

Saint Mary

ON THE HILL
CATHOLIC CHURCH



News and Notes from Fr. Jerry

Do Not Remain Silent: Opening Our Eyes to Hidden Evils Present in Our Midst

“Human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ...It is a crime against humanity.” – Pope Francis

Average age of induction into sex trafficking: 13.

Total estimated global market value of human trafficking: \$32 billion.

Estimated number of people trapped in slavery around the world: 28.9 million.

“Our awareness must expand and extend to the very depths of this evil and its farthest reaches – from awareness to prayer, from prayer to solidarity, and from solidarity to concerted action –until slavery and trafficking are no more.” – Cardinal Peter Turkson

Dear Parishioners,

In this Year of Mercy, it is important as people of faith to open our eyes to the hidden evils that are present in our midst – it is important to move beyond our own selfish and often petty concerns to see those who are neglected and abused on the margins of our lives. What is human trafficking? It is defined by the U.N. as “the recruitment, transportation, harboring or receipt of persons by means of force, fraud or coercion.” Human trafficking takes a variety of forms in every region of the world. Some adults and children are trafficked for prostitution and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation. Other individuals are trafficked for forced labor in agriculture, sweatshops, fishing crews, and domestic servitude, or are trapped into situations of bonded labor or debt bondage. Some children may be forcefully recruited as child soldiers.

The Catholic Church has long spoken out against the depravity of human trafficking and slavery. St. John Paul II, in a letter on the occasion of the International Conference on “Twenty-First-Century Slavery – the Human Rights Dimension to Trafficking in Human Beings,” stated that human trafficking “constitutes a shocking offense against human dignity and a grave violation of fundamental human rights. In particular, the sexual exploitation of women and children is a particularly repugnant aspect of this trade, and must be recognized as an intrinsic violation of human dignity and human rights.”

And more recently, Pope Francis has extensively spoken about the need to end modern-day slavery. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, he states: “I have always been distressed at the lot of those who are victims of various kinds of human

Mass Schedule

Sunday, 7:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m.,
12:15 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Monday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Tuesday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Wednesday, 7:00 a.m. and 5:15 p.m.

Thursday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Friday, 7:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

Saturday, 9:15 a.m.,
5:00 p.m. (Sunday Vigil)

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday, 3:45-4:45 p.m.

Perpetual Adoration Chapel

Chapel is located at the corner of
Monte Sano and Bellevue.

Looking Toward Our 100th Anniversary

A History of Catholicism in Our Region

As we begin our march toward celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the first Mass celebrated at St. Mary on the Hill Parish – Dec. 8, 1917 – we will offer a series of historical snapshots of some of the high points in our parish’s history.

It will surprise many to know that the first Roman Catholic Mass celebrated near what today is known as Augusta, Ga. occurred in 1540 – years prior to settlers arriving in Salem, Mass. in 1620, or in Jamestown, Va. in 1607! Martin Luther was still alive, and King Henry the VIII was on the English throne!

During the spring and summer of 1540, Hernando de Soto, along with 12 priests, eight ecclesiastics and four religious, marched through Georgia looking to claim land for Spain and the greater glory of God. They temporarily settled in an Indian Village along the Savannah River – known today as Silver Bluff, and held Holy Mass during the months they were encamped.

Official Spanish missions were not formed until 1566, and did not flourish until after 1571. That was when Menendez, founder of St. Augustine, Fla. and long regarded as the oldest establishment in the U.S. – established in 1565 – made his way to the Indian settlement, Cofitachequi, on the Savannah River, now named Augusta, to permanently settle. The Spanish brought Catholicism to the southeastern United States 200 years before there was a United States!

Many Georgians trace their “official” beginnings to General George Oglethorpe in 1733. An English officer in the service of the reviled King George II, he founded the Colony of “Georgia” and organized both Savannah and Augusta. Our state was formed as an English penal colony for debtors, a place for King George II to off-load prisoners a long ways from England in the New World. The Colony would also serve as a buffer from the Spanish to the south.

