



**530 West Fullerton Parkway
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chicagocos.org

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A Message from the Rector Brian Hastings:

Remember this rhyme? “Here is the church and here is its steeple. Look inside and you’ll see all the people.” I remember reciting it as a youngster just as I was learning to manipulate the fingers of both hands to intertwine with each other. What fun that was, and how lovely to be so simply and easily amused.

As a rapidly aging man now, I’d like to replace that rhyme with something like “Here are the people, and look inside. That is the church, what a glorious ride.”

Everything we have as a physical church—all our prayer books and hymnals, the buildings and all the ways they’re decorated and set up, all our office equipment and the way we structure parish administration, even all the wine and bread and water and oil we use in our various sacraments—all of it began with the spark of faith within us and within our predecessors here at COS. We have ideas and hopes and aspirations. We treasure what’s sacred and beautiful and acknowledge even what’s abhorrent and dreadful. We seek to become as real and as fully human as God’s grace can do its work. And in that process, we’ve created everything that makes our little establishment here on Fullerton thrive.

I’ve always been grateful for the many personalities that make COS just what it is. I’m particularly happy that we always seem to have room for new ones, even as the long-established folks continue to develop and grow and awaken to new possibilities year after year.

Which brings me to “Happy birthday to Carolyn Sacksteder!” She’s been in the office here so long that she’s the perfect example of the physical church structure



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jumbling together with a unique, deeply appreciated, and lovely person. Unlike almost anyone else, her desk personifies the quirks and delights of her character. She has endured the crazy clerical worldview of more than one rector. She has known COS in good times and bad—and more importantly, when we made something new and good out of the bad. She's made many solid and close friends and, through her bookkeeping, come to know each and everyone of us, not just as a part of the work of this place, but as a friendly and supportive companion. She has wriggled her way into all our hearts and, as the Wizard of Oz said to the Tin Man, "Remember my sentimental friend, the measure of a person's heart is not how much they love others, but how much they are loved by others." We know from this bit of wisdom that Carolyn has a huge heart indeed.

So sure, let's always look for the church and its steeple. Let's even look inside it and see if there are people. But let's also remember that people who grow older also grow wiser and more beautiful in the spirit of the Lord. And let's be super grateful when they hang out with us as long as Carolyn has.

Pax,

Brian