



**Our
Men
in
Black**



**Father James
Parker**
Pastor, St. Mary
Parish, East Dubuque,
and Nativity BVM,
Menominee



Favorite prayer

The Hail Mary because it brings joy to Mary's heart. It reminds her of the first time she heard these words from God's messenger, the Archangel Gabriel.

Favorite saint

St. Therese of Lisieux. We hit it off from the beginning. She is wonderfully friendly and a powerful intercessor before the throne of God, especially for priests. She loves Christ's priests.

What has been a holy moment for you in your priesthood?

On Divine Mercy Sunday 2005, Msgr. Daniel Deutsch had asked me to lead (the prayer) for the parish (Holy Cross in Batavia). We had a beautiful picture of Pope John Paul II, "The Divine Mercy Pope," on one side of the sanctuary, the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the

altar and a grand image of the Divine Mercy on the other side of the sanctuary. At 3 p.m., as we began singing the chaplet, the rays of the sun streamed upon the altar and white vestments. The parishioners said it created a "glow." There was also a cloud of incense smoke rising to heaven while a few hundred people sang from their hearts. Seven priests were hearing confessions with long lines. The next day, I had an appointment with someone who had been there "by accident." They had been away from the Church for 20 years and returned to witness this. I told them not to expect this every Sunday.

What have you learned from your brother priests?

Father John Hardon taught me by example that we can do far more than we can imagine. He pushed himself to the limits in everything he did in serving Jesus Christ and the Church.

Advice for young people considering a vocation

Pray the rosary! Mary will guide young people to their vocation and protect them from so many dangers in the world. The rosary makes the soul docile to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit.

Something about you few people would know

I celebrate the same birthday as Frodo and Bilbo Bagins.

Favorite hobby or pastime

I love walking the huge cemeteries in Dubuque while praying the rosary for the holy souls in purgatory. From time to time, I'll visit a home that has Wii baseball. It's awesome to play.

Favorite temporal things

My J.R.R. Tolkien "The Lord of the Rings" collector's novel.