

She's Unwilling To Settle Down

She's a spry, energetic 72-year-old Sister of Mercy who just wasn't willing to settle down to full-time retirement.

So Sister M. Pierre, a former teacher who'll celebrate her 50th anniversary as a Sister on Sunday, has found another ministry — visiting the elderly and bringing comfort and Holy Communion to the sick and others.

"My whole life was teaching," said Sister Pierre, who's lived at St. Andrew's convent since her last teaching assignment with the parish which began in 1962.

"When I retired in 1969, Father Charles McCarthy (former pastor of St. Andrew's who died in 1971) realized I'd miss the children, so he suggested the names of 10 persons to visit and told me he thought it would help fill the gap," she added.

The "gap" that was filled turned out to be most of her free time because her list has now grown to about 130. She visits people from both St. Andrew's and St. Salome's parishes, where she spent most of her teaching years.

Her daily visits to the elderly, the sick or the bedridden are a ministry of love for her and for those whom she sees.

"I love to go," she says with a smile, "because they appreciate

the fact that you've come to visit and that you accept them. They're so warm and lovable. I also love the people I work with."

Those who lend a hand are the many friends and parishioners who drive her around and bake cakes and other goodies for things like anniversaries, birthdays and hospital homecomings.

At St. Andrew's Parish Festival recently, Sister Pierre set up, and was in charge of a Senior Citizens Booth. Everything was handmade and ranged from intricate decorations and table centerpieces to dolls dressed in complete costumes.

"We try to get them to do things that still make them a part of the Church," she said, "such as contributions of their time and talent."

"With teaching, the rewards are remote," she added, "but they're immediate when you work with the elderly."

Sister Pierre received her teaching degree from Canisius College, Buffalo. Through the years she's taught all grades and for a time was principal of St. Salome's.

She spent most of her time at the Irondequoit parish, teaching there from 1927 to 1930 and returning in 1933 until 1951. She's also taught at St. Mary's, Aquinas Institute, St. Patrick's, Owego; St. Patrick's Elmira, and St. Joseph's, Penfield.



Sister Pierre and two of her drivers, Josephine Fustanio and Art Sanderl.

Originally from Victor, she entered the Sisters of Mercy when the Motherhouse was temporarily located in Charlotte and took her vows on July 8, 1924.

Although her parents are deceased, Sister Pierre still has a brother living in Rochester and "lots and lots of nieces and nephews."

She'll celebrate her Golden Jubilee at St. Andrew's on Sunday with a 12:15 p.m. Mass followed by a reception. Two others, Sisters M. Felix and Julia, who took their vows on the same day with Sister Pierre will share in the celebration.

Music for the Golden Jubilee which Sister Pierre "is looking forward to so much" will be the same as on the day the three Sisters took their vows.

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Having a good time while sharing Happy Birthday wishes and a cake with John Wasala are Dolores Burns, (left), Mrs. Ida Wasala and Sister Pierre.



Sister Pierre leans over to hear Teresa Cartenuto.



A resident at the Nortonian Nursing Home, Vincent Bertolone prepares to receive Holy Communion.



Anna Duke, of the Nortonian Nursing Home will be 101 in September.