It would follow that the new “Georgians,” if religious at all, would be members of the Episcopal Church of England. Interestingly, all colonists were afforded religious freedom in the new colony except Catholics and Jews. Catholics were not allowed because of the territory disputes between England and Spain, which occupied Florida to the south. Histori-



cally, the Spanish were Roman Catholic and Georgia’s founders feared that Catholic settlers might be sympathetic to their religious brethren in any potential disputes. But despite these restrictions, both groups eventually found their way into Georgia (Georgia Historical Society: Oglethorpe and Religion).

Some historians identify that Kennedy O’Brien was the first settler of Augusta, and that it was from his trading post on the shores of the Savannah River that the City of Augusta grew. Other early Catholics included William Callahan, Lachian McBean, Faley and McQuen. In 1770, Daniel MacMurphy appeared as a resident and member of the board of town commissioners. At the close of the 18th century, a number of French refugees fleeing the “Reign of Terror” in France and the uprising in Santo Domingo arrived in Augusta.

In 1811, area Catholics were incorporated as the “trustees of the Roman Catholic Society in the City of Augusta and county of Richmond,” and the trustees of the Richmond Academy were directed to convey to them land in Augusta bounded by Telfair Street, Walker Street, McIntosh Street and Jackson Street (The Bulletin, Sept. 28, 1940). A small church in the form of a cross was built in the center of that property and would serve as Augusta’s only Catholic church for the next half century. Today, we know that property as Bell Auditorium!

New Columbarium Offering Interment Close to Church

If all goes as planned, our new columbarium will be ready for a dedication ceremony on Nov. 1, All Saints Day, offering a beautiful resting place for our beloved dead.

Ron St. Onge has been coordinating the project that came out of a growing awareness for the need to have an interment site for cremated remains close to our church. Ron says he has been receiving feedback that our parishioners believe the columbarium is a welcome idea.

"The response is that, 'We'll be close to our church and God, where we've worshiped for years,'" he says. "It's being done so it will be a very nice spot. There will be shade, benches and a fountain."

The columbarium will have spaces for 398 double niches and 117 single niches.

"This is nothing new," Ron says. "This has been ongoing since Pope Paul VI announced that cremation was permitted in the Church. St. Teresa of Avila Parish in Grovetown has one already in their new church, and we visited a very pretty columbarium in North Myrtle Beach."

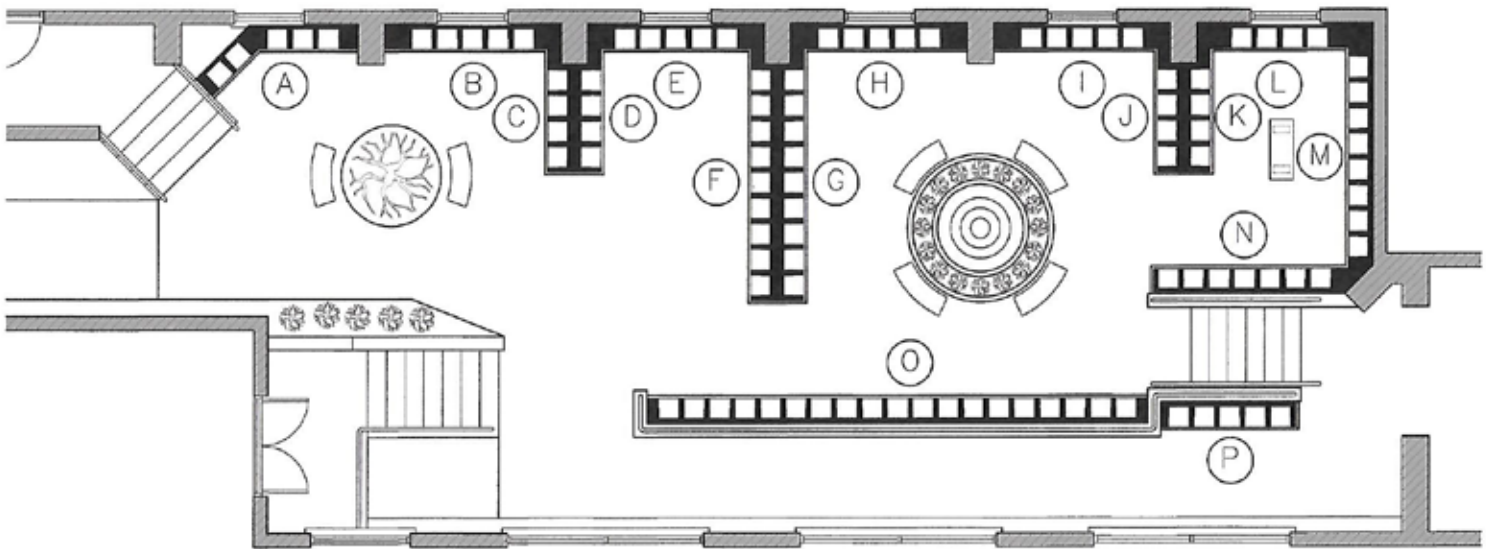
The practice had previously been forbidden in the church, but a 1963 instruction by Pope Paul VI explained that cremation is acceptable when practiced "not out of hatred of the church or Christian customs, but rather for reasons of health, economics or other reasons involving public or private order."

