



CHURCH OF THE  
HOLY COMFORTER

January 2011

# THE DOVE

## *A Letter from our Ninth Rector*

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It is with great delight and anticipation that Jan and I look forward to becoming part of the Holy Comforter family-again!-in March. I am both honored and humbled to have been elected the ninth Rector of the parish, and am eager to join my ministry and faith journey with yours. Holy Comforter, filled with people of deep and active belief, has long been a vital, vibrant, and unique congregation, and I am excited to see where the Spirit will guide and carry us in the years to come.

As I said to the Vestry and Succession Committee in October, one of the characteristics that most drew me to submit my name for consideration in the search for a new Rector was the fact that Holy Comforter has always been well loved by its ordained and lay servant leaders, most recently by the inimitable and irreplaceable Fr. Myers, my beloved and dearest friend. I am daunted by the prospect of following in the train of these great predecessors, but also thrilled that God has called all of us together.

As I write, it is the third day of Christmas, the season in which, through the birth of the Child in Bethlehem, God makes all things new. I wish all of you a blessed and joyous Incarnation, bathed in the warmth of God's love; and I hope you will keep me in your prayers in these coming months, as you are already in mine. May God watch over and walk with us, guide and guard us, strengthen and sustain us as, together, we grow in faith and love.

Fr. Jason Parkin



# *Departure Has Come* *The Rector's Column by Father Myers*

In October I preached a sermon based on the text from the Second Letter to Timothy. "...the time of my departure has come...I have kept the faith." I was amused that the text was so appropriate to the ending months of my tenure. My time to depart has come. In the sermon I outlined the "faith" we have kept together. I want to recap what I shared in that sermon.

First, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a Life of Love. The irreducible essence of the Christian Gospel is love. At the Last Supper, Jesus said to his disciples, "I give you a new commandment, to love one another as I have loved you." Saint Paul summed up his thirteenth chapter of Corinthians with "faith, hope, and love abide, but the greatest of these is love." In Colossians we hear, "And above all put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony." And in the Epistle of John, "God is love." Since God is love, then surely the Gospel Life is one of love. The faith we have shared is striving to be a loving people, to one another and to the world. Such is the kingdom of God.

Second, faith is about what we are, not about what we believe. In Luke, Jesus shares the parable of the Good Samaritan. Samaritans do not "believe" the same as the Jews. Jesus is a Jew, and yet he points to the Samaritan as an example of Gospel Life. It wasn't what the Samaritan believed; it was rather what the Samaritan was - a man of compassion who cared for the stranger. This is repeated in other parts of Scripture too. The Gospel of the 20th Sunday after Pentecost was about the ten lepers who sought out Jesus. He tells them to show themselves to the priest. While on their way, they are healed. One of the ten, a Samaritan, returns to thank Jesus. Jesus

says, "Go, your faith has made you well." In addition to being healed of his leprosy, the man is also made "well." By being a person who is grateful, thankful, and appreciative the Samaritan leper is not just healed, he is whole. Beliefs change as we change. Beliefs tend to separate us. The Church has fractured over beliefs. Faith sustains, because it is what we are - the Body of Christ.

Third, Jesus says, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." (John 12.32) Jesus' death is redemptive. God's plan is to redeem the entire creation. All are included. The

***Father Myers will give  
his final sermon and  
Adult Forum  
presentation on  
Sunday, February 27.***

plan of redemption is not conditional. Jesus did not say, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself if they believe in me, if they assent to certain propositions, if they...etc." By his sacrificial, self-emptying love on the

cross was to redeem all! Until all are drawn into the Life of Love, God's work is not yet completed. Our ministry is one of inclusion and love.

Finally, the faith we have kept together finds Eternal Life in the here and now. We don't wait until death to enter eternal life; we can live it now. The saints of God are those whose life and witness express eternal life. They are the lights of the world drawing their holiness from the Light of the World himself. Unconditional Love is the embodiment of Eternal Life. Once we have experienced unconditional love, we have experienced eternal life.

These four characteristics are an expression of the faith we have kept. It has been a privilege to have shared it with you. I depart grateful for our life together.

# *My Compliments to You!* by Patti Pateros, Community Building

I don't take compliments well. Someone tells me my hair looks nice, I say I need a haircut. If I'm told how petite I am, I say no, I'm just short. If you like my outfit, I reply that it's at least a hundred years old. I have a comeback for everything. Recently a friend called me out on this, asking me why I can't just smile and say thank you.

Compliments make me uncomfortable and I do my best to divert attention away from myself. I know that I do have good hair days and that I am petite because I shop in the petite departments, making my clothes not quite a hundred years old. I just don't like people to notice.

So while I do appreciate the acknowledgement, I have a comeback as well for those who compliment me for a job well done. My flip response is "that's what I get paid to do" . . . a good job. And you should expect no less. But honestly, the quality of my work is reflective of the incredible support system that surrounds me. January 8th marks my 10th year at Holy Comforter. As we begin this new year together, one filled with anticipation and a bit of anxiety, I'd like to thank those who help me get my job done on a regular basis. At the risk of leaving someone out (and to avoid this article looking like the parish directory), I will generalize and categorize - and there is a lot of overlap in these categories:

**The junior and senior high school leaders.** How fortunate I am to work with you. (I think most of your arms have healed after I did a bit of twisting!) And to the members of AIM and WHAM: the saying "if you build it they will come" certainly applies here! You are my pride and joy!

**Those who help with fellowship events.** What fun we have and it's hard to call it work! The ideas, the decorating, and the attention to details do not go unnoticed. We certainly know how to throw a good party!

