

SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE

BOB BADHAM



Envision yourself seated at St. John Vianney Church. What color are the banners surrounding the altar? Why are they that color? What other decorative touches are visible? Greenery? Floral arrangements? If it is a special time of year, such as Christmas, you'll note the Nativity scene set up near the Tabernacle and dozens of poinsettia plants throughout the church. All of these are aspects of the environmental ministry. For more than three decades, this ministry at St. John Vianney has been coordinated by the volunteer efforts of Bob Badham, who contributes his aesthetic talents so that our church environment can enhance the liturgy without dominating it.

Raised on a farm in Washington State, Bob learned the value of hard work at an early age. He expected that farming would be his future, until he discovered his artistic talents while in college. Part-time employment at a local florist during his college years gave him an opportunity to develop his aesthetic gifts. He went on to earn a Master's degree in Art Education from the University of Oregon, which led to an employment offer from Punahou School. Bob and his wife, Jarleth, accepted the offer and left Oregon for Hawaii, a place they had never been. Talk about a leap of faith!

During Bob's thirty years as a teacher and administrator at Punahou, he and Jarleth raised three sons. One of the major lessons Bob shared with them was, "Use your gifts." And luckily for us, he has demonstrated this belief by sharing his talents here at St. John Vianney. Throughout the year, as the liturgical seasons change, Bob's team transforms the church accordingly. Green for Ordinary time; purple for Lent and Advent; red for Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Pentecost; white and gold for Christmas and Easter. This requires not only aesthetic sensibilities, but also the physical strength to climb ladders and to move plants and other objects around the church. An interest in plants and flowers and an understanding of their care is also important to this work. The beautiful manger scene we see every Christmas was designed by Bob and built with help from fellow parishioner Paul Akeo. Similarly, at Easter, our church décor benefits from his creations.

Bob would be the first person to say that environmental ministry is a team effort. The work gets done only because a group of volunteers are willing to contribute their time and their talent. But this is also why Bob was willing to let this "Spotlight on Service" shine on him. He is grateful for the many individuals, past and present, whose service as environmental ministers has enhanced our sense of place as we worship. But now, he feels, the time has come for others to step forward and contribute their aesthetic gifts to lead this ministry.

Might this be your calling? If you are interested and would like to learn more, please call the parish office at 262-8317. Bob or one of his fellow ministers would be happy to provide information and ongoing support.