

SAINT CLARE PARISH PROFILE DICK & MARY ANN SHARKEY



Dick and Mary Ann Sharkey have embraced St. Clare Parish ever since moving to the Town of Rockland 33 years ago.

“We are blessed that we have a very good rapport with the people in our parish,” Dick said.

Added Mary Ann: “It’s a really good group of people who want to do well. We love being with this parish.”

The couple said their Catholic upbringings and small-town roots have helped them feel right at home at St. Clare Parish. Each was raised in unincorporated communities in the Upper Peninsula — Dick is from Nadeau and Mary Ann is from Bark River.

Both Dick and Mary Ann have been involved in numerous parish activities.

Dick is among more than a dozen members of Knights of Columbus St. Clare Council #16900, and he’s a Fourth Degree serving as captain for the Marquette Assembly. Starting in July, Dick will begin a two-year commitment as the Faithful Navigator (which is like the president of the Assembly).

Dick joined the Knights of Columbus in the early 1970s when he and Mary Ann lived in

Ashwaubenon. He remained with that council until transitioning to the St. Clare Council when it started in 2018.

“I always liked what I was doing with the Knights of Columbus, and I still enjoy it,” said Dick, who once served as Grand Knight for two years.

In addition, Dick serves as an usher and greeter for the parish. He welcomes parishioners at the St. Paul Church while helping people get on and off the elevator. He also spent time assisting parishioners while in Care Ministry.

Dick was a member of the parish Men’s Society, including a role as president, and Mary Ann was involved with the Ladies’ Society, including a role as treasurer.

Mary Ann also serves as a church greeter and used to be a lector. She noted the Greeter Ministry stems from the Stewardship Committee, on which she once served as chairperson.

The Sharkeys are among a group of people who, as part of the St. Vincent de Paul organization, assist people in need through food, money, clothing, etc. The group is sponsored by the parish. Mary Ann is the group’s treasurer.

The couple also have been active in Deacon Ken Kabat’s weekly Lenten group.

“We’ve tried to be involved in different things over the years,” Mary Ann said.

Mary Ann grew up on her family’s farm and graduated from Holy Name High School in Escanaba, Michigan. Dick graduated from Stephenson High School in Michigan and spent four years in the U.S. Air Force, leaving with the rank of Airman 2nd Class.

Dick and Mary Ann started dating in 1962, not long after meeting at a nursing home in the Upper Peninsula where they both had been working. After getting married they moved to Flint, Michigan, before heading back north to Escanaba to live.

From there, they moved to Milwaukee and eventually transitioned to the Green Bay area, where Dick worked as a Service Manager at Bartelt Business Machines — he ended up working there for 34½ years until he retired as President and co-owner.

Meanwhile, Mary Ann has put her financial expertise to use at the parish in her roles as treasurer. Overall, she worked in the banking industry for 51 years. She retired from BMO Harris (previously M&I) and was an officer of the bank for many years, retiring as the Regional Cash Vault Manager and Officer of the Northeast Region.

The couple moved to the Town of Rockland in 1987 and have lived there ever since. They said they enjoy being part of St. Clare Parish and their home church, St. Paul in Wrightstown.

“When we had our 50th anniversary a few years ago, we had our marriage blessed at St. Paul Church,” Mary Ann said. “A lot of the people who were invited to the dinner afterward — they came from out of the area — they couldn’t believe the looks of our church at St. Paul, how it looked like a cathedral and how it was so beautiful.”

Added Dick: “We like the cathedral-type feeling of a church.”

The Sharkeys have two adult daughters: Susan Baranczyk (husband Rick), with children Mason and Julia; and Kim Hess (husband Mike), with children Austin and Erika.