



# St. Mary's Monarch

January 2007

News of St. Mary's Parish, Anchorage,  
Alaska

Volume 18, Issue 1

## Words from the Warriors for the Holy Three

*Youth quote of the month:* (recently overheard in confirmation class) "Is that the one who chopped people's heads off?" – Rose

### *Getting to know the Warriors:*

This month we asked the each person what their silliest habit was. These were their answers.

Sara: "I squeak when I'm surprised."

Derek: "I like to dance around at random moments."

Dylan: "Does being annoying count?"

Sarah: "Dancing in the car to eighties music."

Paul: "Allowing my wife to look through old photos perhaps."

Ben: "I enjoy picking on my sisters."

Angel: "Singing in the shower when no one is around."

Eric: "writing romantic poetry that girls in my class love."

Rose: "Walking to Taco Bell in the dead of winter, or anytime when it is too cold outside."

Matt: "Doing my laundry, no really . . . I have a really fun time doing my laundry."

Nichole: "Denying she is a shrimp."

Jessica: "Not keeping secrets."

Lexi: "Obsessively cleaning my room."

Angela: "I conduct to music, any music."

(This will be tested soon.)

### *Looking back-*

The Warriors had a liturgical workshop one Sunday and spent time revising *Beyond Belief*. *Beyond Belief* is a relatively new service at St. Mary's, designed by and led by the youth. It is a contemporary service, centered in prayer, loud Christian music and a time for discussion. Since it started last summer there has been discussion about improving it, as well as including some more traditional elements such as a Eucharist. The workshop time allowed the group, with the help of Paul and Sarah, to create a contemporary liturgy that includes a Eucharist (the only part led by a priest) and preserves other traditional elements from the Book of Common Prayer. The new format seems to be working well. Please join us sometime. *Beyond Belief* is held every first and third Sunday at 2:30 in the Sanctuary.

The Warriors have been keeping busy in other ways too. Several of our Sunday sessions

helped us prepare for our Advent Craft and Bake sale. This event was selected by the group as a way to raise money for three different purposes:

1. For the construction of a multi-purpose building at St. Mary's
2. For repairing/rebuilding churches that have had fires
3. A new espresso machine for Jesus Java

Confirmation classes are well underway and the studying seems to be going well. Some students may still need mentors; if you are interested please contact Fr. Paul. Look for those confirmands and quiz them on the Ten Commandments if you have a chance.

The *Fast Food Progressive Dinner* was a smashing success. Just think . . . two cars full of Middle School students (plus a few adults), four fast food restaurants, a few flamingos and a game of hide the potato back at church to end the night. Everyone who came took a turn praying, either before our departure, at one of the restaurants or upon our safe return (it is likely that each adult said a few extra *thanksgivings* at this point in the evening).

A Bible study on the book of Acts and joining in two KidVentures (swimming and skating/bowling) were also highlights from the last few months. It was great to go have some fun with the rest of the kids from church.

### *Looking forward:*

The confirmation class will be having a retreat in February, tentatively scheduled for February 23-25. This retreat will not be limited to the confirmands; other youth are encouraged to participate, remembering that it is a time of preparation and learning. If you are available to help with the retreat please contact Fr. Paul or Don Schulz. Not all of the activities for January and February are planned as of this writing. If you are interested in helping with the youth group please contact Fr. Paul or Sarah Klitzke.

Thank you St. Mary's for supporting the Warriors in all that we do.

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## Shalom! A New Year for the Church

by the Rev. Connie Jones

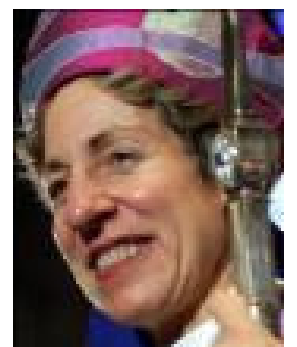
On November 4, Mary Ellen Harris and I traveled to the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. to witness the investiture of Katharine Jefferts Schiori as the 26th Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church.

