



# Savannah Serra Club NEWSLETTER

August 2008

DISCOVERING A VOCATION

## I Remember a Priest...

by Pablo Migone

Seven years ago, at the beginning of my sophomore year in college, I remembered a priest who visited my high school in Augusta. He came for the day and spoke to every 10<sup>th</sup> grade religion class about vocations and asked if anyone had thought of being a priest before. The room got tense, people looked around, no hands went up. I had thought about the priesthood already at that point, but I suppose the time was not right then.

I remembered Father Brett Brannen, my sophomore year in college because the thought of the priesthood would not leave my mind. Since he had spoken about vocations, I figured I should contact him. I went home one weekend and found the pamphlet he had passed out buried under a huge pile of papers.

This began an unexpected and surprising adventure with God. My plans for the future all of a sudden seemed irrelevant and unfulfilling. I wasn't entirely sure of what I was doing, but I felt God's gentle call giving me strength to respond. I decided to take the plunge, to dive into the mysterious call I felt, and to let God lead the way and surprise me. I left Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina and transferred to Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio to begin pre-theology studies.

After three years at Steubenville, this great adventure took me to places I never thought possible. In 2005 I found myself on an airplane headed east over the Atlantic Ocean to Rome. Chatting with a high school friend before leaving, I told him, "who would have thought that five years after graduation I would be heading to Rome to study at a seminary?"

It has been a blessing to live, study and pray in Rome. My passions for both the faith and history have been fed and

increased. I have been able to familiarize myself with the city, walking the streets many saints and historical figures have walked, feeling its cliché eternity by encountering buildings ranging from early Christian catacombs to Saint Peter's Basilica and to the modern Millennium Church in the suburbs.

What makes studying in Rome as a seminarian unique is the same thing that makes Rome itself unique – the Holy Father. Even though I can't call him up for coffee, I've been able to attend Papal Masses, sing in the choir at Saint Peter's and share in the excitement of the thousands of pilgrims that visit Rome. Living so close to the successor of Saint Peter has given me a keener understanding of Jesus' words, "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church." The Holy Father stands as a living link to Jesus through centuries of Popes and Saint Peter. He maintains what we have received from the past and ensures its continuity. What I have learned and experienced by being so close to Pope Benedict at the heart of the Church will definitely remain with me forever.

The morning of this upcoming October 9<sup>th</sup> I will lie down before of the Altar of the Chair at Saint Peter's Basilica and be ordained a deacon. I look forward to this day and to the future as a priest serving our Diocese of Savannah. I ask for your prayers on this day and throughout the upcoming year as I complete my seminary studies and prepare to come home.





## Nativity of Our Lady youth

from Darien participated in the first Mass of the triduum at the Carmelite Monastery in Savannah to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, July 16.

Mass was celebrated by Fr. Ronald Gatman, OSB. Pictured surrounding the statue of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

are: Anna Marie Morris; Sr. Joann Gartner, Prioress; Ericson Moore; Fr. Gatman; Geraldine and Paula Moore; Vincent and Julius Collado.



## Pope announces special year dedicated to St. Paul

Pope Benedict XVI announced a special jubilee year dedicated to St. Paul, running from June 28, 2008, to June 29, 2009, to mark the approximately 2,000th anniversary of the saint's birth, while presiding over a vespers service at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome, on June 28, the eve of the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, the patron saints of Rome.

In his announcement, Pope Benedict XVI said "As in its early days, the church today needs modern Christians who will be witnesses and martyrs like St. Paul, imitating the apostle's missionary energy and spirit of sacrifice and ready to sacrifice themselves."

The Pauline year will feature numerous

special liturgies and events in Rome, the pope remarked, but should also be celebrated in local churches and in the sanctuaries, religious orders and other institutions that have a special link to St. Paul. The Pauline year will also be ecumenical, reflecting the saint's commitment to the unity and harmony among all Christians.

On the occasion of the 2000th anniversary of the birth of St Paul, Pope Benedict has also authorized that each and every truly repentant member of the Christian faithful, duly absolved through the Sacrament of Reconciliation and restored with Holy Communion, who prays for the Supreme Pontiff's intentions and in a spirit of

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total detachment from any inclination to sin, will be granted the Plenary Indulgence from temporal punishment for his/her sins, once sacramental forgiveness and pardon for any shortcomings has been obtained.

St. Paul was born in Tarsus, in what is now Turkey, at the start of the Christian era, sometime between A.D. 7 and 10, according to church historians. After his conversion on the road to Damascus, he became one of the church's foremost evangelizers, first among Jews, then among Gentiles.

The commemorative year will include symposiums and special publications devoted to the writings of St. Paul. His letters are a primary source of information about the life of the early church and have strongly influenced church thinking through the centuries. St. Paul's success as an evangelizer was a result of his extraordinary personal involvement in announcing the Gospel and his total dedication to Christ, despite problems and persecutions.

"St. Paul's life holds a lesson for modern Christians. The action of the church is credible and effective only to the extent that Christians are willing to pay personally for their faith in Christ. Where this commitment is lacking, the appeal of the Gospel will be weaker. Although St. Paul was once a violent persecutor of Christians who experienced a lasting personal conversion, he lived and worked for Christ and suffered and died for him. His is still a lasting example for us today," the Pontiff concluded.

## Exciting Serra Programs On Tap

Sandy Humphrey, Programs VP, has some exciting programs planned for the coming year:

### September 13

Archbishop Romero's Opening Prayer with Scripture, from the US Council of Serra International Program Committee material for "In His Steps," will be a nice inspiring beginning to our year. Also we will use the meeting to get organized for our Priesthood Sunday Project.

### October 18

Father Daniel Firmin, Chancellor of the Diocese of Savannah, will speak to the group about his responsibilities in his role of helping Bishop Boland administer the diocese.

### November 15

In keeping with the Pauline Year, Father Douglas Clark, Editor of the Southern Cross, will speak to us about how St. Paul impacted the early church as well as his influence on church thinking through the centuries.

### December 13

Once again we plan to send Christmas cards to the priests, religious and seminarians of our diocese. A Christmas Brunch at St. James following the Mass in December will help us celebrate the season together.

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