



Ann Friend's Involvement At St. Joseph's Began In Her Childhood

By Evelyn Beck

All her life, Ann Friend has lived on the same street and attended the same church: St. Joseph's. She has been a member of the parish longer than anyone else, and her twin brother, Father Francis Friend, was the first native Andersonian to become a Catholic priest.

One of six children, Ann felt the strongest connection to her brothers Francis and John. "Francis was quiet and read a lot and didn't get into much trouble while John and I were always in trouble," she said. "But the three of us were close."

As a young woman, Ann attended Winthrop College but left to take a job back home at Duke Power in order to help support Francis as he studied for the priesthood at North American College in Rome. He had told her about his appointment to Rome during a visit to her hospital room, where she was sick from the effects of ether after an appendectomy. She attended her twin's ordination in Rome in 1958 and grieved his death 10 years later. All of her siblings are gone now except for her sister, who lives in Montana.

During more than 37 years at Duke, Ann moved from accounting to engineering to distribution. "I was the first female at Duke to get a hard hat," she said. "They take a man off the pole at 40, but I went to school at 45 and learned to put wires on poles." She also earned a bachelor's degree

in business administration in 1981 by attending Limestone College at night.

After retiring in 1989, she opened up her own business, A Friend Wash-erette, known for its super-sonic blind machine.

When the rent got too high, she closed the business after nine years. She spent the next nine years as a cashier at Winn Dixie until the store closed, in addition to working weekends for several years as a receptionist at The Calhoun when it was a retirement home. For the past five years, she's worked part time as a hostess at Wendy's. She also taught safety courses at Tri-County Technical College and currently offers AARP driving instruction for seniors at locations throughout the community. "There are only two things I haven't done—snow ski and water ski—and that's because I couldn't teach my dog to drive the boat," said Ann, who has three dogs and two cats.

Ann has served on the state board of the South Carolina Catholic Women's Club, as president of the Anderson Business and Professional Women, and as president of the Duke Power Retirees for the Anderson area. The Knights of Columbus named her an honorary first-degree life member.



Ann Friend

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“A Friend” Lives Up To Her Name

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At St. Joseph's, she's been involved in just about everything except for singing in the choir. She started teaching Sunday school when she was just 11. She started the CYO and the youth choir and remembers fondly the days of “weenie roasts” and Saturday night socials. She also initiated the Blood Bank's visits to the church. “The first time was in February 1978; 72 pints of blood were given that day,” she said. An usher, an extraordinary minister, and a past president of the Hilltoppers, she's also a member of the Bereavement Committee and attends most funerals at St. Joseph's.

Ann's service has been recognized in a number of ways. At Duke, she was the first recipient of the Robinson Citizenship Award in honor of her civic participation. At the 55th reunion of her Girls High School graduating class, she was honored for her deep faith. And the South Carolina Catholic Women's Club has named her Catholic Woman of the Year three times.

In her spare time, Ann enjoys rug hooking and needlepoint. But woodworking is one of her greatest pleasures, so much so that she bought the house behind hers and turned it into a shop. She makes toys for an orphanage in Seneca and for Toys for Tots. Her current *pièce de résistance* is a toy 18-wheeler in a block of wood that children can take apart.

Known for her steady supply of jokes and her everpresent hats, Ann is also noted for her willingness to help those in need. “She'll help anybody in the parish, like taking people to the doctor,” said parishioner Anne Flanagan, who's known Ann for 40 years. “She helps in ways so nobody knows it. She doesn't broadcast it. I've been laid up for almost three months and she keeps calling and saying ‘Do you need me? Do you need me?’ She does what she can to help people. She's a very good person.”

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