

THE COLLECT

January 2009

St. Thomas Episcopal Church ❖ P.O. Box 124 ❖ Medina, WA 98039
425.454.9541 ❖ www.stthomasmedina.org



Services

Sunday
8:00 am Eucharist with hymns
9:00 am Fellowship
9:15 am Adult Forum
10:15 am Sunday School
10:15 am Sung Eucharist
11:15 am Fellowship
3:00 pm Senior Service
(Chapel, last Sunday of the month only)

Wednesday
10:00 am Eucharist (Chapel)
Daily
7:30 am Morning Prayer (Chapel)
6:30 am Friday Morning Prayer (Chapel)
(no Saturday service)

Music Rehearsals

St. Thomas Singers
Thursdays - 7:30 – 9:30 pm

St. Thomas Choristers
Sundays - following 10:15 service

Calendar

Baptism Preparation
January 10, 10:00 am

HYC at St. Thomas
January 16-18

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 19

Annual Meeting
February 22

From the Priest-in-Charge (Interim)

LIVING FROM THE HEART: RING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH A RULE OF LIFE

by *The Reverend Doctor Jane Maynard*

*O Jesus, while the star of grace impels us on to seek thy face,
let not our slothful hearts refuse the guidance of thy grace to use.*

Hymn 124, 1982 Hymnal

During the season of Epiphany, we consider especially Jesus' grace and presence in our lives. One sign of God's presence is the yearning many express for a simpler, more centered life.

Many people adopt New Year's resolutions as one way of redressing imbalances in their lives. We may resolve to get more sleep, to eat a more nutritious diet, to exercise more regularly, or to be more patient and attentive to our spouse and children. While the intent of these resolutions is to achieve greater balance and health, we often fail to keep them. Our resolutions often focus on ways that we fail to measure up, and when we don't succeed in keeping them, we may end up feeling even more inadequate. Perhaps a new approach is called for, one that connects us with the light of God's grace.

In her helpful book, *Living Faith Day by Day: How the Sacred Rules of Monastic Traditions Can Help You Live Spiritually in the Modern World*, Debra Farrington describes how re-discovering the practice of developing and following a rule of life can help contemporary Christians introduce a greater sense of balance and satisfaction into their daily lives. The intent of monastic

rules is to help religious communities become more attentive to God's presence and more open to God's guidance. Farrington provides a brief overview of traditional and contemporary rules and then talks about how these may be adapted for individual Christians who wish to live more intentionally.

According to Farrington, monastic rules consider activities in eight categories. These activities include:

- putting God at the center of your life, the intent behind all rules
- finding a prayer rhythm and type that works for you
- approaching work as part of your spiritual life rather than something divorced from it
- developing a regular practice of learning more about God through study
- finding spiritual companionship
- caring for your body
- reaching out through caring for others and the environment
- offering hospitality and finding ways to be a gracious presence in the world

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THE STAR IN THE DARKNESS

by Kathryn Ballinger, Deacon, Associate for Spiritual Direction & Parish Visitor

I have always loved the images of Epiphany: the star brilliant in the blue velvet night sky, the shadowy figures of the Magi on their camels silhouetted against the night, plodding across the desert dunes. Exotic and foreign-looking, these strangers on a quest come from another place. The mystery of their appearance intrigues me.

Who were these wise men: kings? Magi? They could have been astrologers who studied the natural sciences and were known for their observations of nature. They could have studied the writings of many religions, and therefore they would have been aware of the wider world around them. So, it is reasonable that they noticed this new star and knew its significance.

Where did they come from? The Bible says from the East, but many believe Isaiah foretold their coming when he said that “the young camels of Midian and Ephah will come,” which we know today as Iraq. We know that these men were not Jews, that they traveled a long distance, and that the journey was not easy.

Most importantly, they were the first Gentiles to worship Christ. They are a sign to us and to the world that it was part of God’s plan to call the world to worship Christ. And the star they followed shows us that Christ was the Light sent into the world that would call all nations to him. Just as that star called those foreigners to come to worship at the manger, so Christ would call the whole world to kneel with them. They represent all those Gentiles who would find redemption through Christ.

