



Mary Ann Wachtel

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51 years in SFCC (1971-2022)

Mary Ann joined SFCC in 1971 as the 23rd member of the new community, making her one of our early pioneers. She has been personally present for the growth and evolution of SFCC over the past 50 years. This makes Mary Ann a woman of wisdom within SFCC – a true community treasure.

Mary Ann has always given her time and talent to education. She holds a university doctorate (PhD) in biology and lifetime certification with the Missouri State Public Schools. She has been in the classroom since the mid-1950s. Over the decades, Mary Ann held positions as teacher, principal, department head and university dean. She always kept current with educational skills and academic disciplines through continued seminars, workshops and training programs. Most admirably, Mary Ann did not shy away from immersing herself into the world of computer hardware and software.

Eventually, Mary Ann moved into the area of adult education; and, from there, took training as a licensed bereavement and grief counselor. This ministry became the focus of her later professional years and well into retirement. She facilitated numerous retreats and seminars and was a featured speaker on bereavement. Mary Ann's adult education ministry involved establishing an organization, Emmaus Way, to train lay spiritual directors, enlisting speakers from Aquinas Institute, St. Louis University and other local institutions.

As a hospice chaplain, spiritual director, as well as trainer in the Ministry of Consolation in the St Louis, Missouri diocese, Mary Ann was both credentialed and experienced in the skill of compassionate listening and training others to do the same. She served on the board of the National Catholic Ministry to the Bereaved (NCMB), an organization approved by the National Council of Catholic Bishops (NCCB).

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