

**Memories of my time with the Daughters of Mary and Joseph: Margaret
Frampton (King) aka Sister M Francesca.**

I spent my secondary school years at Coloma in Croydon and having observed the way of life of the Ladies of Mary for those years as a pupil, I decided at the age of 17 to enter the Novitiate in Forest Hill.

We were a large and fairly lively group by the time we were joined by our jumelles from Castlecor for our final year in the Novitiate. Seventeen of us made our first Profession together in the Parish Church in Forest Hill and when those of us who are still in touch get together we recall those times with many fond memories.

My memories of the 9 and a half years spent as a lady of Mary – Novitiate, College, Teaching in Forest Hill and then Uganda – are overwhelmingly happy ones. (With the possible exception of my chore of cleaning the aptly named ‘Siberia’ – the long concrete corridor between the Novitiate and the primary school at Forest Hill – in my memory it was always FREEZING!)

This was a time of great change in the Church as a whole and also in Religious Life. Inevitably this led to certain tensions in community. Coming in at the bottom of the ladder as we did, it was undoubtedly easier for us to adapt to the changes whereas it was more difficult for those who had spent a lifetime conforming to a more structured way of life. These tensions became more apparent as we progressed towards our time for final Profession and having already delayed the decision for over a year, it was at this stage that I decided to leave the congregation.

However, the friendships formed during this time are some of the closest and most treasured ones I have. Also those who made a particular impression on me during those formative years have a special place in my heart and I hope, have had an influence for the good on my life since then. I will always look back with affection and gratitude on my time as a ‘Lady of Mary.’