



Parish Couple of the Month January 2021 Deacon Vince & Joanne Rogalski

I'm not sure where to start the story of Deacon Vince and Joanne. I thought it would be nice to begin the year getting to know who these people are that assist in the Mass and step in and help with Communion Service or whatever is needed for the Parish and recognize the love and support they receive from their families for this very big commitment. So, for the next few months, we will feature our Deacons and their families.

Deacon Vince and Joanne are a devoted couple in serving the Catholic Church and have given of their time and talent in a variety of roles for a very, very long time. Deacon Vince was born and raised in the Catholic Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He went to Catholic school and started his career in high school as a warehouse foreman. Continuing his education at the University of Minnesota (Golden Gophers), studying Lab Medicine. But he didn't stop there, his love of learning took him on a path to a Master's Degree in Educational Psychology followed by work on a Doctorate Degree in Organization & Administration (ABD), leading him to a successful career at the University of Minnesota Medical School in the Department of Family Practice as a Research Fellow.

Joanne came from a Protestant family, although her Father was Catholic, they did not attend the Catholic Church. She grew up as a Methodist but loved going to the Catholic Church to hear their choir. She just loved the music. Joanne's family moved around quite a bit as a child and she was fortunate to travel to many States, until she settled into northern Minnesota for High School and continued her education at Hamlin University in St. Paul studying Medical Technology. Her career led her to Supervise a medical lab in a St. Paul Hospital.

Their love of knowledge and bond with the medical field made them the perfect couple. After marriage and a busy life of raising five children (which at the moment includes 13 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren), a ski trip to Crested Butte by Deacon Joe and Bev Fitzpatrick began a development of a business plan (by Joe and Vince) that changed their life, resulting in a move to Colorado. Their new adventure brought forth opportunities to start and run a successful property management business with the Fitzpatrick's. They were a very close family and attended the Baptist Church in Crested Butte during this time. Because Deacon Vince had been divorced, he did not feel welcome in the Catholic Church, so they would still dabble at going to Queen of All Saints Church, but it wasn't until Monsignor Jim Koenigsfeld told them "we've got to fix this" and so he helped Deacon Vince start his annulment process. It took 18 months and during this time Joanne joined the RCIA program. After the annulment was complete in 1996, Deacon Vince and Joanne joined Queen of All Saints Church, knowing in their hearts that the Catholic Church is "The Church" that was formed by Jesus, so with their thirst for knowledge, they started liturgy classes and took active roles in the Church Ministry. Over the years, they have served as Sacristan, Eucharistic Ministers, Hospitality, Environment, Liturgy, Maintenance – you name it! For Joanne, it all started with a well-known parishioner, Betty Spehar. Joanne had just completed the RCIA program and thought she could just enjoy being a Catholic for the first year. But Betty had different plans for her and one day she approached Joanne and advised her that, "you are going to read." Joanne had no choice but to say yes, so in her true form for love of learning, she attended seminars on how to become a Lector and the rest is history.

What I find most interesting and awesome about Deacon Vince and Joanne is that they share and do everything together. They pray together each morning and evening (Liturgy of the Hours) and they do all their ministry work together, whether it be at work or Church. They live by the saying from Bishop Sheen; “Those that pray together, stay together.” Clearly, the Holy Spirit is working in their lives, because in 2001 Deacon Vince enrolled in the Deaconate program and Joanne was right there with him, taking the classes together, typing up papers, and giving him her full support. It was important for Joanne to be a part of and understand the commitment her husband was undertaking for the love of their Church. They just knew the Holy Spirit was guiding them in this journey and Joanne was convinced of this. She told Deacon Vince; “you need to do this – you know this is for you’ and he replied; “let’s do this.” There was no second guessing, they just knew this was their next step.

The Holy Spirit has worked in their lives more than once. It was God’s timing who led them to Crested Butte and when it was time to move to lower elevation (Gunnison) for Joanne’s onset of asthma, her mother was moved to the Nursing Home in town and Joanne was now able to visit her every day. We just never know how the Holy Spirit is working in our lives.

The Rogalski’s believe in giving back to the community and have not only been involved in their Church, but also in a variety of roles in Government. Deacon Vince has been on the Town Planning Commission, Town Council, Mayor for two years, on the State Transportation Advisory committee for 30 years serving as Chairman for the last 15 years, County Planning Commission, State Transit & Rail Committee, State Transportation Planning for the Gunnison Valley and has been the Hospice Chaplin since 2004, finding time to visit those in Hospice. I’m pretty sure I missed a few and Joanne has been there with him every step, traveling together and supporting each other. Somehow, which I’m not sure how they do it, but they have managed to pick up a few hobbies and share their talents beyond this. For example, Deacon Vince is a carpenter and you can find his handywork in the Parish Office building in Gunnison and in the lower level Education Center in the Queen of All Saints Parish Hall. Joanne is super organized and loves detail, although meetings are not really her style, she excels in planning, hospitality and organization.

Ironically, Deacon Vince was born on the feast day of Saint Vincent Ferrer and on Easter Sunday (hence, he was given the knick-name of “Bunny”). He finds Saint Vincent to be fascinating; he was a Friar and renowned preacher who helped to end the Great Western Schism (two Popes had been elected at the same time and it caused great confusion and a loss of prestige for the papacy). Saint Vincent was one of the judges who helped to end the schism by electing a third pope to take over and after this spent his last years devoted to preaching in northern France. But he was also known for his gift of miracles in raising people from the dead. Deacon Vince’s given name follows the role of Saint Vincent as a skilled leader and manager for his entire career and he continues to be a leader in serving both the parish and community.

Joanne’s love of music and shared Feast Day with Saint Cecelia makes her the perfect patron Saint. Saint Cecelia is regarded as the patroness of music, because she heard heavenly music in her heart when she was married, and an angel is seen to protect her. Joanne feels music is an integral part of the Mass and it makes her heart sing, just like Saint Cecelia.

A personality test taken to identify which of the sixteen types of personalities they possess (Jesus is all sixteen by the way), Deacon Vince and Joanne found their results to be exactly alike – they know what each other is thinking and have a true bond of heart and mind. Truly this is a match made in heaven. Thank you, Deacon Vince and Joanne for all your time and giving and sharing to Queen of All Saints parish and the community!

Joanne’s advice to couples: Always keep sense of humor and schedule a weekly date night,

Dcn Vince’s Moto: “Have Faith and Press Ahead”