

Pioneer Parishioners

Ardeen Merry

Ardeen Merry and her late husband, Dick, were among our first parishioners. Ardeen notes, "I remember attending mass in the old hardware store." She continues, "Sometimes Father Lacey's sermons were interrupted by a little noise from the washing machines and dryers at the coin-operated Laundry next door."

She says, "In 1949, Dick and I were wed at St Vincent de Paul Church in the City and were happily married for almost 55 years...with lot of travels and trips to hike in Sedona."

Dick worked for Gilmore Steel and attended college at USF in the evening. Ardeen smiles, "It took him 10 years to earn his degree as he became very active with volunteer work for the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVdP)." She continues, "Later, he became one of the 'First Responders' for the Red Cross and SVdP. He helped victims of floods, hurricanes and other disasters."

In 1958, Dick's company transferred him to manage their peninsula facility. She says, "We bought a home in Redwood City and helped to develop the new parish of St. Matthias." She remarks, "One of the first things Dick did was to work with Bruno Rusconi and others to create the St. Matthias SVdP Conference. Dick served SVdP projects and programs for 50 years."

She notes, "Dick received many honors including the SVdP Ozanam Service Medallion award and Red Cross recognition for donating 15+ gallons of blood over the years." She adds, "Dick also volunteered at the V.A. Hospital and helped create the local jail ministry." She reports, "He always said his goal was to help people in need." She comments, "Dick inspired me, as he did so many others. I am glad our church now has the 'St. Vincent de Paul--Richard J. Merry Memorial Room.'"

Ardeen and Dick devoted their lives to volunteer service. In addition to being a Eucharistic Minister, Ardeen packed food bags for SVdP home visits, served as President of the Junior Auxiliary of Little Children's Aid, President of the Redwood City Library and a member of the Peninsula Children's Auxiliary.

According to Ardeen, "Dick was a delightful man and a good patient." She says, "I am so grateful for my faith and for our parishioners' compassionate support when Dick was ill. He never complained. His Merry smile and laughter were always there."

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with Father Lacey's encouragement and blessings

in the City

After his military service,

Ardeen was raised in San Francisco, attended St. Rose Academy and earned degrees in Biology and English from Dominican College. She met her future husband just before he shipped out in the Navy.

Ardeen and Dick were both SF natives

The petite, impeccably groomed woman who serves as Eucharistic Minister for Saturday mass is (which helps autistic children).

With pride in his humility and accomplishments,

He was called into action (for 3-week stints)

." She reports, "He told me he did volunteer work for the love of god and to help people however he could. From serving as a "First Responder," to delivering food to the poor and helping people handle grief At that time, it did not have or want a SVdP group. wherever and to try She is also active with the ICP group (her maiden name is DeVincenci).

promoted him and As if he needed to live to the name of Merry...trying to live up to his last name

thru surgery and treatments

ministry at San Quinton

Through it all prayer was always the answer.

(which she says has since been replaced by a gas station)

and I got to know served on the General M.B. Stewart a troop transport. Ardeen reports

involved with the Red Cross and

She notes "We didn't have many relatives as we were both only children. But Dick had many cousins and other relatives in Ireland whom we enjoyed visiting.

got him involved and

and then Vice President

(Also a SVdP volunteer)

and a member of the Italian

to Manager

and starting a short teaching career.

to donate

heart surgery, rare and deadly Wagner's granulomatosis, pneumonia and cochlea implants

Arden adds, "During his navy stint, Dick got involved in donating blood and community volunteer work. He continued until his heart problems slowed him down."

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