

## MISSIONARY SISTER OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD PIETRA AUMER PUTS COMPASSION INTO ACTION

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By TAMI QUIGLEY *Staff Writer*

Sister Pietra Aumer, a Missionary Sister of the Precious Blood (CPS), has been a touchstone of God's love, mercy and compassion in action at Holy Family Manor (HFM), Bethlehem since 1970. Though she retired six months ago, she continues to volunteer with the same zest she put into work.

Sister Pietra was honored March 6 with a 2016 Caring for Our Communities Award at the ninth annual gala of Catholic Charities, Diocese of Allentown. She was honored for more than 50 years of nursing and over 40 years at HFM.

"It has been a privilege and a joy to work at HFM as a nurse and volunteer since 1970," Sister Pietra said. "This work with the elderly has been – and still is – my mission and passion. The years have flown by and 'retirement' was a word I didn't want to hear. Now the time has come, but I can still volunteer."

Sister Pietra was born into a religious family and raised in a small town in Upper Austria. After finishing school she worked as a sales employee and did bookkeeping in Innsbruck. In 1957 she entered the convent in Wernberg, Austria. She made her first profession in 1959 and her final profession in 1962.

After three years of nursing training in Graz, Austria and two years of midwifery training in Paderborn, Germany, she was transferred to the United States and then to South Korea to learn the Korean language. When the mission in Korea closed, Sister Pietra returned to the United States and began working in January 1970 as a nurse at HFM. She became a U.S. citizen July 5, 1976.

As a registered nurse at HFM, Sister Pietra worked on all units and enjoyed getting to know the residents, their families and staff. She was selected Nurse of the Year in 1993 and 2007, Employee of the Month in April 2014, and Volunteer of the Year in 2014. She was nominated by

HFM at the time of her golden jubilee for the 2010 Catholic Health Assembly for a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Sister Pietra retired from nursing Sept. 9, 2015, but continues to volunteer at HFM, taking care of St. Ann Chapel and the gift shop, and is active in the auxiliary.

During her years as a nurse, Sister Pietra was known not only for her excellent nursing care, but also for her special love for the elderly and the dying, fully living her charism to bring redeeming love to all those whom she meets. She still visits residents at HFM as much as possible to pray, and provide encouragement and hope.

“My gratitude goes to God for all his gifts, especially for his call to religious life and my call to be a nurse, and my personal vocation within that call,” Sister Pietra said. “As Pope Francis says, ‘We are all a little fragile, for we all will be elderly. Some, however, are particularly weak, many are alone and affected by illness. Some depend on the indispensable care and attention of others.’”

Sister Pietra also thanks her CPS congregation, “who nurtured and supported both my calls – the healing mission of Christ’s redeeming love became my own.”

She holds gratitude in heart for her parents, friends and mentors who loved and encouraged her, as well as the residents of HFM and their families.

Sister Pietra is grateful for the wonderful bond she has with HFM nurses and support staff.

“Together we cared for and encouraged our elderly who have gifted us with their own life example and their graceful and difficult aging. All their struggles bring us grace at the foot of the cross.

“It is always a special blessing when we hear from our residents that their own parents or a loved one also have been residents at HFM many years ago.”

Sister Pietra voiced gratitude for the vision and foresight of Bishop Joseph McShea, founding bishop of Allentown. HFM was established in 1962 and Bishop McShea invited the CPS community to be part of its beginning. “Of the 18 sisters who have ministered at HFM, I am the lone CPS at this time; however, we have hopes and dreams to continue in this ministry.”

You did it!  
*Congratulations*