In a very real sense, all who have found salvation in Christ are repre-

sented by those kings. Like them, we have seen the darkness of our lives. Like them, we have looked to heaven for some hope.

As we settle into the darkness of winter, our world seems bleak indeed: economic disaster, mortgage failures, bombings in India, riots in Greece, war and starving people everywhere. This world is in desperate need of light. Yet, Almighty God has promised that light will not be overcome by darkness. That light – the Light of the world – is with us in the midst of the world’s darkness and chaos: Emmanuel – God with us.

So we journey with the Magi from the darkness of unbelief to follow the light of Christ in faith and hope. We wait for Christ to recreate in us new hearts and minds, and for God’s creation to be recreated as it was meant to be in the beginning. As we approach the manger, we, like the Magi, can reach inside our cloaks and pull out our most precious gifts to give to Christ: we lay our hearts on the altar to the one who is the light of the world, our guiding star in our darkness.



*From the Priest-in-Charge
continued from page 1 . . .*

Farrington suggests that most of us already follow an implicit rule that addresses some, if not most, of these areas. One way to become aware of one’s existing rule is to answer this question, “What are the things that you currently do to nurture your spirit?” As you reflect on this question, you may be surprised at the variety of activities that give you life. They may include everything from gardening, to dancing, to walking the dog, to developing spreadsheets.

Farrington suggests that we consider how the spiritually nurturing activities we already do fit within the eight traditional categories. To achieve greater balance, she suggests that we aim to develop new practices in the underrepresented areas. Then, she encourages us to engage the help of a spiritual friend or two for accountability. A journal can also be a great tool in monitoring one’s commitments. Once you have succeeded in developing a rudimentary rule, strive to follow it faithfully. If you are able to do so for three months, then dedicate your rule to God for one year. If not, revise and try again.

Remember: the aim of all rules is to provide balance and openness to God’s gracious love. I encourage you to experiment with this practice in the New Year. May it strengthen your awareness of Christ’s light in your life and lead you more deeply into the heart of God.

Faithfully,

WHAT CHILD IS THIS, ANYWAY?

by Josh Hosler, Associate for Christian Formation

Sometimes it's an epiphany: a "Eureka!" moment, a descending dove, a blinding flash of inspiration – a born-again, hallelujah day that knocks you off your horse.

At other times, it's a growing realization, a rising star, a creeping suspicion, a joyful thought that you don't believe, and then you do, and then you don't ... and one day, you look back and say, "Wow. I believed it all along."

First comes the action, then the revealing. First comes the reality, then the manifestation of that reality. First comes Christmas, then comes Epiphany. And throughout this season, we are invited into stories of Christ revealed in the world.

The Magi are the first. These sages from the East tell us that the light of the Living God, YHWH, has spread to the Gentile world as well. They had been wrestling with the concept for some time; they just needed confirmation of what they were beginning to suspect.

Next comes the Baptism. The young man Jesus is baptized along with

throng of others, but there's something clearly different about this baptism. It sets gears turning. A powerful energy begins to spread throughout the countryside.

Some people, like Nathanael, figure it out in retrospect. "Wait ... you saw me under a fig tree, and suddenly you knew me through and through?" Others, like the fishermen, take a bold risk on a brave idea. And next thing they know, they're casting out demons, healing the sick, and reuniting the outcasts to their community. And finally, they see Jesus transfigured before their very eyes, conversing with Moses and Elijah. But we're getting ahead of ourselves.

Wait ... who is this guy? Is he so special? And if so, how? And what does it all mean? This guy could become a superstar. But what star is this, anyway? What child is this, anyway? I see Jesus' hand reaching out to me. And then the words come: "Do you trust me?"

Wow. If it's true, this could get big. This could change everything.