There was so much that was memorable about this event, but perhaps the one thing that has stayed with me is Presiding Bishop Katharine's message of "Shalom" in her sermon that day. If you have a chance to go to the Episcopal website to read the full sermon, please do. (<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/>)

I had always taken "shalom" to be simply the Hebrew word for peace, but she elaborated on the meaning with these words:

"Shalom. It doesn't just mean the sort of peace that comes when we're no longer at war. It's that rich and multi-hued vision of a world where no one goes hungry because everyone is invited to a seat at the groaning board, it's a vision of a world where no one is sick or in prison because all sorts of disease have been healed, it's a vision of a world where every human being has the capacity to use every good gift that God has given, it is a vision of a world where no one enjoys abundance at the expense of another, it's a vision of a world where all enjoy Sabbath rest in the conscious presence of God."

When I heard her words, I was strengthened in my resolve to continue the ministry of St. Mary's as a "welcoming and inclusive" congregation, where absolutely everyone is welcome and no one is denied.



# My Reason to Be Thankful

by Thelma Jackson

Thank you Lord for this and all opportunities. Guide me, strengthen me, and encourage me. Amen

Today, we come together with family and friends and offer thanks. Of all the profound gestures of the human heart, thanksgiving is the most common and the most basic. Its presence creates a universal bond that transcends differences throughout the world. During the thanksgiving holiday, we focus on our blessings and express our gratitude to God for them. But thanks are on our lips daily. We can never say thank you enough to parents, friends, leaders, and especially to God. Since thanksgiving has become an integral part of our lives, we have found that our attitude toward life has changed. We have become more positive, gracious, loving and humble.

I remember as a child that obedience was very important in my home. To love was to be obedient and there were many, many rewards in return. I'm thankful that I was taught the negatives of being disobedient and the positives of being obedient because those teachings have been a source that I have drawn on throughout my life. How wonderful it would be if we could help our children and grandchildren to learn thankfulness through obedience at an early age. Being thankful opens doors. It changes a child's personality. Obedient and thankful children want to give; they radiate happiness and they draw people to them.

First Thessalonians 5:18 tells us that "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us." Paul was not teaching that we should thank God FOR everything that happens to us, but thank God IN everything. Even when adversity strikes, we can be thankful for who God is and for the good he can bring through the distress. Our joy, prayers, and thankfulness to God should not fluctuate with our circumstances or feelings. Obeying these three commands: rejoice; keep praying and give thanks, often goes against our natural inclinations. We cannot spend all of our time on our knees, but it is possible to have a prayerful attitude at all times. This attitude is built upon acknowledging our dependence on God, realizing His presence within us, and determining to obey Him fully. We then find it natural to pray frequent, spontaneous, short prayers. For God deals with us from a merciful posture; His arms are open, His words are healing.

I'm thankful that I have learned to be slow to speak and to do things without murmurings and disputes, because being angry or unforgiving makes it impossible to have a gentle and quiet spirit.

Psalms 27:14 tells us to "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and God shall strengthen our hearts." I'm thankful that in my waiting, I have been blessed with a wonderful family, a loving church community and many friendships that would not have been a part of my life had I not accepted what came my way with courage and with the best I had to give. God's love and the love of others has been a driving force in my life. All that I am and all that I ever hope to be, I owe to the loving grace of God. Grace is God's voluntary and loving favor given to me; I can't earn it nor do I deserve it.

To be thankful means to take nothing for granted but to always seek out and value the kind that will stand

behind the action. Nothing that is done for us is a matter of course. Thankfulness is a quality similar to electricity: it must be produced and discharged and used up in order to exist at all. Think of the beauty that again and again discharges itself within and without. We must remember that as much as has been given us, much will be expected of us and that true homage comes from the hearts as well as from the lips and shows itself in deeds. Simple thankfulness helps us experience God at work in every moment of every day.

We thank thee and praise thee O God, who has given us wisdom and might and has made known unto us what we desire. Let us remember that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father. There is no shadow of turning with thee; Thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not, as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be. Great is thy faithfulness, Morning by morning new mercies I see. All I have needed, you have provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me.



## St. Mary's for the Next 50 Years!

### Summary of Congregational Discernment Process

by Mike McCormack

Starting at the beginning of summer and completed at the end of October, the St. Mary's Long Range Planning Committee planned and conducted a parish-wide discernment process to establish consensus on what our mission will be in the future and what this means with regard to existing and new programs. Related to this was asking what will be the direction with regard to developing our St. Mary's physical campus.

