

Diane Baumgart - November 2012 Witness Letter

Hi, my name is Diane Baumgart. I've been a member of Holy Cross parish for about 10 years. When I moved here, I checked out different area churches but what drew me to Holy Cross were the people in the pews. Sundays were filled with families of all ages. It seemed to be an active parish. It still is, and I am excited to be a part of the various ministries here.

I am in my third year on parish council, take the Eucharist to the homebound on First Fridays, and am active with the Welcoming Committee, the new Golden Faith Group and more. Three years ago, I completed the Commissioned Ministry program (now the Emmaus Program) through the Diocese and was commissioned by Bishop David Ricken. I have five grandchildren, two of which attend Kaukauna Catholic School System.

Born and raised in Green Bay, I am one of four children of Don and Betty Baye. I have three brothers. We attended St. Jude Elementary School and I graduated from St. Joseph Academy, my brothers from Premontre. My faith journey begins with this strong family background and my parent's belief in a Catholic education.

I was married for 17 years and, as the wife of a military man, lived in Texas, New Mexico, Kansas and Spain. A universal church became evident when living in Spain. I attended the local Spanish church with its Spanish Mass and could follow every aspect of it. It was a welcoming experience. We had four children, one in heaven, another one of our own and two adopted. I then went through a divorce, which sent me on a downward spiral, keeping me between tears and mad determination to make it. A special program called *Beginning Experience*, sponsored by the Catholic Diocese, responded to my grief with prayer, supportive friends and helped me learn to walk closer to God.

It was at this point I knew the value of making a retreat, of spending time discovering how God loved me. Every day His blessings came through in friends, family and other ways. I now set aside retreat time every two years, sometimes more. The most recent retreat was our own CRHP (Christ Renews His Parish) weekend. What a wonderful experience to get to know people I am blessed to pray with every week. I am a strong advocate for life in all its forms and stages.

Hindsight is 50/50 and while I don't know what is ahead, when looking back I can see how fully God has held me in the palm of His hand.

Diane Baumgart