

The Rector's Annual Report  
January 1, 1991

What's a church? Really! This is not the start of some long boring sermon, but rather a question that should be asked around every annual meeting time. I have two answers for that question and I'd like to share them with you. First, the church is you; and secondly, the church is a hospital for sinners, not a retirement home for saintly people.

When I say that you are the church, I mean that literally. If outwardly, the church is friendly, its appearance pleasing and inviting, its spiritual atmosphere is reverent and worshipful without being cold, it is because you have made it so. The church reflects each of us as if it were a mirror. It has no life or spirit apart from its members. Make of the church what you will.

I get people who worry because either they are not good enough to attend church or take communion or the people they see there are not good enough (whatever that means?). I receive comments about how many people are hurting in our congregation and how someone doesn't want to have to worry about everyone else's problems, especially when they have enough of their own. God didn't send Jesus to round up all us perfect ones for heaven, God sent him to all who "travail and are heavy laden" and it is those that God would "refresh" (Matt. 11:28). The body of Christ is full of those who need healing--physical, mental, relational, spiritual. It's a hospital full of doctors, nurses and patients.....and you are both!

So what is the annual report of Grace Church and of St. Mary's? In a nut shell, the first is full of patients and the second full of doctors, or youngsters who would be doctors. At Grace church we need to spend a lot of time loving ourselves with God's graceful help into health; while at St. Mary's we need to actively reach out and bring more people into our community of faith. Both churches have much to offer to many people. The Spirit of our Lord is alive in both places and both need to plug into it a little more so that each can be a place of refreshment for the bodies, minds, and souls of its members and community.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

*Fr. Allen*