

THE REMNANT

The time: The early 1970's.

The place: Castlecor, Ballymahon, Co. Longford, Ireland.

There a small group of novices were preparing for First Vows or Promises. Sr. Brigid Johnston had come from London, Ladbroke Grove to be exact, to share her love of Sacred Scripture. Small in stature but large in her world view, she was soft-spoken and gentle. She walked on her toes with a dancing movement and was always ready for a bit of diversion. And if that involved a drive for a mini break, so much the better.

She dispensed with the formal lecture arrangement, opting to sit with her students in a circle in the comfort of the community room. Sessions with "BJ" were a joy as she welcomed our participation and opened up our thinking in relation to things past and yet to come. Well versed in the Old and New Testaments, she led us through the texts with reverence and a great clarity of language.

On one particular day she was dealing with the concept of the "anawim" in the Old Testament. As it was being explored with the group she invited us to consider the possibility that we might possibly be the "remnant" in the light of waning numbers entering religious life.

We did not know it at the time but we had a prophet in our midst.

Maria Higgins (Raleigh)

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