

Living Our Faith Meet Mary

An SFX parishioner since: 2012. I like to say my journey to College Church began on a dark and stormy night. In 2004, I was a hit-or-miss Catholic who felt a calling to go deeper in my spiritual life. I thought a faith-based retreat might be a way to dig into that. With zero knowledge about Ignatian spirituality, I found myself driving at night through a pouring rain from downtown St. Louis to the White House Retreat Center — questioning that decision every mile. Eight years (and retreats) after that first one, I asked to join College Church where I can more fully embrace Ignatian spirituality. I'm thrilled to be a parishioner and have never questioned the wisdom of that decision!

Living my faith: I'm the granddaughter of four Italian immigrants who retained "green card" status their entire lives because they were shy, not formally educated and lacked command of the English language. So, it was somewhat personal for me to join the Advocacy Committee, where I'm privileged to help raise awareness about the vital needs of those we serve through our Birth Certificate and State Identification Program. I've always wanted to live the call of Christ in Matthew:25. The Program is a perfect manifestation of that call.

Why I'm involved: Those who exit the White House Retreat see a sign that says "Welcome to the Mission Field" – an Ignatian reminder to live our faith through action. In addition to being spiritually fed here, I'm so blessed to be part of a warm and compassionate community. College Church is filled with bright, action-oriented people responding to community needs.

Words that describe SFX: Progressive, Dynamic, Intellectually Stimulating.

My neighborhood: My husband, David, and I live in Creve Coeur near the Jewish Community Center in a beautifully diverse neighborhood. I loved growing up on a farm in a small town in Illinois, and I love the multicultural vibe in my current neighborhood. Common ground is easy to find.

Fun facts: I'm Momma to two beautiful daughters and Nonna to four precious grandchildren (7, 5, 3 and 1!) I'm retired from a 42-year career spent in journalism, communications and marketing, with the exception of a seven-year stint (1993 - 2000) as the founding executive director of Forest ReLeaf of Missouri. This vibrant, volunteer-driven organization, now 31 years old, has planted more than 250,000 trees in neighborhoods, communities and cities. It's such a joy to see the fruits of this labor.