

SAINT CLARE PARISH PROFILE

MIKE & ANNE McMAHON



Mike and Anne McMahon were self-described “Chreasters” — primarily attending Mass on Christmas and Easter — upon getting married in 1994.

“After being brought up Catholic, both Anne and I slowly moved away from regular Mass attendance though our college years and as we focused on our careers,” Mike said.

But that all changed in 2003 — two years after they joined St. Clare Parish — when both Mike and Anne were invited to attend men’s and women’s Cursillo gatherings.

At the time, the couple had recently built a home and moved to Greenleaf with their young children, Grace and Sam. Grace was beginning classes in the public school system.

“Coincidentally, at that time, Anne and I were each invited to attend a Cursillo, which we did,” Mike said. “Although we had not really thought hard about it in many years, we were immediately reminded of the importance of our Catholic upbringing and how it shaped our vision of people and the world around us and how it gave us strength dealing with personal

struggles.

“We re-committed to make sure we raised our children Catholic, enrolled them in St. Mary school and began attending church regularly again and engaged our family in church life. ... In the end, it was a good refresher and it re-centered our focus on what we needed to be doing.”

Ever since attending those Cursillos, the McMahons have been active parishioners.

Anne, a Wausau native, is in her sixth year as the environment coordinator at St. Mary Church. She uses her interior design expertise to decorate the church throughout the liturgical seasons. She enjoys all seasons (her favorite is Christmas) and adding new twists each year.

“Decorating has helped me get more connected through the seasons of the church,” she said.

Anne also is in her fourth year as a sacristan, and she’s on the Parish Picnic food committee.

Previously, Anne was involved with the effort to refurbish the Virgin Mary statue at St. Mary Cemetery. She also was a religious education teacher for four years, served on the Parish Picnic auction committee for four years, and was co-leader of the St. Mary Girl Scout troop.

Meanwhile, Mike, an Eau Claire native, remains very active as well here at St. Clare Parish.

In addition to serving as a greeter and member of the Parish Picnic food committee, Mike is the Deputy Grand Knight for the Knights of Columbus St. Clare Council #16900. He has been involved with the parish’s group since it formed two years ago.

“I like the camaraderie. I like it because it’s fellow neighbors and parishioners,” he said.

Mike has also been involved with the Parish Picnic auction committee as well as church facilities studies and future facilities planning.

Their children, Grace and Sam, both attended St. Mary school and are adults now. Grace has been involved with the Parish Picnic and has helped her mother with church decorations. Sam served as a greeter and played drums with the choir.

Mike and Anne enjoy attending Mass at St. Mary Church because of its proximity, intimacy of the church space and the ability to attend early morning services.

“We’ve gotten to know and have become friends with many of the parish members who attend there regularly,” the couple said.

Speaking about St. Clare Parish overall, Mike and Anne appreciate the close-knit community; friendly, outgoing people; and history of the communities and continued involvement of the generational families.

“The parish has always strived to engage its members in areas that may interest them and continually introduces new opportunities,” the couple said. “We’ve always found it to be a very welcoming community. When we first joined, Fr. Bob (Kabat) helped us connect with other people in the church, the school and in church groups. These introductions provided a connection to the parish and the community as a whole.”

The McMahons encourage parishioners to be involved in parish activities.

“It allows people to get to know each other better, which makes for a stronger parish community and life, and it’s just nice to know your neighbors better,” they said. “It’s a way to show appreciation for what you have by sharing it with others in a common cause. It reinforces to our children the value we place in our faith, the future of the Catholic church and the future of our parish.”

Outside of church activities, Mike and Anne both enjoy golfing, bicycling and walking. Anne also enjoys Pilates, gardening, reading, cooking and experimenting with new recipes, while Mike also likes boating, fishing, yard working, grilling, building things and doing maintenance work.