



Patricia Ann Pierce

A few months after Patricia Ann “Pat” Pierce passed away in 2005, a neighbor produced a well-worn suitcase monogrammed “PP” that contained a wealth of photos and mementos of her friend’s life, which had been given to her for safe keeping. It contained memories of family, friends, school days, faith and service to others. The suitcase itself spoke of Pat’s love of travel.

Pat was born in Santa Monica, Calif., two years before her brother, John. Her father worked as a mortician at Pierce Brothers Mortuary (no relation). Devoutly Catholic, Pat attended Saint Monica’s High School in Santa Monica and went on to nearby Mount St. Mary’s College in Los Angeles. She spent 38 years of her four decades as an educator in Covina, where she taught first and second grades. She even bought a house near the school she taught at, to be closer to her pupils.



Her love of children was legendary, and she is remembered fondly as a hands-on teacher who dispensed hugs as well as knowledge to children in her classrooms who were neglected or from broken homes. Many pupils returned years later to thank her for her loving kindness. Pat herself remained unmarried her entire life, although an engagement ring was found among her effects and a family story hints at a young suitor in the military who was killed during a war, but Pat herself kept any such relationship private.

Her life was full nonetheless. Besides teaching, she was active in her church and never missed Mass, even when traveling. She was also deeply involved in Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, a professional honor society of women educators, as well as the American Association of University Women.

In addition, she was a devoted volunteer at Inter-Community Hospital, where she helped with fundraising and was president of the Inter-Community Hospital auxiliary for two years. She proudly wore her 2,000-hour service pin.

Pat’s life included a wealth of friends, many of whom were her traveling companions. Her destinations included Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Europe and Hawaii, as well as visits to her brother and his wife at their retirement home in Arkansas’ Ozark Mountains.

And without fail, friends, family and even casual acquaintances remember her laughter. Her sister-in-law, Louise, remembers Pat bringing single and widowed friends to the weekly family dinners, and those friends becoming friends of the entire Pierce family. More than one remarked on the closeness of the family and that the dinners featured talk and laughter in equal measure.

Pat’s estate was divided between her college alma mater, which established a scholarship in her memory, and Citrus Valley Health Foundation, to support Citrus Valley Hospice.



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