PARISHIONER MAGGIE RILEY VOLUNTEERS IN THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM

by Mary Pneuman, Bishop's Committee for Israel/Palestine member

Many will remember when, not so long ago, Maggie Riley was a chorister and high school choir member at St. Thomas. Now, taking leave from her internship in media outreach at YES! magazine and a job at Macy's, she is moving to the village of Zababdeh in the northern hills of the West Bank. Maggie will work with the children and youth of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, help plan a women's exchange (Women's Connection for Peace), and assist at the Penman Clinic, a full-service clinic that serves approximately 1,000 out-patients a month in this largely Christian community.

Maggie has "always believed that just because it is, doesn't mean it should be." Her interest in Israel/Palestine came in her senior year at Western (where she majored in English), when she took a course in international relations that opened her eyes to the unjust use of power and, as she says, "put a fire in my belly." This led to independent research into the Israeli occupation of Palestine and a growing awareness of the role America was playing because of misinformed acceptance of systematic injustice that is "almost invisible in America." Believing strongly that as a citizen she needed to do her part to help the Palestinian people and promote understanding and peace, she set about to discover how she could translate this call into action. This led to the Episcopal Bishop's Committee for Israel/Palestine and a conversation with Father Fadi Diab of St. Matthew's, Zababdeh,

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THE PROCESS TOWARD HOLY ORDERS

by *Dwight Russell, Diocesan Commission on Ministry member and chair of Parish Commission on Ministry*

As many of you know, I am the chairperson of our parish Commission on Ministry. Our mission is to assist those who feel a “nudge” from God toward a different path in life, whether it is Holy Orders or a lay ministry vocation. In addition, I have served on the Diocesan Commission on Ministry since January 2006. This month marks the conclusion of a regular three-year term, and I will leave the diocesan post to explore other avenues of ministry. Depending on the plans of our new rector, I will continue to work with parishioners who wish to discern their individual call. Several people at St. Thomas have asked me what the steps and requirements are for someone who is in process for Holy Orders (the priesthood and the diaconate). So, here is a summary of the pathways toward both orders.

It is important to preface the details with a summary of the duties of each office. Priests are “gatherers” and shepherds of their congregations, seeing that parishioners receive what they need for Christian formation and nurturing. Deacons operate on the fringe of a congregation, identifying the needs of the surrounding community, bringing those needs back to the parish and mobilizing members of the congregation to satisfy those needs (much as in the first century – “feeding the widows and orphans”). Contrary to some perceptions, the job of a deacon is not to function as a non-stipendiary assistant to a rector.

To a point, the activities and requirements for each office are the same. They are as follows:

1. Spend a minimum of 36 hours over a period of nine to twelve months in formal discernment with a committee.
2. Apply in writing to the Bishop for admission to postulancy.

The Bishop then may decide to invite the person to a three-day postulancy BACOM (the acronym for Bishop’s Advisory Commission on Ministry). Participants are: the nominee, members of the Diocesan Commission on Ministry, and the Bishop. The mission is to decide on the readiness of the nominee to be made a postulant.

3. Complete and submit to the Bishop the following documentation: personal financial statement, behavioral screening questionnaire, results of a physical examination and a psychological examination, and a life-history questionnaire.

Postulancy

Assuming admission, the postulant proceeds to work toward candidacy for ordination, which involves the following steps:

1. Submit a theological education plan for approval by the Bishop, and begin that education.

For the priesthood, it is necessary to have a bachelor’s degree prior to application for postulancy. There are options for theological education for the priesthood: three years at an approved seminary or two years locally, e.g., Seattle University, and then one year at an Episcopal Seminary, e.g., Church Divinity School of the Pacific at Berkeley, California.

For the diaconate, a bachelor’s degree is not necessary. Theological education includes church history and an overview of scriptures, and other areas of canonical competency, which can be studied at various local institutions. Education for Ministry is a preferred course of studies.

