



THE DESCHANE FAMILY: FINDING A WAY TO SERVE

By Laura Kerscher | Photos submitted by the Deschane family and by Long Shot Photography

“Find a way to serve others,” Chris and Erin Deschane encourage their family, “the world tells us to put ourselves first, but our happiness is greater when we recognize that we are each part of something larger than ourselves.” These words ring true not only for the Deschanes but for everyone; being generous and kind are simple ways to spread joy and be part of something truly beautiful. In fact, this is exactly the type of joy that the Deschanes have found

at Our Lady of Lourdes, “There are many generous and kind people,” explains Erin, “even those we don’t know well who will often share smiles and compliments.” That kind of joy and kindness is contagious....and life changing.

Chris and Erin Deschane met while she was working near Dallas and he was attending USAF training in Texas. They were married on June 30th, 2007 in Erin’s hometown Lutheran church in Brenham, TX. Two years later, Erin

went through RCIA and their marriage was convalidated on March 21st, 2009 at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Arlington, VA. Chris is now the General Manager for Michels Power, Inc with a B.S. from the United States Air Force Academy and M.B.A. from the University of Phoenix. Erin is a



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preschool teacher at St. Timothy Lutheran Church with her B.B.A. from Baylor University. Together they have two beautiful girls: Natalie (14) and Audrey (12).

Five years ago, the Deschane family joined Our Lady of Lourdes (OLOL) and found something truly special. Living so far from family, they came to rely heavily on their church family. Erin laughs, "Since we live several states and many days travel away from all of our family, [OLOL has] become our extended family, helping us feel like we're home." Being part of the OLOL family, it is important to each of the Deschane clan to be involved and participate in parish ministries. Chris is involved with the Knights of Columbus and That Man Is You, while Erin is the Kindergarten Religious Education teacher. The girls are lectors and involved in the youth group while Natalie is also a cantor and the Kindergarten Religious Education assistant.

Faith has always played an important role in their lives. Erin explained, "Though I'm not sure I recognized it at the time, looking back I can see the influence of my faith throughout my life from my relationship with my parents, to the university I chose, to my marriage and family." Natalie and Audrey also pondered the role Faith played in their life and shared, "When the world seems too big, we know that God is there to comfort us and answer our questions." The Deschanes also regularly turn to the saints and prayer when they are in need of

comfort or inspiration. Audrey has a special devotion to Saint Anthony because "he helps me find hope when I'm feeling lost or conflicted." Natalie finds herself turning to Saint Cecilia, sharing, "I find joy in music, and she is the patron saint of musicians." The Hail Mary is the prayer of choice for Erin because the words inspire and comfort her even when she is feeling overwhelmed. Erin said, "[Mary] is the role model for motherhood which I consider my highest purpose."

Natalie and Audrey have a joyful spirit of service and

gratitude as they strive to be the best version of themselves in their studies as well as extracurricular activities. Natalie is on the honor roll and the student council as she finishes the 8th grade at Mountain View Middle School. She enjoys playing the cello in the school orchestra, participating in school musicals, singing in the choir and small ensembles as well as taking lessons in voice, dance, and acrobatics at The Studio in Enola. Similarly, Audrey is also on the honor roll as she finishes the 6th grade at Mountain View Middle School. She plays the trumpet in the school band, participates in the school musical and enjoys taking jazz and ballet classes at The Studio.



Adding much joy and excitement to their family is their sweet two-year-old rescue mutt named Scout. He does a great job keeping them all on their toes and in high spirits. Erin explained, "About a year ago, he ate nine rocks and had to spend a night at the hospital. He's healthy now, and fortunately hasn't done it again!"

As a family, the Deschanes enjoy being active and involved in the community. Their favorite pastimes are traveling, camping, hiking, and swimming but they also enjoy board games, dancing, music, and cheering on their favorite sports team—the Green Bay Packers. They have even dabbled in building an experimental kit airplane (model: Vans RV-7A). In the community, they find joy in serving at local pancake breakfasts and Lenten fish fries as well as volunteering at Healthy Steps Diaper Bank and Junior Achievement. Chris also serves on the Hampden Township Planning Commission.

Joyful service and simple kindness are what the Deschanes are all about. Whether it's gifting their time, talent, or just a simple smile, they are making a difference—one person at a time. If you see them at Mass or out in the community, stop and say hi! You'll be glad you did.

Do you know a fellow parish member who has a story to share? Nominate someone you'd like to see featured in one of our upcoming issues! Contact us at cleaver@decidedexcellence.com.



Catholic Neighbors of **Mechanicsburg**

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