

# Stories

A Newsletter of Parishioners' Enlightening Stories of Life Events

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Ann with Casey and Tazzie

## Hospitality at St. Patrick Hooked Me Into My New Catholic Family

By Ann Hammersly

church, now Fenlon Hospitality Center.

My husband Mike and I moved to Arizona 17 years ago and settled into an apartment while waiting for our home to be finished. Looking in the phone book for a Catholic Church, I ended up at St. Patrick entirely by accident; it wasn't the closest church but I figured I could find 84<sup>th</sup> Street! At St. Pat's, I loved the music, enjoyed the priests and the friendly atmosphere, and so even when our house was finally finished, I still drove past other parishes to continue attending Mass here in our little

ladder and ended up with a broken heel. It took me a while to get back to church, but four weeks in, I decided to try the early Mass – 7:00 AM then – hoping that attendance would be low enough for me to put my foot up. So I hobbled in, tucked my crutches under the seats, and stretched out, thankful that I wasn't getting any dirty looks. At communion, I started to try to get up and into line when the Eucharistic minister rather emphatically signaled me to sit back down. After twelve years of Catholic school, I was very used

to doing what I was told during Mass, so I sat down again, rather puzzled. A few minutes later, she came over to me and gave me communion and a blessing at my seat. I was stunned. At the parishes in which I grew up, I doubt if anyone would have even NOTICED that I was struggling, much less gone out of their way to help me and make me feel welcome. I came to learn that her simple act of hospitality is the hallmark of St. Patrick. Whoever she is, I thank her for teaching me what this community is all about. She hooked me into my new Catholic family and I am forever grateful.

I became more involved with

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- St. Patrick's Hears the Call Of Hospitality
- Eucharistic Ministers Needed
- Newsletter Notes From Fr. Eric Tellez

## Newsletter Notes From Fr. Eric

I have known Ann Hammersly and her husband Mike for many years now. She is a wonderful example of the fruits of hospitality here at St. Patrick. Her experience of receiving that hospitality when she first arrived and, in turn now gives back, truly shows

what the fruits of that gift of hospitality can give back to our community.

Ann's story shows how someone reaching out in welcome had a profound affect on her life. I am proud of the hospitality this community provides. It is our baptismal call

to offer hospitality and welcome wherever we are be it in the church pews, the grocery store, at work, etc. Let us strive to always be inclusive people of God.

Peace in Christ,

*Fr. Eric Tellez*

## Hospitality continued from page one



The men and women of this community are my role models in behaving as Christ teaches us – caring for each other, showing mercy and patience, sharing our talents and having fun together!



**Ann Hammersly is a Eucharistic Minister and invites you to join with her in service of this ministry at St. Patrick Catholic Community. Contact Kevin McGloin at 480-998-3843 to sign up for training.**

St. Pat's over the years, attending classes and retreats and later joining the lector ministry because it was already familiar to me. I had first become a lector (to help get over a fear of public speaking!) at the Newman Center at UC Riverside when I was an undergraduate. Later a shortage of Eucharistic ministers at St. Pat's led me to volunteer for that ministry as well. And hey everyone – we have a similar shortage happening now – so please consider signing up to be an EM! There is something absolutely wonderful about sharing Christ with your fellow parishioners in this profound way. I've also enjoyed working at Vacation Bible School the last several years – even though I don't have kids of my own, it's great fun working with the little ones when I'm on summer break! But the ministry that is the hardest and most rewarding for me is Ministry of Care. I must admit that every time I'm getting ready to head to the hospital, I'm terribly nervous. What crisis will I see today? Can I meet the needs of the patients I will see? I pray (HARD) that God will give me the right words for His people who are most in need. By the time I leave the hospital, I'm completely wrung out but very spiritually satisfied. MOC is the most valuable ministry that I can do – visiting people who are ill or dying and reminding them of God's love for them, as well as of the love their fellow human beings have for them.

A wonderful St. Patrick's experience occurred for me in 2001, when I chaperoned the Life

Teen pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi. Watching the teens and Fr. Vern try to figure each other out was priceless, but seeing the teens totally “get it” was life-changing. Sharing Mass in St. Peter's, in the catacombs, and at the Hermitage of St. Francis, as well as seeing the highlights of the



Mike and Ann Hammersly



Life Teen Rome Trip



early church in Rome led us all to a deeper understanding of our faith and of ourselves. I also learned that one should NEVER get between Fr. Vern and his strawberry gelato! I would go again in a heartbeat, and I threw my coins in the Trevi fountain in the hope that it will happen again.

Many of you probably know that I am a high school teacher – I've been a physics teacher at Chaparral High School for sixteen years now. Students used to be shocked when they saw me at church (apparently surprised that teachers are allowed outside of a classroom on the weekends). The Life Teen Club now meets in my classroom at lunch, so it's hopefully not too much of a surprise anymore to my students when they see me at Mass proclaiming the Word or distributing the Eucharist.

Outside of my job, I keep busy with my hobbies – my conventional one is cooking (and eating, of course). I really enjoy trying new dishes and the most common TV channel on in our house is the Food Network. The second most common channel is anything about the Diamondbacks – my husband and I love baseball (sorry Fr. Eric, not football!) and have been in the same season seats since the first opening day at BOB. We still miss the purple and teal, but are starting to adjust to Sedona red.

My unconventional hobby is competing in dog agility. You'll never see us in the televised championships, but my two mutts and I have a great time running around. When it's going well it's like ballroom dancing with a four-legged partner – absolutely beautiful. Unfortunately for us, our more typical runs are more likely to amuse the onlookers than awe them. At least we're good at something!

The friendships I've made at St. Patrick's are so incredibly valuable to me. The men and women of this community are my role models in behaving as Christ teaches us – caring for each other, showing mercy and patience, sharing our talents, and having fun together! You all are rock stars in my book!