2. Begin work with a spiritual director.
3. Complete the first of two years of field education. For the priesthood, both years are normally done in a parish other than the home parish. For the diaconate, one year in a parish other than the home parish, one year at a domestic/social services agency.
4. Complete anti-racism training and sexual misconduct prevention training.
5. Complete a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). A typical local example would be a chaplaincy internship at Harborview Hospital or Veterans’ Hospital.

Completion time for the postulancy phase averages two years and depends on academic scheduling, finances, family considerations and work schedule, to name a few. Once most of the requirements outlined above have been met, the postulant applies to the Bishop for admission to candidacy, attends a candidacy weekend (similar to postulancy BACOM) and, if deemed ready, becomes a candidate.

At this juncture, the paths to becoming a priest or a deacon take different directions. The candidacy phase averages one year, depending on the same variables applicable to postulancy, and the requirements for each are as follows:

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Priesthood Candidacy

1. Complete seminary, graduating with a Master's Degree in Divinity, unless previously accomplished.
2. Take the General Ordination Examinations.
3. Meet with the Board of Examining Chaplains toward receiving a Certificate of Canonical Competency.
4. Complete the second of two years of field education.
5. Meet with the Diocesan Commission on Ministry to determine readiness for ordination to the transitional diaconate.
6. Approval by the Bishop and ordination to the transitional diaconate.

Once ordained, the path to final ordination to the priesthood involves completion of these items:

Transitional Diaconate

1. Continue discernment, work, and reflection in this final phase for a minimum of six months.
2. Issuance by the seminary (or other applicable program) of a certificate showing the candidate's scholastic record and evaluation.
3. Receipt by the Bishop of a report from candidate's supervising clergy covering his/her scope of work, gifts of ministry, and growing edges.
4. Receive the Commission on Ministry's Certificate of Attestation indicating readiness for ordination to the priesthood.

5. Receive a testimonial from the Diocesan Standing Committee stating readiness for ordination to the priesthood.
6. Approval by the Bishop and ordination to the priesthood – thanks be to God!

Diaconate Candidacy

1. Complete the second of two years of field education.
2. Take examinations in all areas of competency.
3. Complete a written report to the Bishop relative to candidate's formation and educational work.
4. Receive the Commission on Ministry's Certificate of Attestation indicating readiness for ordination to the diaconate.
5. Meet with the Board of Examining Chaplains toward receiving a Certificate of Canonical Competency.
6. Receive a testimonial from the Diocesan Standing Committee stating readiness for ordination to the diaconate.
7. Approval by the Bishop and ordination to the diaconate – thanks be to God!*

* The Canonical designation for this office is Vocational Deacon or, in the vernacular, permanent deacon. It is a working position and not a step toward the priesthood as with the transitional diaconate. Being a vocational deacon does not preclude aspiring to the priesthood at a later date. However, serious in-depth discernment by the individual, the bishops, and the larger community is needed before pursuing this course of action.

I would be pleased to entertain questions.

PROJECT OUTREACH SEEKS FOUR NEW MEMBERS

Project Outreach is looking for four new members to join our steering committee in March for a three-year term. The mission of Project Outreach is "to provide a channel for funds and volunteer resources to help people beyond the parish; to identify unmet needs as they arise and to respond with financial assistance and service within the framework of the Episcopal heritage." Members commit to attend one evening meeting on the second Thursday of each month, and they are responsible for prayerfully evaluating grant requests and making thoughtful use of the money given to Project Outreach. In support of the committee's mission, members take on specific tasks such as researching grant requests, stuffing Christmas and Easter appeal envelopes, and sending acknowledgments to donors.

