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“Everything We Have is a Gift from God”

Jim Theisen loves thoughtful phrases. There's his company motto, "People Buy from People, Not from Businesses," and there's his answer when asked why he and his wife Marita are so generous to others. "Everything we have is a gift from God," he said. "Divine Word spreads God's Word throughout the world and we are blessed to be able to help."

For their timely and generous support, Divine Word College presented the Dubuque couple, owners of Theisen's Home-Farm-Auto, with its Donaghey Award for Outstanding Service during a Mass and banquet on September 23.

"Jim and Marita have been generous benefactors of Divine Word College for more than 25 years," said Mark Singsank, associate director of development, who nominated them for the award. "They continue to be strong believers in the mission of Divine Word College and in our students." Established in 1999, the award honors the late Fr. John Donaghey, SVD, who dedicated much of his life to the college.

Jim and Marita were married in 1956 after he returned from the service, the same year he joined the family business started by his parents, Leo and Kathryn, in 1927. Using

his experience in the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps, he helped grow the Dubuque business. Today, Theisen's Home-Farm-Auto has 24 stores and 1200 employees.



Jim and Marita Theisen

An extension of his company motto—which speaks to a personal connection to people—is the connection to those in need. Sometimes those needs strike close to home. Marita is stricken with Alzheimer's disease, a struggle that Jim has taken on at home, as a board member of the Iowa Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association and by supporting efforts to help families facing the same struggle.

Looking back, he credits his parents for setting an example of compassion. "Mom and dad were always looking for where they could help," Jim said. "You've got to give back. Give something away sometime and see how you feel."