



CHURCH OF THE  
HOLY COMFORTER

February 2011

# THE DOVE

## *Father Myers Says Goodbye*

After twenty five years as the Rector of Church of the Holy Comforter, Father Myers bids farewell to his parish and his home. February 27 is Father Myers' final Sunday at Holy Comforter. He will be the homilist at all three liturgies and have his final Rector's Forum at 10am in the Great Hall. He takes with him the prayers and good wishes from a grateful parish. Invitations to Father Myers' Retirement Party on May 14 at Misericordia will be mailed in early April and will include a response card; reservations will be taken at that time.

Father Jason Parkin begins his tenure as the ninth Rector on March 1 and will be the homilist and lead his first Rector's Forum on Sunday, March 6.



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## *Race to Nowhere: the Dark Side of America's Achievement Culture*

Film and Discussion led by Father Myers ■ Thursday, February 10 at 7pm in the Great Hall

A concerned mother turned filmmaker aims her camera at the culture of hollow achievement and pressure to perform that has invaded America's schools. This remarkable new film shines a light on the price our kids pay for this "race to nowhere." Cheating is commonplace, stress-related illness, depression and burnout are rampant, and ironically, young people arrive at college and the workplace unprepared and uninspired.

Featuring the heartbreaking stories of young people who have been pushed to the brink and educators who are burned out and worried that students aren't developing the skills needed for the global economy, RACE TO NOWHERE points to the silent epidemic running rampant in our schools.

RACE TO NOWHERE is a call to families, educators, experts and policy makers to examine current assumptions on how to best prepare the youth of

America to become the healthy, bright, contributing and leading citizens in the 21st century.

Among many others, RACE TO NOWHERE features Dr. Madeline Levine, author of the bestseller, *The Price of Privilege*, Dr. Deborah Stipek, Dean of the Stanford School of Education, Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg, an adolescent medicine specialist at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Dr. Wendy Mogel, author of *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee*, Denise Pope, author of *Doing School*, and Sara Bennett, author of *The Case Against Homework*.

Following the viewing of the 90-minute documentary, Father Myers will lead a discussion. Tickets are \$10; advance purchase is required and space is limited. Go to [www.holycomforter.org](http://www.holycomforter.org) to purchase tickets. All net profits from ticket sales will go towards the Fabretto Children's Foundation, sponsor of our high school mission trip.

## *Why M&M's? The Rector's Column by Father Myers*

My first day as Rector was March 1, 1986. My office was in what is now the elevator shaft. (No comments please.) I put out candy for the children. I used tasty Jelly Bellies, because President Reagan had popularized them. They were in President's office and on the table where he met with the Cabinet. So I used them in my office. That worked until summer time when all my Jelly Bellies stuck together. We didn't have air-conditioning in those days, so the humidity, as awful as it was, formed the candy into a big sticky blob. I had to remove them. In ditching the Jelly Bellies, I pondered what could take their place. I remembered M & M's and their catchy phrase, "They melt in your mouth, not in your hand." Since then, M & M's have been in my office. (Their slogan isn't all together true.)

I wanted something that would be welcoming to the children. It was important to me that my office be known to them and be a place they wanted to come. The children have been coming in a steady stream. The blessing to me is the joy and enthusiasm that arrives at my door each day, and on Sundays it is a zoo. We go through two to three large bags of M & M's each week. Patti does a regular run to Sam's Club for Church things, and I put my order in when we are running low.

Inviting the children has been beneficial. Three and four year olds became teenagers ten years later, and when they needed a friendly ear, they showed up at the M & M place. Young people have commented about coming to see me with some anxiety, but an anxiety mitigated by a deep appreciation for the "treat" that had been found in the room in prior years. Hopefully the friendly ear provided another kind of nourishment.

Adults "sneak" in as well. Some important interactions have been occasioned by a parishioner

seeking M & M's. The candy "thing" has caught on. Other clergy over the years have undertaken a candy ministry. Now most all the staff has candy. (Any wonder our nation is obese?)

It was in 1982 that M & M's went aboard the space shuttle. They have been with each launch ever since. 1995 was the year a new color of M & M was introduced. The company held a national voting campaign to determine what the new color would be. The answer was revealed when the night lights on the Empire State Building were turned on one evening and blue was the color.

I was frantic when the M & M Company sponsored a million dollar prize to the person who discovered the "grey" M & M in the bag. One Grey M & M was placed in a bag. Whoever discovered it won a million dollars. I poured the contents of each bag carefully so I could discover it. I just know God wanted Holy Comforter to find the grey M & M, but either some child ate it or some devilish fiend derailed it in route to us. Either way we didn't win!

Come March 1, my departure, the jar of M & M's will accompany me. I will be introducing a new group of folks to the joys of M & M's at my "office" at Misericordia. When son, Mark, was a little boy, he believed the M & M meant Mark Myers. I still haven't told him otherwise, so don't give up the secret! I'll miss you all; it has been very "sweet!"



## *It's Time* by Patti Pateros, Community Building

We've had a year to prepare, and it can't be delayed any longer. We need to say goodbye. As of March 1, Father Myers will no longer be the Rector of Church of the Holy Comforter.