The committee communicates its work to the parish through the bulletin board in the Great Hall, monthly *Collect* articles, mission minutes in church and Power Point slides during the weekly Forum and coffee hour. Our objective is to expand congregational participation in outreach consistent with the findings of the Parish Profile and to facilitate the process of matching volunteers to programs and ministries and to identify the leaders who can welcome volunteers to join them. Please speak to current committee members to learn more about the very interesting and enjoyable work we do on the committee: Delphine Stevens (2008 Chair), Bill McSherry (incoming 2009 Chair), Tom Casey, Alison Cole, Gini Ann Davis, Larry Loranger, Tucker Moodey, Mary Pneuman, Kathy Smith, and Beth Zobel. We hope you will consider joining us, and we particularly seek a new member who has an accounting background.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church Vestry

Alice Reid, *Senior Warden*
Charles Brown, *Junior Warden*
Fred Barkman, *Treasurer*
Jim Blundell, *Chancellor*
Nicholas Sooy, *Clerk*

Roger Ahroon Jean Johnson
Jeff Belfiglio Bonnie Palevich
Margaret Chorlton Steve Pedersen
Jim Hughes Nancy Pitarys

Staff

The Reverend Doctor Jane Maynard,
Priest-in-Charge (Interim)
The Reverend Kathryn Ballinger, *Deacon*
Associate for Spiritual Direction
& *Parish Visitor*
The Reverend Stephen W. Best,
Associate for Couples & Family Life
Charles Rus, *Interim Associate for*
Liturgical Arts
Josh Hosler, *Associate for Christian*
Formation
Aileen Loranger, *Associate for Pastoral Care*
& *Health Ministries*
Jeremy Anderson, *Associate Organist*
Judy Crunkilton, *Parish Administrator*
Gerry Gallaher, *Business Manager*

THE COLLECT

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Please submit copy to Shirley
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sedeffenbaugh@comcast.net or leave
in the drawer marked "Collect" at the
Church. All articles will be edited. If you
have questions, please call Shirley at
425-455-4817.

A MESSAGE FROM ANDREA SATO BORGSMANN, SENIOR WARDEN

Dear Friends,

I write to share with you some news of leadership transition for the Vestry. I have been serving the Vestry as Senior Warden during the past year. I am part of the "retiring" class of Vestry members that includes Charles Brown (Junior Warden), Alice Reid (Warden for Communications and Events) and Roger Ahroon. Our term officially concludes with the February annual meeting.

During this time of transition and in the absence of a rector, Pastor Jane and the Vestry have agreed that the best way to select Vestry leadership is for the Vestry to select its own leadership at the annual retreat. In early March 2009, the Vestry will spend a weekend on retreat and as part of their work, they will mutually discern their gifts and choose Vestry leadership for the coming year.

As many of you know, my husband and I have been blessed with the unexpected gift (truly a miracle) of my becoming pregnant. My due date is mid-February, within days of the 2009 annual meeting. It is important during this time of transition that the Senior Warden be as fully available to the parish as possible. To this end, I felt it best to step down as Senior Warden, which took effect as of our December 16th Vestry meeting.

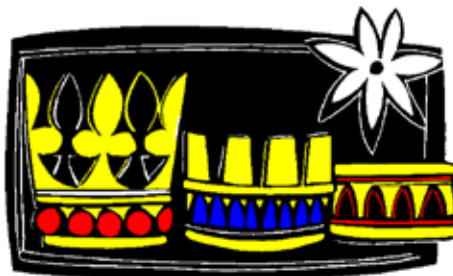
The Vestry appointed Alice Reid to serve as Senior Warden until a new Senior Warden is selected from the continuing classes of Vestry members (appointment anticipated to be on March 9, 2009). At the next Vestry retreat, the Vestry will also select a Junior Warden and, if they discern to do so, other "special role" wardens.

It has been a great honor to journey with St. Thomas during this time of transition. The time has not been without challenges, but it has been rich in rewards as well. The greatest blessing has been getting to know so many parishioners whom I would not have otherwise come to know.

I have been heartened to experience the growing energy and vitality of our community. The parish has come together in so many ways during this time of transition to build up a deeper community of faith. We have experienced unexpected losses and detours on the path (and will continue to do so), but we have come together in a new way. People have given generously of their time, their talents, and their treasure in so many ways. This generosity has allowed us to continue to live into what it means to "Practice the Hospitality of God." I pray for our community's continued strength for our journey.