There currently are about 10 urns interred in an allotted space within the church, he said.

"Father became aware that we needed a columbarium, and he wanted it to be next to the church on the church campus," Ron says. "The Pastoral Council, the Finance Committee and Bishop Hartmayer have given their approval for this project to be constructed by Columbarium Designers, Inc."

As Ron notes, the contractor is drawing up the final plans that will go to the bishop for approval.

The pre-construction cost for a double niche is \$2300, which includes two urns and inscription plaque, and the cost of a single niche is \$1500, which includes one urn and inscription plaque.



The layout for the double niche area in our columbarium – with the approval of final plans, it is anticipated that a dedication ceremony can be held Nov. 1, All Saints Day.

Anyone interested in obtaining a niche may send an email to burial@stmaryonthehill.org. Barbara Kareis will respond to the inquiry and make an appointment to discuss the purchase. Those without email access also may call the parish office at 706-733-6627 and leave their contact information with the parish secretary. She will forward the information to Barbara.

Meet Seminar

You may have noticed a new face helping out around the parish these past few weeks as we are blessed to have Will Cook spending his summer break from seminary here at St. Mary on the Hill! Having just completed his first year as a seminarian at Mount St. Mary's in Emmitsburg, Md., Will is happy to have a chance to work with the priests and parishioners here.

"[I'm enjoying] the work," he says. "It's nice doing something other than just studying –building relationships with people and seeing a little more fruit of your labor."

Growing up in Tulsa, Okla., Will could not have predicted that he would someday be taking the first steps in following the call to priesthood in the Diocese of Savannah. Experiences in the Marine Corps and as a Salesian missionary in France both played a role in leading him to seminary, and to our diocese.

"I didn't always know [I had a vocation]," Will says. "After graduating from Oklahoma State University, I commissioned in the Marine Corps – the Marine Corps will make you grow up really quickly.

As my personal level of responsibility grew, my faith grew right along with it."

After completing four years of military service, Will spent a year doing mission work with the Salesians in France, helping to provide young people with basic job skills.

"It was a great experience, and a real eye-opener," Will says of his time with the Salesians. "Growing up, I had never had a great personal relationship with the parish priests, and there I got to live with 10 priests and brothers and got to know them on a personal level."

While the entire year of mission work left a lasting impression on Will, he found one aspect of his experience in France particularly inspiring.

"The local parish there didn't have any altar servers, so I got to recruit some of the kids and put together a team of altar servers," he says. "Seeing them take an interest in their faith was inspiring. The church in France is really struggling – we had this large, beautiful church that was usually pretty empty. So seeing the altar servers and the youthful presence in the church was extremely powerful."