One of the most vivid memories as a parent is when your children decide to move out of your house. You hesitantly agree, but fear they have no idea what it's like out there in the big, bad world. You help them pack their most precious belongings, load them up with supplies, buy them basic groceries (they'll have the same box of salt for most of their adult life), then shed a few tears (of joy? of sadness?) as they walk out the door. You've done your best and now it's time to let them go. But you know - and they know - that even as they claim independence, you will always be there if they need you.

That's how I am dealing with Father Myers' retirement. My problem is deciding who is the parent and who is the child.

As we look back at Father Myers' 25 year tenure as rector, we reminisce about the impact he has made on our lives. He has married happy couples and buried many of his good friends. He has welcomed third generations of families and written college application letters for those same children. He has provided countless hours of counseling and guidance to countless numbers of people. He has led his parish strongly and passionately, helping us deal with the big, bad world. He has been in our homes and in our hearts for many years - but now it's time for him to

let us go.

For the past 25 years, the parish has been Father Myers' support system. I have only been here for ten of those years, but in that short time I have shared both happy and sad events. As other parishes became divided following the 2003 Primate's meeting, we respectfully listened to one another and rallied around our rector. We shared his joy and financial burden when Andrew was accepted as a resident at Misericordia. We humorously nursed his broken finger back to health. Sadly, we cared for Bonnie during her illness and helped her family deal with her untimely death. With Mark beginning his own career and Andrew well-cared for, with our parish family strong and financially stable, with a solid commitment to one another and to our local and global community, his work is done here . . . and now it's time for us to let him go.

And like our children venturing out on their own, Father Myers will need time - to set up his new home, to discover his new neighborhood, to deal with Comcast, to figure out his commute to work (okay, it may not be a long commute, but it certainly is longer than the twenty steps he is used to), and to understand what his life will be like after Holy Comforter. Hopefully, we will all give him the time and space he needs to figure it all out.

Although Father Myers is claiming his independence, we know - and he knows - we will always be here if he needs us. Because, after all, we are family.

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## *Updates for our Parish Directories*

The parish directory, which is a listing of all pledging members of the parish, will be published later this month. If you would like to pledge or update your family information, please contact the parish office.

A parish pictorial directory will also be published in early March. Deadline for receipt of family photos is February 24. Digital photos can be emailed or hard copies can be dropped off in the parish office (photo

will be scanned and returned to you; be sure photo is labeled). Professional photographer Jack Hardman will be available in the parish library to take family photos on Sundays, February 6, 13 and 20 from 8:30-11:15am. No appointment necessary.

Updated directory info or digital photos can be emailed to [pjpateros@holyccomforter.org](mailto:pjpateros@holyccomforter.org)

## *Junior & Senior High School Updates* by Patti Pateros

Both the junior and senior high school youth groups [AIM and WHAM] have begun new programs during this winter season.

In preparation for their mission trip, Taking AIM: Chicago, AIM is focusing on social issues that our cities face everyday. They are managing their own town, have elected a mayor and district representatives, and hold their "town meetings" every Sunday morning at 10am. Their first agenda item is whether to allow a homeless shelter to be built in their town. All citizens of the town (junior high schoolers) are invited to voice their opinions, debating the pros and cons of such a move. If they vote to allow the shelter, they then must decide the appropriate district in which to build it. Each week, the town meeting will discuss and vote on such issues. Additionally, seventeen 7th graders meet each Wednesday evening in preparation for their confirmation in June. Thirteen 8th graders completed

their confirmation class last fall.

WHAM is "airing their dirty laundry" by talking and journaling about stuff that drives us crazy, makes us worry, or is an issue at home or school (or even church!). Their "dirty laundry" is actually hanging on a clothes line in their meeting room. They watched the film "Babies" and journaled about times parents still treat them like babies. Over the next few weeks, they will watch "The Social Network" and talk about whether the movie fairly depicts "Generation Y" - their generation. Fourteen high school students are preparing for Mission: Nicaragua 2011, their mission trip hosted by the Fabretto Children's Foundation.

AIM and WHAM meet every Sunday from 10-10:45am in their lower level meeting room. All junior and senior high school students are welcome to join them anytime for fellowship and conversation.

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## *Thank You* by Mary Johnson, Director of Children's & Youth Ministries

It's no secret that I have a song for just about everything. Any phrase or sentence I hear during the day will more than likely elicit a song. I've learned to control the impulse to sing it out loud.....for the most part. So as I sit down to write this February Dove article with the singular thought of Fr. Myers departure from this parish, I'm singing all sorts of songs with the word "goodbye" in them. A hard concept to grasp since I remember so clearly the day I said "hello" here in June of 2000.

Though I had met Bob Myers at the Haljuns on previous occasions, arriving here it was a different setting; he was now my boss. I greeted him as "Fr. Myers' on my first day to which he said; "Mary, how long have I know you? It's Bob." There has never been a time since when I didn't consider him a friend first. I have been able to do my job because of his trust and confidence in me and I am so very grateful for that. Bob had the faith that All Things Bright and Beautiful was the right decision for this parish and was willing to commit the resources needed to nurture the

preschool to this thriving ministry of today. He has allowed me to participate in the growth over the past 10+ years and experience the joy of working with so many children and their families from the preschool and the parish.

