



A Testimony Of Service



“As a parishioner at St. Francis, you're almost compelled to get involved simply because so many are setting the example of service for you,” says Joyce Harper, a member of our parish since 1999. It is this aspect of the parish, among others, that first attracted her to get involved herself. “I was so impressed by Father John's and my fellow parishioners' examples, it was impossible for me not to get involved. Father's words

Francis Parish that she was brought back! “I had been away from the Church for a long time when I found out about a program called 'Take another Look at the Catholic Church.' I signed up for the program, and it was absolutely fantastic!” Joyce relates. “The program was so wonderful that it brought me back—and brought me back with a vengeance!” she adds laughing. Joyce goes on to explain that what she means is her experience

with St. Francis parish, particularly through the witness of Fr. John and parishioners, not only attracted her to come home to the Catholic Faith, but it inspired her to take an active role in serving within the Church.

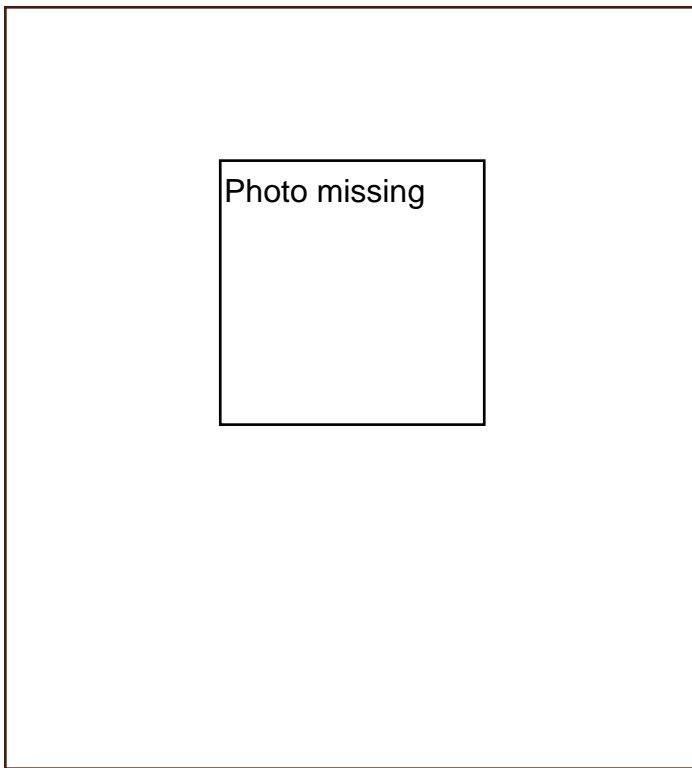
For the past three years, Joyce has assisted with our liturgies by serving as Worship Coordinator for the 8:30 a.m. Masses here at St. Francis, which involves making sure the lectors, extraordinary ministers, and sac-

my time and energy to the new Stephen Ministry, which I am very excited about.”

“As soon as I heard about the Stephen Ministry, I immediately wanted to get involved,” Joyce relates. “I first heard about it through a friend of mine who was a Stephen Minister for the Lutheran Church. I was so pleased that the Catholic Church offered the ministry as well.” Having had experience working in the professional world with a wide variety of people, Joyce knew the Stephen Ministry would be a natural fit for her, particularly working with people one-on-one.

This personal, one-on-one aspect is what characterizes the Stephen Ministry and gives it its strength. “It's all about listening to the person in distress, and walking side by side with them,” Joyce explains. “We don't fix their problems; we're not psychiatrists, although we are trained to determine whether the person we work with should move on to professional help,” she says. But very often, people go through hardships that they can fix themselves, and just need support and a compassionate ear. “Stephen Ministers help people think through those difficulties, and encourage and support them in overcoming their hardships,” says Joyce. Joyce is confident that with clearly defined goals, strategies, and devoted parishioners, the Stephen Ministry will bring about a lot of healing to members of the parish community.

Joyce and her husband, Jack, have two sons and two grandsons. When she's not working, Joyce's favorite pastimes are spending time with her family, particularly her grandchildren, and playing golf with her friends.



are so real and applicable to everyday life for me, and here I see parishioners daily living out their faith.”

Joyce has lived in San Jose for many years. But only recently did the Faith become a major part of her life, when she returned to the Catholic Church after a long absence. Amazingly, it was by the grace of the Holy Spirit acting through St.

Francis Parish that she was brought back! “I had been away from the Church for a long time when I found out about a program called 'Take another Look at the Catholic Church.' I signed up for the program, and it was absolutely fantastic!” Joyce relates. “The program was so wonderful that it brought me back—and brought me back with a vengeance!” she adds laughing. Joyce goes on to explain that what she means is her experience with St. Francis parish, particularly through the witness of Fr. John and parishioners, not only attracted her to come home to the Catholic Faith, but it inspired her to take an active role in serving within the Church. For the past three years, Joyce has assisted with our liturgies by serving as Worship Coordinator for the 8:30 a.m. Masses here at St. Francis, which involves making sure the lectors, extraordinary ministers, and sac-