The actual process consisted of two major parts. First, questionnaires were mailed to all parish households asking specific questions with regard to St. Mary's future. Second, an all-parish discernment meeting was held at Waldron Hall on October 14. Both initiatives were very successful with the results of the discernment meeting reported in the last Monarch. The next step for the committee was compiling the results of both the over 60 questionnaires received as well as results of the Discernment Meeting into a concise summary. What follows is the result of that effort.

"Build the Church!" was the headline of the community forum and the surveys distributed to the congregation. This refers to physical buildings but more than that: to a dynamic growth and expansion of the St. Mary's community. The physical facilities shall serve to *attract* new members – particularly young adults, young families and young people. The congregation emphasized reaching out to both the young and to elders, and stressed intergenerational programs. Becoming ever more inclusive and diverse was also supported, particularly reaching out to Alaska Native people. We should create a multitude of ways to become engaged in St. Mary's – the more activities we host, the more vibrant the campus and the more new members will be attracted to join our community. We should aim to provide

and host activities on every day of the week for every aged member of a family. The St. Mary's Creative Institute was remembered by many as a 'community school' type program that offered everything from spiritual reflection to auto mechanics.

Participants and survey respondents also want us to reach out more to those in need. While many identified reaching out to people who are homeless as an important ministry, others expressed reservations. More discussion and education is needed to learn more about the types of people who are homeless, what their needs are and how St. Mary's might be best suited to help. Also, concerns among the congregation regarding security at St. Mary's need to be addressed to find the right balance between being open to all but also creating a safe place for all. Supporting existing programs such as FISH and reviving ministries such as providing meals for Claire House, a temporary residence for homeless women and children, was emphasized by many. Creating stronger connections with the neighborhoods that adjoin St. Mary's was a goal for many, both in terms of better pedestrian and trail connections to the campus and increased programs that benefit low-income families.

In terms of facilities, support was overwhelming for constructing a multi-purpose facility as part of the St. Mary's campus. The elements suggested for the facility include: classrooms, theater, gym, laundry, showers, kitchen, storage, childcare, coffee shop, social service referral, Creative Institute, dormitory, and a pre-school with playground. The facility should be linked to trails and walkways for pedestrians, as well as include adequate parking.

Housing is also a popular idea for facility development. Supportive housing and senior housing received almost equal votes. Participants would like to see plans for new facility development incorporated into an overall facility plan for St. Mary's. This should include repairing, remodeling and expanding existing facilities and parking areas. Open space is important to many and should be incorporated into the facility plan.

Many participants stressed the need for continued fiscal responsibility in any new projects we undertake. Some asked if our annual contributions are sufficient to embark on a facility expansion. Ensuring a sound fiscal plan for development is key for many congregants.

The next step is to present these results to the St. Mary's Vestry along with some suggested action steps. Under the direction of the Vestry we will develop specific goals, specific programs and facility plans that reflect the results of the discernment process. This will take place the remainder of 2006 and early 2007. We will keep you advised of our progress.

One final note: unlike the national and state elections last November, the Long Range Planning Committee is still open to any and all comments and input from our congregation. If you have anything to offer, please contact any LRPC member or Michael. LRPC members are Mike McCormack, Hugh Gellert, Eric Wohlforth, Bob Thwing, Michael Burke, Thea Agnew Bembien, Sherrie Simmonds and Niel Thomas and Thelma Jackson.

# Alaskans Attend Bishop Schori Investiture

By Mary Ellen Harris

Bishop Mark McDonald, Connie Jones and I were the Alaska contingent at the Investiture of Katharine Jefferts Schori as the new and first woman Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church. The whole experience was a mountain top experience for me, and as Connie said, for her and other ordained women, a pilgrimage.

It started in June when Hisako Beasley called me from the floor of convention to tell me that Katharine had been elected by the House of Bishops and would soon be approved by the House of Deputies. Katherine Jefferts Schori was the first woman nominated to lead the Episcopal Church for the 9-year term of Presiding Bishop and her election came as a surprise to many. The Episcopal Church is one of the few churches in the Anglican Communion that consecrates women as bishops, although the majority ordains women as deacon and priest.

