



# THE POWER OF PUBLIC PRAYER

By Gretchen K. Reese

On October 13, 1917, in Fatima, Portugal, Our Lady performed a miracle witnessed by 70,000 pilgrims, some of whom were atheists, communists and anti-Catholics. As a result of her intervention, some of these people converted, reminding us that conversion of the hardest hearts is possible.



On October 10, 2009, about 100 enthusiastic Catholics gathered at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist for a Procession and Mass in honor of Our Lady of Fatima and the 92<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Miracle of the Sun. In spite of cloudy weather, the participants

processed for several blocks, raising their voices in song to Mother Mary and chanting the Angelus, the Divine Praises and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin. At the end of the procession, flowers were placed at the feet of Mary's statue and a crown of roses was placed on her head. Fr. Firmin, assisted by Deacon Mike Daley of Blessed Sacrament Church and Art Zimney of the Cathedral, led the crowd in a fervent public Rosary on the front steps of the cathedral, before the statue was carried inside for noon Mass.

This year's procession and public Rosary were held not just to commemorate an event in the past, but as a witness of public faith today. Our Lord sent the apostles forth to teach in His name. Praying the Rosary in public is one way to introduce others to the Catholic faith.

"Now no man lighting a candle covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed, but setteth it upon a candlestick, that they who enter shall see the light." (Luke 8:16) Public prayer also spreads the Fatima message. Our Lady told the children: "You

saw hell, where the souls of the poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish devotion to my Immaculate Heart in the world." She commanded the children to say a Rosary every day.

Does such prayer actually work? At the end of World War II, Communist Soviet troops occupied Vienna, Austria. They refused to leave. Following a massive public Rosary procession led by Fr. Petrus Pavlicek, the Communist invaders packed up and left. Large scale public Rosaries are likewise credited for

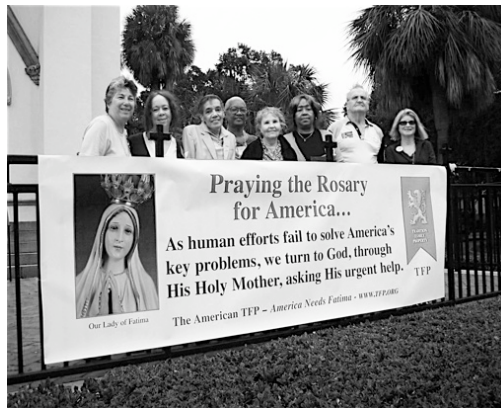
foiling a Communist takeover in Brazil in 1964, and also with the

victory at sea in the decisive Battle of Lepanto when Muslim invaders were set to take over Europe in 1571.

As another example of effectual prayer, since 1973, pro-life Catholics have peacefully prayed the Rosary in front of abortion clinics. The power of their prayer has slowed the advance of the Culture of Death. As proof that public prayer save lives, recent studies show that abortion clinics are currently closing at the rate of one per month.

Public prayer is powerful. St. Louis de Montfort said, "Public prayer is far more powerful than private prayer to appease the anger of God and call down His mercy, and Holy Mother Church, guided by the Holy Ghost, has always advocated public prayer in times of public tragedy and suffering." In these difficult

times, we must all pray and ask for the mercy of God upon our nation and our world. Perhaps you will join us in our next Public Square Rosary.



## Procession and Mass in Honor of Our Lady of Fatima on October 10

A procession in honor of Our Lady of Fatima and commemorating the Fatima Day of Prayer for the Sanctity of Human Life and World Peace was held at the Cathedral on Saturday, October 10, 2009 at 10:30 A.M. Following the procession, there was a Rosary and additional prayers offered on the plaza at the entrance of the Cathedral. Fr. Daniel Firmin officiated.



## CATHEDRAL PARISH HONORS ITS PRIESTS



October 25, 2009 was Priesthood Sunday, a special day set aside to celebrate the Priesthood and honor Christ as Priest as well as the men who were called to be his priests here on earth. Catholic parishes throughout the country rallied in support of their priests in a celebration of the American priesthood. Local parishes were asked to develop an appropriate way of honoring both the priesthood and their own priests.

Here at the Cathedral, in this Year for Priests, we again marked this special occasion by coming together as a parish community at the October Covered Dish Supper to honor the good priests who are so important in our lives and show them our appreciation. Special notes of thanks were also written on cards supplied by the Serra Club of Savannah and deposited into boxes marked for each priest.

Priesthood Sunday was a call for Catholics everywhere to honor Christ as Priest and the men who are called to be his priests here on earth. We joined together in praying for our

priests, in praising God for their courage and their generosity, showing their support for the sacredness of Christ's priesthood and their thankfulness for good priests, who are there for us when we need them. Without a priest, no parish would be able to be a Eucharistic community. Therefore it is essential to reaffirm the importance of the priesthood of Jesus Christ and its central place in the life of our Church.

So at the supper, between 75 and 80 Cathedral parishioners came together to do just that by acknowledging the great debt we all owe to Bishop Boland, Fr. Clark, Fr. Firmin and Brother Robert, for faithfully serving our needs all these years and assure them of our loving care and gratitude for their presence in our lives. Although Monsignor O'Neill was winging his way to China and Korea, we thanked him in absentia.

If you were unable to attend the supper, it's not too late to take a moment after Mass next Sunday and say thank you to a priest.

### ***Could You Not Watch One Hour With Me?***

You are invited to participate in Eucharistic Adoration at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist. Currently the Adoration Chapel is open from 8 AM to 5 Pm Tuesday thru Thursday.

All Catholics are invited to participate in this important opportunity to deepen our community's prayer life.

Contact Gretchen Reese at [rees2192@bellsouth.net](mailto:rees2192@bellsouth.net)



You are invited to the

# The Ninth Annual Cathedral Heritage Ball

Saturday, November 21, 2009

The Hilton Savannah DeSoto Hotel

Mass: 5:30 PM

Ball: 6:30 PM

\$125 per person      Black Tie

Please join us for an evening of fun,  
food and dancing to benefit the  
Cathedral Heritage Fund

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