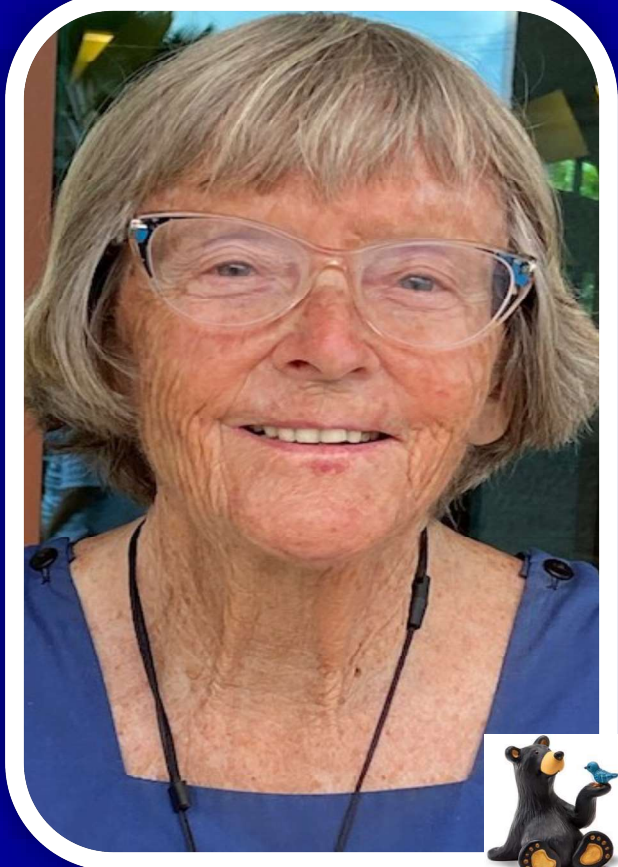


# Spotlight on Service Maria Brasher



At Masses on April 24-25, we heard about the need for volunteers to serve as sacristans, the people who help to prepare the church for Mass. Sacristans set up the altar and assure that the priest and the deacon have everything they need to complete the celebration of the Eucharist. They also collaborate with the altar servers, the lectors, the Eucharistic ministers, the music ministers, even the linen ministers -- everyone who has a role in the Mass rite.



Today's spotlight on service features the woman who has been our parish's longest serving sacristan, Maria Brasher. Maria began her work as a sacristan more than four decades ago, when her children were attending Kailua Elementary School. She recalls: "I'd get my husband off to work and the kids off to school, and then attend daily Mass. At that time, no one was serving as a sacristan. I just pitched in to help; and the next thing I knew, it was a part of my daily routine." It was a routine Maria continued -- at daily Mass, Sunday Mass, funeral Masses, school Masses -- until just over a year ago, when health concerns imposed some limits on her activity.

As the years rolled along, Maria actually joined the St. John Vianney staff. Her jobs included not only the work as sacristan, but also several years as the Director of Religious Education. Maria has fond memories of working with Mitsu Papayoanou and Thia Rossi to develop procedures to train new sacristans and new members of the religious education staff. Some of her most vivid memories are with Mitsu, especially as they would prepare for the Easter season. "We would visit other churches, both Catholic and non-Catholic, just to get ideas about how to get lay people more actively involved in Church," she recalls. She also enjoyed the spirit of teamwork when it came to doing any special projects or parish events, such as the Country Fair. "Everyone would just pitch in to help. The shared experience of preparing was as important as the event itself."

As was noted at the April 24-25 Masses, we currently have only a handful of sacristans. Maria notes that there is a definite need to train more, especially from among the already-trained lectors and/or Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist. If you have an interest in learning more about this or any ministry at St. John Vianney, please contact the parish office and leave your name and contact information.

