

Busy mother at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish knows best

Mothers can have many jobs. For Amy Middleton, that list includes teacher, lacrosse coach, real estate agent, committee chairwoman and parish administrative director. Not to mention, she is a retired Baltimore City Police officer.

Despite being a busy mom of six, Middleton, a parishioner at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Essex, still finds time to fit it all – and then some – onto her packed calendar.

“You have more time than you think,” she said. “The more things you take on, the more time you have. I find that if you are busy, it’s easier to manage a schedule.”

Middleton and her husband, Andy, married in 2004 and have built a blended family that includes: Gina, 24; Manny, 20; twins Olive and Grant, 16; Devan, 14; and Brenna, 12. She is stepmother to the youngest two.

She also has two grandchildren, Lola, 4; and Hayden, 1.

Gina is a Mercy High School graduate, and last year Manny graduated from Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, where their four young siblings are enrolled.

“We’ve always made our children our priority,” said Middleton, 43. “Their education is extremely important to us. Last year, we had five of our kids in Catholic school at the same time. If you add it all up, it’s a lot of money, but for us, it’s an investment.

“It’s such an incredible investment when you see the people that they turn out to be. The exposure to their faith on a daily basis rather than just once a week makes a real difference.”

Her husband, also a former Baltimore City Police officer, works security for Baltimore County Public Schools and part-time as a maintenance supervisor at St. Rita Parish in Dundalk, where the Middletons make their home.

“We’re very busy, but we always make time to do whatever we can together as a

family,” Middleton said. “It’s a lot of running, but it’s worth it. Once you are outnumbered by children, you might as well just go with it. The focus is always on what’s best for the kids. Monday and Tuesday evenings are always family dinner time, when the family is all together and Andy is off work.”

Middleton’s own “day job” is as a full-time real estate agent, which she has been doing for a little over a year. She said that allows for a good work-life balance.

“My job is very flexible,” she said. “You can do a lot from home. I work at home and I’m able to take care of the house and the kids.”

She is very involved in school and church activities at Mount Carmel. In 2010, she approached athletic director Mike Naunton about starting a middle school girls’ lacrosse program. She’s the second-year coach of a team that includes her youngest, Devan and Brenna.

Middleton also teaches fifth grade in the parish’s religious education program. Twice a year for parish festivals, she chairs the flea market committee.

Middleton and her husband are volunteer administrative director and director of operations, respectively, for the Apostleship of the Sea, the Dundalk-based branch of the international Catholic ministry to seafarers.

After Middleton took medical retirement from the police force in 2008, she helped start a children’s consignment shop at Apostleship of the Sea, which morphed into more administrative responsibilities.

“Amy is in constant motion,” Andy said. “She’s up early in the morning taking the kids to school. She works, coaches lacrosse. Somewhere in there she squeezes in time for housework. I’d be lost without her. One of my many pet names for her is ‘June,’ like Johnny Cash’s wife. She stood by him no matter what ... With Amy, it’s the same way. No matter what we’ve been through, in the end, she’s always there.”

Middleton offers advice for other mothers who think that doing it all is impossible.

“Moms are incredible people, but you need to know you don’t have to do it alone,” she said. “Sometimes I have to ask other moms for help, like ‘hey, can you grab the

kids from school?’ It’s also important to take time for yourself, but I don’t always follow my own advice.”

She enjoys family time at the beach and date nights with her husband once or twice a month. She also likes to sew and bake, which she says she doesn’t get to do often enough. On hectic days, Middleton says the simple things in life are best.

“Sometimes just sitting still is like a dream come true,” she said. “Silence is just a sweet sound.”