

Pioneer Parishioners Marie Graycar

If you have been a parishioner for awhile, you probably remember seeing Marie Graycar selling hand-made handsome household and baby items in the back of the church before and after masses.

She made and sold these things to help fund her Layette Project for needy new mothers (called Respect Life). Marie and her colleagues sewed, knitted and crocheted sweaters, booties, receiving blankets, bibs and baby clothes to donate to those in need. Today, we honor Marie for her compassionate mission of helping the poor.

Marie Graycar is the oldest of 11 children. Raised on a Van Nuys Dairy Farm in Southern California, she milked cows, did other farm chores and helped sew clothes for her family.

When she was a teenager, the family moved to New Jersey where she attended college and met her husband. According to one of her daughters, Patricia, "The story goes that dad was attracted to mom because she was not afraid of bugs." She explains, "They were in biology class together when this fascinating fact was discovered."

The Graycars were married for 58 years and had 9 children (Mr. Graycar died in 1999.) Patricia adds, "My mom and dad had 5 girls, then with helpful prayers to St. Joseph, they had 4 more children--all boys."

In addition to her sewing projects, Marie served as a teacher and high school librarian and was active with the Maryknoll Study Club. A long-time Filoli Volunteer, she loves gardening and currently enjoys visiting Gamble Gardens and the San Francisco Botanical Gardens as well as watching old movies at the Stanford Theatre.

On a historical note, Mrs. Graycar was among the "Pioneer Parishioners" who attended mass in a temporary church (in a hardware store) until the St. Matthias Church building was ready in March of 1963.

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