On Friday, November 3, we attended the organizing meeting of a new group calling itself the Episcopal Majority. The meeting was held at St. Columba's, a short walk from where we were staying. We heard an encouraging address by Jon Bruno, Bishop of Los Angeles, and attended workshops on what is going on in the Anglican Communion and how we can continue with an international mission no matter what happens to the Anglican Communion. As Susan Russell, President of Integrity, said in a workshop I attended, "We have been small 'c' Catholics for many years, maybe we will have to be small 'a' Anglicans for a while."

A steering committee was elected and we expect to hear more from this group, but the best part of the experience, for me, was the encouragement of meeting with over 150 people who came together determined that the dissidents in the church will not get the last word. The majority of

Episcopalians support the right of a diocese to elect their own choice of bishop and see no reason why we can't all worship and do missions together, no matter what our differences of biblical interpretation.

Saturday dawned sunny and warm by Alaska standards, and the trees were in bright fall mode. Connie and I were chauffeured to the Cathedral and joined a line of happy, excited Episcopalians waiting for the doors to open. When the doors opened we streamed in and were amazed to find seats right next to Hisako! The Cathedral seats over 3,000 and we were in the center section but about ¾ of the way back from the altar. We could see, but from a distance, however we were all excited to be there and finding friends from various parts of the country. It was something of a reunion.

The procession started with Native American smudgers and drummers after carillon, organ and brass and finally, choral preludes. The procession went on and on, led by the most amazing streamers that were expertly waved over our heads. Almost the entire House of Bishops, Ministers of Baptismal Sprinkling and Communion, Presenters of Symbols of Ministry, Representatives of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion, guests from the Ecumenical and Interfaith Communities, and finally, Washington National Cathedral Canons and representatives of the Cathedral Chapter and readers of the lessons. Nobody does processions like Episcopalians!

When everyone was finally in we sang "Holy, Holy, Holy" and the Welcoming Party processed back down the length of the nave, led by drummers and dancers, to answer Katharine's knock at the door. She entered wearing vestments created for her representing a new day dawning. It was so exciting I felt shivers down my spine.

After the Liturgy of the Word and a wonderful Homily,

we did a renewal of Baptismal Covenant and then Eucharist. Eucharist for over 3,000 people was a feat, but Washington National Cathedral's staff was wonderfully organized and it moved like clockwork.

Katharine's homily was wonderful, the music was wonderful – many of my favorite hymns were sung. After the service there was a crowd moving toward Katharine at the baptismal font in the center of the nave, so we moved outside to find refreshment in the school next door. We visited with old friends and new acquaintances and when we wandered back over an hour later she was still greeting a reception line, so we got in line and spoke with her for a few minutes. She was so gracious, we felt like she was willing to take whatever time we needed. When we left for a late lunch she was still there greeting people – four hours after the service started.

The next day we did the whole thing again for the formal seating of the new Presiding Bishop in Washington National Cathedral. This time we got VIP seating near the pulpit because Connie is the official Alaska representative to the Cathedral

There is a DVD available, which we will be getting, meanwhile streaming video of the November 4 investiture service is now available online at: <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/investiture>.

Streaming video of the November 5 seating ceremony is available from Washington National Cathedral's website at: <http://www.cathedral.org/cathedral>.

Photo galleries of both the investiture and formal seating services are available at: <http://www.episcopalchurch.org>.

## Pioneers, Prophets and Priests

The history of the Episcopal Church USA reflects the changes and challenges of the nation including the unique experience of Black Americans as slaves and free people. Their lives and their ministries are a tribute to their spiritual, intellectual and vocational gifts as well as to the community that nurtured and continues to support their work.

### **The Rt. Rev. James Theodore Holly**

Born in 1824 in Washington, DC, James Theodore Holly was the descendent of freed slaves. He was active in anti-slavery conventions in the free states in the United States befriending Frederick Douglass and participating in abolitionist activities.

