

Cindy Ramaeker Christensen came to St. Mary School in 1970 when she was in fourth grade. It was a memorable year for her. She is the ninth child of twelve children born to Andy and Shirley Ramaeker. They made their home on a farm northwest of Eagle Grove. The four boys and eight girls were brought up in a home filled with Catholic faith, hard work and love for family.

When Cindy started school at St. Mary's, she came alongside five of her siblings. It was a great sacrifice for her parents, Andy and Shirley, to afford a Catholic education and to travel the roundtrip miles each day to transport children to St. Mary's in Humboldt. But the Ramaeker parents would not have it any other way. A faith-based Catholic education was so important to them that they would sacrifice the financial investment and time to make sure their children were provided the best start in their faith and education. Each day, Cindy's parents would drive the children to school at St. Mary's and pick them up at the end of the school day.

Andy and Shirley Ramaeker made a living as farmers. Today, Cindy's daughter and son-in-law, Molly and Morgan Slining, reside on the family farm.

Devotion to the Catholic faith runs strong in the Ramaeker Family and a number of family members have served in religious roles. Fr. Victor Ramaeker is Cindy's uncle and a retired priest in the Diocese of Sioux City. When Fr. Vic was a newly ordained priest, he said his first Mass at St. Mary's. His parents were living in Humboldt at that time. Today Fr. Vic resides in Algona. Two of Cindy's aunts became nuns – Sister Mary James (deceased) and Sister LuVerne.

Cindy is a nurse and works in the medical and surgical areas of the hospital in Webster City. She is a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Eagle Grove. Using her talents to benefit others, Cindy is starting a parish nursing program in her cluster parishes.

Fr. Dan Guenther, pastor at St. Mary's, worked for a number of years in Catholic schools with Cindy's uncle, Fr. Vic Ramaeker. Fr. Dan noted that like Cindy, Fr. Vic was always very dedicated to Catholic schools, and no doubt, would be very moved and inspired by the actions of his niece, Cindy. Fr. Dan states, "We at St. Mary's are very pleased with Cindy's generosity to our capital campaign, Ignite the Faith."

Cindy keeps in touch with St. Mary's through the annual *Bells of St. Mary's* newsletters that are sent to alumni, parishioners and friends. She has supported the St. Mary's Endowment Fund for many years. She sees the Ignite the Faith Capital Campaign for St. Mary's as a great way to give back to a school that gave her so much. She wants to honor the Catholic school tradition that her parents began in the Ramaeker Family. Her capital campaign gift will pay tribute to the sacrifices her parents made in order for their children to attend Catholic school. In honor of Cindy's gift commitment for the campaign, the Fourth Grade classroom will be named in honor of the Ramaeker Family.

To date, more than \$2 million has been committed to the Ignite the Faith Capital Campaign. The Campaign goal is to raise \$3.5 million. Support has come from parishioners, school families, alumni, businesses and friends. To make a gift to the Ignite the Faith Capital Campaign, please visit the campaign website at www.humboldtareacc.org or call Development Director Stephanie Larscheid at the Parish Office at 515-332-2856.