

DONOR PROFILE:
Sherrie Yowell Anderson & Debbie Yowell Farley



Christian stewardship is second nature to the Yowell sisters — now Sherrie Anderson and Debbie Farley — because it was a “family affair” for them growing up.

“Our parents came from very humble beginnings but through God’s grace, hard work and good business decisions, they were able to have some success and were able to make, later in life, major contributions to their parish and the diocese,” said Debbie, a member of St. Paul Chong Hasang Parish in Harker Heights. “But my dad was always quick to remind all of us that it was God who had blessed us with the success, so it was only right to be a generous steward of what was really God’s gift.”

The two remember their mother, Johnnie Lou, sharing stories of how her family hosted Mass in their home for the Catholics of Elk since, with 10 siblings, theirs was the largest in town. (William “Bill,” her future husband, lived right next door.) Then, when the community joined together to build St. Joseph Church, she would pick flowers from the garden to decorate the altar every Sunday.

Supporting and participating in the church was “part of your life,” said Sherrie, a member of St. Paul Parish in Austin. “You didn’t think about it.”

When Johnnie Lou and Bill married and moved from Elk to Killeen, they followed in their parents’ footsteps and helped establish the church there. Debbie recalled, “My dad always tells me this story of how one day, he drove the priest in the area at that time, out to a cornfield on the north side of Killeen and he said, ‘Father, I really think you need to look at this land and purchase it, and let’s build a church here.’ And then fast forward, and that’s where St. Joseph’s stands today.”

Debbie and Sherrie are now following in their parents' footsteps. Both are volunteering on the Campaign Executive Committees for their parishes' *Encountering Christ* campaign and, when Bishop Joe Vásquez invited them to make a leadership gift to Encountering Christ, they responded generously.

"There was no question that we should support our diocese as the people before us did to give us the structure that we have now," Sherrie said. "We have to do our share to pay that forward and make sure that the diocese stays strong and can tend to the needs of everyone who's here."