Bishop Holly left the Roman Catholic Church over a dispute about ordaining local black clergy and joined the Episcopal Church. He was a shoemaker, then a teacher and school principal before his own ordination at the age of 27. He served as rector at St Luke's Church in New Haven, Connecticut and was one of the founders of the Protestant Episcopal Society for Promoting the Extension of the Church Among Colored People (a forerunner of UBE) in 1856. This group challenged the Church to take a position against slavery at Gen-

eral Convention.

In 1861 he left the United States with his family and a group of African Americans to settle in Haiti—the world's first black republic. He lost his family and other settlers to disease and poor living conditions but was successful in establishing schools and building the Church. He trained young priests and started congregations and medical programs in the countryside.

In 1874 he was ordained bishop at Grace Church, New York City, not by the mainstream Episcopal Church, who refused to ordain a black missionary bishop, but by the American Church Missionary Society, an Evangelical Episcopal branch of the Church. He was named Bishop of the Anglican Orthodox Episcopal Church of Haiti. He attended the Lambeth Convention as a bishop of the Church. He died in Haiti in 1911. Below is a contemporary account of his funeral:

"The crowd that followed was immense—the side walks and balconies were crowded with people to see the funeral go by. The Mayor of the city sent to inquire through what streets the procession would go, and then sent to have those

streets perfectly cleared. People have told us that after the funeral they could not find a piece of mourning in town; everywhere they were told that 'Bishop Holly had cleaned them out,' so great was the number of those who thought it their duty to take mourning for the Bishop."

Bishop Holly shows us how the Church can nourish and sponsor freedom, education and liberation as it provides the spiritual support for resistance to society's prejudices and oppression.

Information about Bishop Holly, including this quotation, can be found in *The History of the Afro-American Group of the Episcopal Church*, by George F. Bragg. The electronic edition can be found on line at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/church/bragg>.



# IN HER OWN WORDS

From "So Where Is the Episcopal Church Headed Now?" a lecture given by Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific:

The Anglican tradition in this country was born in a revolution against monarchy and its aftermath. We have been from our foundation a profoundly democratic church, insisting that priests and the laity hold council and govern in partnership with late-coming bishops. We have a colonial heritage that developed and maintained a church run by lay men and funded by lay women, often with a profound distrust of bishops with too much authority.

We are also heirs to a tradition that in the late 19th century affirmed that there were (and are) four things that hold us together as Christians. The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral insisted that Jesus' prayer "that we all may be one" is our earnest desire for all the churches of Christ. We acknowledge that all who have been baptized in the name of the Trinity are members of that larger church. That statement further acknowledged that human custom in terms of worship and discipline is mutable, and that we do not seek either absorption or schism in approaching the differences among us, and that unity among Christians is only possible by returning to the principles of the early church. Those essential principles of unity consist of: the scriptures of Old and New Testaments; the historic creeds; Baptism and Eucharist; and the historic episcopate, locally adapted.

The way forward is going to require both much greater clarity about our own identity and much greater vulnerability to the truth of others. We are learning more about our own positions in dialogue and conflict with others, but it is a process that is meant to change us all. In order to go forward we are going to need to be willing to die, in the sense that the Body of Christ must be continuously willing to die if it is going to maintain its identity as a resurrected body. Each of us, and each portion of the church in tension, must repent of its self-centeredness and excessive hubris, seek reconciliation with its most hated opponents, and find new ways of living together. It will not be painless or easy, but it is the road to abundant life.

We are a body, an organic, living thing. Christians are the body of baptized folk called into service to the dream of God, where the poor hear good news, the captives are set free, the sick are healed, all are fed, housed, clothed, and people live together in peace. All are free to bless God and each other in creative and productive relationship. Communion may exist most effectively and incarnationally in partnerships that effect that dream, rather than in structures designed to control and contain untidy ecclesiastical politics.

In other words, I don't think Jesus is as interested in instruments of unity as he is in whether or not we're serving his brothers and sisters or feeding the hungry. The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion are going to survive if we manage to work together at healing the world.

(November 2005)



**Feast of Lights  
Saturday,  
January 6  
6:00 p.m.**

**Martin Luther King Day  
Service  
Monday,  
January 18, 2007  
6:00 p.m.**



**Annual Meeting!**

**St. Mary's Annual Meeting will  
be held on January 28, 2007, at  
11:30 in Waldron Hall.**



**Business  
Meeting**