Blessings to you and your family during this Holy season,

~Andrea



GIVING TO BATTLE HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS EXCEEDS \$10,000

Generous autumn giving at St. Thomas enabled Project Outreach to award grants totaling \$10,250 to seven local charities. In a time of increased financial stress and need, undesignated donations of nearly \$2,000 reached a record level of giving during a one-month period.

Faith-based organizations depend heavily on private funding and volunteers to stay open. Centering on the theme of empowering women and service to youth and families, Project Outreach assisted the following ministries:

E-Wish – The Eastside interfaith Sophia Project is expanding the Eastside Women’s Center day program for homeless women at Bellevue First Congregational Church by providing temporary over-night shelter. Helping the women make the transition to independent living is the principal objective of this program. (\$1,200 for sleeping mats)

Families and Friends – One of the oldest victim assistance programs in the United States, Families and Friends of Missing Persons and Violent Crime Victims, provides 24-hour services for the Crime Victim Assistance Center in 19 counties in Washington state, including King County. This program provides a crisis line, crisis intervention, peer support, legal and courtroom advocacy, referral and educational services to those traumatized by violence. (\$2,000)

Friends of Youth – The Landing provides two meals a day, overnight shelter, and case management to 12-15 homeless young adults between the ages of 18 and 24. The only Eastside shelter dedicated to this age group, The Landing helps obtain stable housing and job training and connects the

youth with other community resources. (\$2,000)

Mary’s Place – This day center associated with the Church of Mary Magdalene in Seattle provides food and clothing for 60-70 women each day. A former mission of First United Methodist Church, the center strives to empower women and requires each woman to sign up for a job at the center during the day. (\$2,000)

Penman Clinic – St. Thomas volunteer Maggie Riley will be assisting at this full service outpatient clinic in Zababdeh, West Bank, for the next six months. The clinic serves more than 1,000 patients per month. Maggie will also work with the Sunday school, youth, and women of the sponsoring parish, St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church. (\$500)

Thanksgiving Dinner – In collaboration with Hopelink, St. Thomas purchased, prepared and delivered turkey dinners to more than 500 Eastsiders on Thanksgiving day. (\$1,000)

Vision House – Located in Renton, Vision House provides transitional housing to homeless single mothers and children in crisis, while counseling them to become self-sufficient. This program helps approximately 30 families at any one time and is constantly at capacity. (\$1,500)

All funding decisions are thoughtfully made on the basis of site visits and research and must meet criteria of being inspired by faith, “teaching people to fish,” and organizational effectiveness. All of these organizations offer opportunities for parishioners to become personally involved. If you are looking for a meaningful volunteer ministry, contact Delphine Stevens, Project Outreach Chair.

Please keep the work of Project Outreach in your prayers and continue to give generously. The next granting period will be in March.

Parishioner Maggie Riley continued from page 3 ...

during his visit here in October 2008. Then Maggie bought her airline ticket and will depart in early February for five months in Zababdeh. (The Bishop of the Diocese of Jerusalem recommended that she postpone her planned December 29 departure because of the crisis in Gaza.)

In a recent interview, Maggie expressed her happiness that “two years of dreaming and planning were coming to fruition,” but she admitted that the “part of her that had never been that far away was a little nervous.” She said her brother, now a freshman at Eastern, was excited; her parents were calmly cautious but supportive; and her long-time boyfriend had encouraged her to be true to her convictions. Maggie reflected on how the warmth that has come from this church community had helped her to recognize the intersection between faith and action and “opened [her] eyes to the fact that this is the kind of work God would want us to do.”

Maggie Riley, your church family honors you for putting your faith to work, and you are in our prayers. We look forward to hearing from you often as your mission unfolds. Maggie’s e-mail is: maggieriley@comcast.net.