During his year with the Salesians in France, Will Cook played sports twice a week with kids from a nearby school.

arian Will Cook



Seminarian Will Cook.

When it was time to head back to the States, Will knew exactly where he wanted to be – Georgia. He had spent his last year of military service stationed in Albany, and had fallen in love with our state’s culture and people. Utilizing his degree in construction management, Will found a job that brought him to Savannah.

“In Savannah, I got involved in church and other local organizations,” he says. “But I realized that while I enjoyed construction, it just didn’t seem like it would be enough, even if I were married and had kids. I felt there was something I wanted to give on a different level.”

Will says that his first year at seminary was a great experience, and he has enjoyed the opportunity to grow spiritually and get to know his fellow seminarians.



Will Cook worked with a youth group during his mission year in France.

“I’ve definitely learned to pray a lot better, and my spirituality has grown in endurance and knowledge and experience,” he says. “The formation of the seminary has given me growth in my awareness of faith and relationship with Christ, as well as my perception of His intentions for me. Being here and meeting a lot of other normal guys who are serious about their faith has been really encouraging.”

For any young men who may be considering a call to the priesthood, Will offers his advice and perspective.

“Definitely pray about it, get experience, and get involved in the Church,” he says. “Figure out what it is a priest does and imagine yourself in that situation.”

We are certainly happy that Will’s path to the vocation has brought him to St. Mary on the Hill for the summer. Welcome to our parish, Will!

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A Look Back on First Communion at St. Mary on the Hill

We congratulate our students who received their First Communion this spring at St. Mary on the Hill!



Do Not Remain Silent *continued from front cover*

trafficking. How I wish that all of us would hear God's cry: 'Where is your brother?' (Gen 4:9). Where is your brother or sister who is enslaved? Where is the brother and sister whom you are killing each day in clandestine warehouses, in rings of prostitution, in children used for begging, in exploiting undocumented labor? Let us not look the other way."

I thank Katie Connor for the work she has done in our faith community and beyond in helping us to be more aware that the evil of human trafficking just doesn't exist in foreign countries, but can be found right here in Augusta. More about her work will appear in the July issue of *The Marianite*. In the meantime, you can learn about human trafficking from a Catholic perspective at <http://www.usccb.org/about/anti-trafficking-program>, and to get involved locally, go to www.icareforthevoiceless.org.

In this Year of Mercy, we are also continuing to raise awareness of the plight of persecuted Christians, especially in the Middle East. Fr. Ezzat Bathouche, pastor of St. John the Baptist Melkite Catholic Church in Chicago,

who grew up in Syria will return to Augusta on Thursday, June 23 to preach at our second annual deanery Mass for Persecuted Christians. The Mass will be celebrated at St. Teresa of Avila Church in Grovetown and will begin at 7 p.m. Many of you packed the Church last year and I hope to see a full Church again this year.

Do Not Remain Silent

The Catholic Churches of the Augusta Deanery ask you to participate in a special Mass for Persecuted Christians:

Thursday, June 23, 7 p.m.

St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church

4921 Columbia Rd.

Grovetown

God bless you,

Fr. Jerry

Ad Placement



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Recent Donations to St. Mary on the Hill

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*In Memory of Marie McBurney
Michael Rucker*

*In Memory of Steve Kowalczyk
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*In Memory of Tony Price
Jim and Mary Forbes*

*In Memory of Clare Schweers McCall
David deBorde*

*In Memory of Brian Mulherin:
Estelle Mulherin Duncan*

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*In Memory of Marie McBurney
Mary Ellen and Paul Zielinski*

St. Mary on the Hill School Endowment Fund

*In Memory of Thomas Edry
Timothy and Kathleen Collins*

Baptisms

Mary Huston Nicholson
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Kemp Franklin Badger
William and Cecilia Badger

Margaret Banks Dial
Brandon and Maura Dial

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Recent Donations to St. Mary on the Hill

St. Mary on the Hill Columbarium

*In Memory of Robert Szalkowski
Biagio and Ruth Ann Vericella
Dolores Szalkowski*