St. Mary parishioner left lasting legacy

If the measure of a man is in his family, then the influence of Col. Patrick J. Donohoe will stretch a long, long time.

The retired U.S. Army Colonel was 80 when he died in May. He will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia July 21. His legacy includes a marriage to his wife, Jane, of more than 50 years and six children and their offspring, all of whom seem to be following the lead he set at St. Mary, Annapolis, where he was a most active parishioner.

“He was very popular and loved by everybody,” said Father Patrick Flynn, C.Ss.R., an associate pastor of St. Mary who presided at Col. Donohoe’s funeral in May.

Father Flynn noted that the funeral was attended by several priests who had been impressed by Col. Donohoe’s outreach.

He headed up the Fourth Day Men’s Group, was a Third Order Franciscan and served on the Right to Life Committee.

“Pat was a true patriarch,” said Greg Mack, a fellow member of Fourth Day at St. Mary. “He was my mentor in growing with the Lord. Through piety study in action, many looked up to him for his guidance and wisdom.”

Col. Donohoe regularly led the Fourth Day group, which shared scripture and mentoring after Saturday’s 6:45 a.m. Mass.

Elizabeth Donohoe, M.D., one of Col. Donohoe’s five daughters, noted that after illness restricted her father, the Fourth Day group honored him with an empty chair at its meetings.

She and her siblings were shaped by their parents’ faith.

“Growing up in a military family, Dad would go out of his way to find a Catholic church anywhere we moved,” said Patrick Donohoe Jr . “We participated in the

Catholic Family Movement. In the early 1960s, we spent several weeks at the Red Cliff Indian Reservation (in Wisconsin) with the Chippewa, where we worked with the priest assigned to reservation."

Patrick, who lives in Blacksburg, Va., has three sons, all of whom have worked for Habitat for Humanity. One leads his church's Young Life group.

Those boys are among 11 grandchildren. All are college graduates and active in their Catholic communities.

"I credit the faith foundation I was given growing up as a Catholic to volunteerism and reaching out to people in need," said granddaughter Moira, who is expecting the Donohoes' sixth great-grandchild. "Pop certainly played a role in that."

An Annapolis resident for 27 years, Col. Donohoe was born in Ohio, graduated from the U.S. Military Academy and served in the Army Corps of Engineers from 1949 to 1972. In retirement, he taught at West Point and worked for several federal agencies.