TIMELINE FOR CALLING A RECTOR

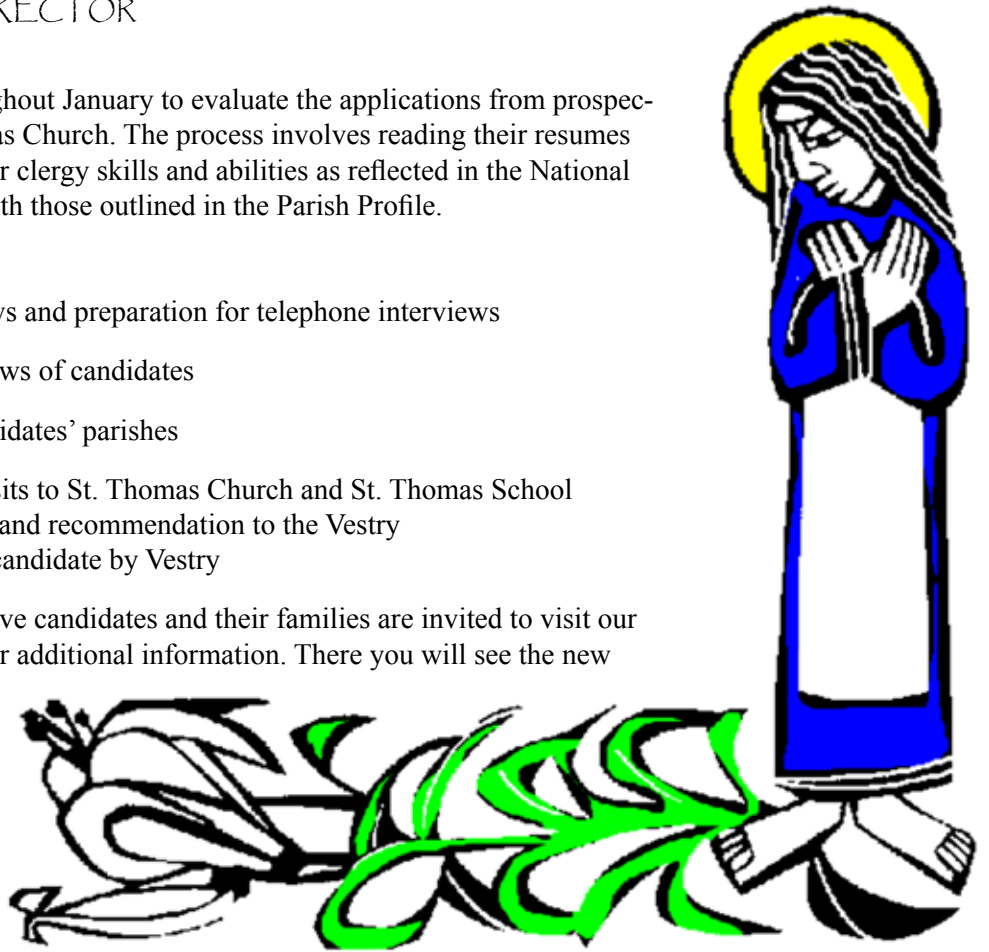
by Jean Haehl, Call Committee member

The Call Committee is meeting throughout January to evaluate the applications from prospective candidates for rector of St. Thomas Church. The process involves reading their resumes and essay questions and matching their clergy skills and abilities as reflected in the National Church Deployment Office records with those outlined in the Parish Profile.

The committee has set this timeline:

- Jan. 6 – 31 Application reviews and preparation for telephone interviews
- Feb. 1 – Mar. 5 Telephone interviews of candidates
- Mar. 1 – May 5 Visits to final candidates' parishes
- May 20 – June 10 Final candidate visits to St. Thomas Church and St. Thomas School
Final discernment and recommendation to the Vestry
Approval of final candidate by Vestry

St. Thomas parishioners and prospective candidates and their families are invited to visit our website, www.stthomasmedina.org, for additional information. There you will see the new "Calling a Rector" page designed by parishioner Claudia Ballheim that enables you to review the Parish Profile, *Collect*, and sermons recently delivered at St. Thomas Church. You may also click on "Transition Update" to keep current on our progress.



Practicing the Hospitality of God

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