**Members of our parish ministries.** It's amazing what a quick phone call or an email can accomplish. Without hesitation, you scurry into action in a moment's notice, whether it's to contact a newcomer, host a reception, or prepare the church for a special liturgy.

**Outreach volunteers.** I can offer all the outreach events in the world, but without your participation, I'd be reaching out all by myself.

**The copy machine.** What beautiful bulletins you print!

**My co-workers.** You help me implement my wild and crazy ideas, and allow me to have input into yours.

**The Vestry.** Your open-door policy and leadership not only motivate me to do my best, but also encourage me to think out of the box.

**My parish friends.** You lend an ear or a shoulder to cry on; you provide moral support and honest feedback. And you often become, much to your dismay, some of my most valued volunteers.

**My boss.** Ten years ago you saw potential. Your trust in my judgment and confidence in my skills encouraged me to push beyond what I thought I was capable of doing . . . and thinking. You rarely questioned "if" I could do something; rather you helped me figure "how" to do it. You are my #1 cheerleader, my friend, and the main reason I am good at my job. I hope I have lived up to your expectations. I still can't imagine not having you here.

My compliments to all of you and thank you for making me look good. And I don't want anybody complimenting me on this article because you'll only get my usual comeback: I write the way I speak . . . and I speak from my heart. Happy New Year!

## *In the Vineyard*

### **We joyfully announce the birth of . . .**

- 8lb 5oz Ruby Louise to Marla and Alton Smith. Ruby has an older sister, 3yr old Stella.

### **We express our sympathy to . . .**

- The Fraleigh family on the death of Jane's mother, Priscilla Jones Castle, on December 19.
- Ron and Nancy Semerdjian on the death of Nancy's mother, Edna Kirker.
- Sue Toth on the December 9 death of her father, Dr. Richard Buenger.
- The D'Arcy family on the death of Tom's mother, Marguerite, on December 8.

### **We congratulate . . .**

- Hal Stewart on his election as Second Vice President of Bishop & Trustees, making him a corporate officer in the Diocese.

### **We welcome to the parish . . .**

- Jack and Jennifer Bevington of Northbrook.
- Bob and Chris Chodos of Northfield and their 8th grade son, Adam.
- Matthew Gonzalez of Chicago.
- David Jones and Heath Howe of Evanston and their children, 3rd grader Eli and 6th grader Sophia Civetta.
- Edith Love of Wilmette.
- Jim and Diane Nothnagel of Winnetka and their daughters, 8th grader Dayna and high school junior Erika.
- David and Melissa Trandel of Winnetka and their young children, Ava and Jude.
- Scott and Anita Tyson of Kenilworth and their children, 4th grader Sheridan and high school senior Gabriel.

## *108th Annual Parish Meeting*

During the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 30, 2011, we will conduct the business of the parish, elect new members to the Vestry, review the budget prepared for 2011, and discuss any additional agenda items.

The Vestry has approved the slate which the Nominating Committee will present to the parish for election to the Vestry. Full biographies of the candidates will be posted later this month.

## *The Baptism of Our Lord*

The Feast of the Baptism of Jesus Christ is one of the great festivals of the Church's liturgical year. Unlike his birth, all of the Gospels record the event of Jesus' baptism in the river Jordan by John the Baptist. The Gospel writers agree that this was a culminating event in salvation history because in the act of this ritual cleaning, Jesus is revealed to the world as the eternal Son of God and the long-awaited Christ who will usher in the Kingdom of God.

Following in our Lord's footsteps, this is one of the four days that we celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism and renew our baptismal covenant during the liturgy, recommitting ourselves to Christ and to the work which he has set for his church to do. Please pray for John Nicholas Kropp and his family and godparents as he prepares to receive the Sacrament of Baptism on Sunday, January 9, at the 9:00 am liturgy. Join us for a reception in the Great Hall following the Baptism.

### *Music Notes* by *Derek Nickels*

This past December 5, 2010 on the Second Sunday of Advent, the choir led the congregation in our traditional Service of Lessons and Carols for Advent at the 11:15 a.m. liturgy. This liturgy was designed to incorporate the Advent themes that included readings from the Old and New Testaments that illuminate the proclamation of Christ's birth. This year's Lessons and Carols included music spanning five centuries: Palestrina, Stainer, Rickards, Biebl, Noble, Willcocks, Manz, and Krebs. A Service of Lessons and Carols for Advent was first introduced to Holy Comforter in 1980 but changed to Christmas Lessons and Carols on the first Sunday after Christmas in 1981 and 1982. It was re-instated in 1991 as an Advent tradition by then Director of Music, J. Gary Stuart.

# *Special Events and Liturgies*

## **Wednesday, January 5**

5:30pm 7th Grade Confirmation Class begins

## **Sunday, January 9**

9:00pm Sacrament of Baptism

## **Thursday, January 20**

12:00pm Altar & Flower Ministry Luncheon

## **Friday, January 21**

5:30pm Family Movie Night (Great Hall)

## **Sunday, January 30**

10:00am Annual Parish Meeting

## **Sunday, February 27**

Father Myers' Final Sunday (Homilist & Adult Forum Presenter)

## **Sunday, March 6**

Father Parkin's First Sunday (Homilist & Adult Forum Presenter)

## **Sunday, March 13**

9:30 am "Blues Mass" featuring music by the Jimmy Burns Blues Band

## **Saturday, May 14**

Father Myers' Retirement Party

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*To read more about our parish or to register for a parish event, go to [www.holycomforter.org](http://www.holycomforter.org).*