creations

How does the Church help to *Inspire Goodness*? Through an encouragement to *Outreach and Mission* that seeks to serve Christ by serving others.

I invite you to grow in faith and walk with me as a witness to God's love, a follower of Christ, as we daily seek opportunities to *Discover Beauty, Understand Truth, and Inspire Goodness*.

DISCIPLESHIP: CELEBRATING OUR FAITH AS A COMMUNITY

My friends, while God has called us together here and now to grow in our individual journey of discipleship, we were not created to live in isolation. Our common set of beliefs proclaimed in the Apostles' Creed and our commitment to following Jesus Christ binds us to one another in community. Opportunities for connection and relationship exist within our parishes and Diocese ranging from small prayer groups to parish ministries to ecclesial movements, all of which unite us with the Universal Church. Having embraced the Good News, we are naturally called to share that same Good News with others. We are not called to be mere individual consumers of our Catholic faith; rather, we must learn to be sharers (witnesses) of it so that ongoing conversion is of paramount importance in our homes, cities, Diocese, nation, and world. Our Diocese is blessed with Priests, Deacons, those in Consecrated Life, and many lay leaders who are committed to working to build communities that reflect a strong foundation in Christ. However,

...all of us are called to mature in our work as evangelizers. We want to have better training, a deepening love and a clearer witness to the Gospel. In this sense, we ought to let others be constantly evangelizing us. But this does not mean that we should postpone the evangelizing mission; rather, each of us should find ways to communicate Jesus wherever we are. (Evangelii Gaudium, 121)

In identifying needs and examining opportunities for growth in communal discipleship within our Diocese, I have identified *Five Areas of Focus* for the next five years, each with specific areas of concentration. These are:

EVANGELIZATION

- Empower Catholics to live their baptismal call through the development of a personal relationship with Christ
- Promote a culture of life that respects the dignity of every person
- Prioritize catechesis, formation, and pastoral care for every age, stage, vocation, and walk of life
- Recognize the cultural plurality of our Diocese and welcome all persons into active participation in the Body of Christ
- Emphasize the understanding of family as the domestic Church to engage with parents as the primary catechists of their children, whether in Catholic schools, parish religious education programs, or home school families
- Study the availability and affordability of a Catholic education
- Examine academic support and formation programs for exceptional learners
- Promote the cause of Friar Pedro de Corpa and Companions (The Five Friars of Georgia), imploring their intercession in marriage and family life
- Inspire hospitality and welcome to those who do not worship on a regular basis
- Develop models for small group ministry
- Offer customized and unique attention to individual parishes and schools in the work of evangelization and discipleship

CLERGY AND CONSECRATED LIFE

- Develop a culture of vocational discernment
- Facilitate priestly fraternity
- Enhance continuing education for Clergy
- Care for retired Priests
- Evaluate formation for the permanent diaconate
- Expand the presence of those in Consecrated Life

OUTREACH/CATHOLIC CHARITIES

- Rethink the “identity” and structure of Catholic Charities within the Diocese
- Identify underserved communities
- Tangibly communicate service opportunities, activities, and their subsequent impact

PARISH VIBRANCY

- Assist parishes with identifying and meeting needs
- Establish rubrics to measure growth and sustainability
- Create partnerships between urban and rural parishes
- Identify opportunities for mission and rural ministry

PROPERTIES AND PRESERVATION

- Treasure the past while building for the future: parishes, schools, cemeteries/columbaria
- Cultivate parish endowments
- Engage in preliminary planning for a geographically centered Diocesan Retreat Center

These *Five Areas of Focus* for the next five years are an attempt to prioritize areas of growth and improvement in our Diocese. The great work and ministries of the Church that comprise the foundation for our Catholic faith in South Georgia will continue. I believe, though, that it is important to have a ‘roadmap’ to challenge us in our mission. At each of our Listening Sessions, we prayed the following...

*We cannot do everything,
and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something,
and to do it very well.*

TAKEN FROM *THE ROMERO PRAYER* BY BISHOP KEN UNTENER

While we cannot address every concern that was brought forward in the *Reflect+Renew+Rejoice* planning initiative, I hope that as we look to the next five years as a Diocesan family we will work together to *do things well*. Please look for updates through our Diocesan communications (website, *Southern Cross*, social media) that will keep you informed of our progress in the *Five Areas of Focus* and engage your prayerful support as we grow together in our call to be missionary disciples.

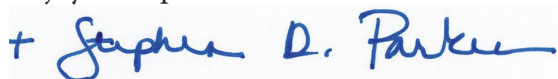
THROUGH HIM, WITH HIM, AND IN HIM

At the beginning of the *Reflect+Renew+Rejoice* initiative, I promised that the end result would not be a “doorstop” – a plan-filled binder that would grow dusty before it could be implemented. Rather, the goal has always been to develop a plan that challenges us to Christ-centered growth in faith, hope, and love...and of course, joy! All that we are and all that we do should be focused not on an event or a timeline, but on a person: Jesus Christ. *Through Him, With Him, and In Him*, we respond personally and communally to our call to discipleship. Along the way we will encounter God’s grace in celebrated and outward ways, but also in His quiet whisper (I Kgs 19:12) and gentle manner. Today I invite you to join me as an active participant in this journey, drawing closer to God and to one another as we continue to build the Kingdom of God in the Diocese of Savannah.

Mary responds to Elizabeth’s greeting by pronouncing that her soul “magnifies the Lord” (Lk 1:46). Please join with me in imploring the intercession of Mary, Mother of God, to guide, guard, and protect the faithful of our Diocese. May she inspire us to look to the future with hope. As she always pointed the way to Christ, we too can follow her example by embracing our personal call to discipleship and “magnifying” the Lord by our thoughts, words, and actions.

At every Mass, I ask for your prayers for me and for those who minister in the vineyard of the Lord in the Diocese of Savannah. In a special way, I appreciate that you whisper my name to the Almighty so that I may be the Shepherd, the Bishop, that you need and deserve. Please know that I remember you each day in my prayers, my conversations, with God. May we meet each day in our prayers and *Rejoice in the Lord always!*

In joyful hope,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephen D. Parkes". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the left of the printed name.

Most Reverend Stephen D. Parkes
Bishop of Savannah

Bob Ghioto
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