

Her 50 years as a nun truly golden

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MENANDS — Sister [Mavis Jewell](#), a short woman of white hair, stood in front of a crowd of more than 200. But they knew not to underestimate her docile appearance: At some point, she had commanded each of them in one of her campaigns for good.

Jewell was at [DePaul Provincial House](#) in Menands to celebrate her Golden Jubilee, marking 50 years with the Daughters of Charity, dedicating her life to God, the poor and the ill.

They started with an hour-long Mass where the Rev. [John Walden](#) recalled working with Jewell at [Albany Memorial Hospital](#). He described Jewell's strong character he saw as a backup chaplain. He said he would come for one patient but always would end up taking a tour of the entire place as Jewell took him to others to give his blessings.

Sister [Clarisse Correia](#), who has known Jewell for more than 40 years, said Jewell hasn't changed since she met her when they worked together at [Lourdes Hospital](#) in Binghamton.

"She was a woman of high energy and strong convictions. She could always make things happen," said Correia of the youthful Jewell. "But she would never ask you to do anything that she would not be able to do."

Jewell, born in Brooklyn, moved to Ireland as a child. She completed nurse's training in London, then moved back to the United States where she became a Daughter of Charity in April 1959. She worked in many hospitals before coming to St. Peter's in Albany, where she has been for 20 years. She also went on a mission to help poor hospitals in Lithuania and started the [Prayer Shawl ministry](#).

Tom Christman of Colonie, a parishioner with [St. Pius X Church](#), said he faced fear and anxiety in September when he needed triple-bypass surgery. Christman said one morning, Jewell came to present him with a shawl from the ministry.

"It was a unique and life-changing experience," Christman said. "I felt its warmth and the presence of god in the shawl."

The shawls are made by church members, including Christman's sister, who say prayers of well-being while they are made.

Jewell faced a dire situation herself when in 2003 she had to undergo treatment for cancer in her stomach and esophagus. Jewell was unconscious for a month and doctors considered her recovery a "miracle case."

Perhaps Jewell's fiery spirit to survive and help others can be determined by a story she retold from nursing school.

A man came into a ward Jewell was working in while she was a student and not yet a sister. He had a gun and told nurses to give him the key to the narcotics cabinet or be shot, she said.

"I took my shoe and threw it straight at his Adam's apple, knocking him out," said Jewell with a smile. "After that, I was considered the brave Irish nurse."

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