So....back to the search for a goodbye song. Not being particularly fond of goodbyes, I was looking for more of the "see you later" concept so of course "Happy Trails to You" seemed the perfect choice since it says "til we meet again". But there is a particular song that is a favorite of mine that says it best:

So let me say before we part, you'll be with me  
Like a handprint on my heart  
And now whatever way our stories end  
I know you have re-written mine by being my friend:  
I've heard it said  
That people come into our lives for a reason  
Bringing something we must learn,  
And we are led to those who help us most to grow  
If we let them, And we help them in return  
I know I'm who I am today because I knew you...  
I have been changed .....for good!

Thank you, Bob! Love, Mary

## *2011 Vestry Members*

At the 108th Annual Parish Meeting on Sunday, January 30, 2011, reports were given by the Rector, Senior and Junior Wardens and Treasurer, and the 2011 budget was approved. The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of Vestry candidates which were then elected by the parish: Eric Beatty, Sarah Crawford, Doug Groncki, Cindy Macfarland, and Ann Pearce. Biographies of the new members are posted on the bulletin board and our website. The 2011 Vestry is as follows:

### ***Executive Committee***

Jon Bunge/Senior Warden

Bob Patin/Junior Warden

Connie Layton/Clerk

Tom Hamilton/Chancellor

Art Duquette/Treasurer

### ***Administration & Stewardship***

Andy Knott/Operations

Josh Newsome/Canvass

### ***Community Life***

Eric Beatty/Newcomers

Doug Groncki/Education

Courtney VandeVelde/Fellowship

Charlie Wise/Liturgy & Music

### ***Ministry and Mission***

Sarah Crawford/Outreach Mission

Cindy Macfarland/Outreach Resources

Ann Pearce/Ministry

## *Parish Support & Help*

Are you emerging from a challenging time, a health threat, a serious loss or crisis? Are you taking care of a family member with a debilitating illness? These are just a few of the situations where the thirteen Stephen Ministers at Holy Comforter can provide you with support and help.

Stephen Ministers are members of the parish who have gone through extensive training to listen, care, encourage and provide emotional and spiritual support. The caring is focused, one to one, and confidential. It does not replace pastoral counseling or professional counseling, but adds an additional layer of help for our parish. In many situations, it may be the only type of supportive care necessary.

Referrals for Stephen Ministry are now being received by Father Hardman. At the end of February, the Stephen Ministers of Holy Comforter will be ready to meet with parishioners who need help. The caring companionship will be an hour once a week for as long as is needed. Please call Fr. Hardman or one of the Stephen Leaders, Jean Britt, Rev. Elizabeth Andrews or Dr. Richard Augspurger for further direction. All conversations will remain confidential.

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## *In the Vineyard*

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

- Ora Hepworth on the death of her sister, Ruth Barber.
- George Kezios on the death of his sister, Constance Kasson.
- Bev Joutras and Cindy Macfarland on the death of Dick Joutras on January 25 following complications from surgery. Dick was a beloved friend and long-time parishioner, having served as Senior Warden 1974-75. His presence at Holy Comforter will certainly be missed.

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

- 9lb 6oz Gordon David to Julia and John Hinshaw on January 11. Gordon's older sisters are 7yr old Elizabeth and 4yr old Anna.
- Cooper Eileen to Lindsley and Tom Godbout on January 21. Cooper's sister is 2yr old Currie and she is John and Nancy True's 7th grandchild.

## *Adult Forum*

The Adult Forum is held in the Great Hall from 10:00-10:45am on Sunday. The various topics and speakers are meant to stimulate our minds with new information, to provide a safe and welcoming environment to discuss opposing viewpoints, and to realize that spirituality comes in many different forms. The 2010-11 theme is Christian Hospitality.

### **February**

- 6 Christian Hospitality: Guest & Host
- 13 Welcoming the Visitor: Our Building:-  
A group activity
- 20 How could our building be more  
welcoming to the visitor? A group activity
- 27 Rector's Forum: Father Myers says goodbye

### **March**

- 6 Rector's Forum: Welcoming Father Parkin
- 13 Blues Mass: music by the Jimmy Burns Blues  
Band (extended 9am liturgy)
- 20 Lent Program: Risks & Barriers to Christian  
Hospitality

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## *Special Needs Ministry*

Whether there's a new baby, surgery, illness or death, parishioners can count on support and help. There are those in our midst who selflessly prepare and deliver meals for just a few days or for many weeks. The website "Lotsa Helping Hands" was introduced as a tool for communication and notification of need to the long list of parishioners who are ready and willing resources for this ministry. The website also allows the recipients to add notes on scheduling or dietary preferences. To join this ministry, please call the parish office.

## *Tennis Tournament & Potluck Dinner*

The Tennis Guild's annual tournament is Saturday, February 5, at Centennial Park, Wilmette. Tennis begins at 5:30pm, followed by a potluck dinner at 8:15pm at the home of Sid and Allison Condit. All are invited to participate. Contact Sid for info.

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