

### **Sr. Mary Pauline Bleach- Family Eulogy**

Good morning. I am Josephine Bleach, Sr Mary Pauline's niece. First off I want to thank the Daughters of Mary and Joseph for the great life Sr Mary Pauline had with them and their loving care of her, particularly in her final years. Her family really appreciated how happy and content she was with both her life and career choices. She always talked fondly of the many wonderful sisters in religion that she lived and worked with over the years.

Sr Mary Pauline, or Maura as she was called by her family, was Irish. She born at home on a small farm on a mountainside in Cappbane Co Clare, really beautiful place with views of the Shannon from the house. She was a twin. She and her twin sister Eileen were very different in looks and personalities. Eileen used to say that Maura was the bright one who excelled in school. They were always very close and even from a young age, very adventuress. At the age of 3 they decided it was time for both of them to go to school with their older brother, Tom. Holding hands, both of them wandered down the long lane on their own, on to the main Scarriff road and down to school house. Ireland being Ireland at that time, it was agreed that they could stay.

Having completed their second level education in boarding school in Spanish Point, which Sr Mary Pauline had fond memories of, both of them headed to England. Eileen to nursing and Sr Mary Pauline to the convent and teaching.

At that time, nuns were only let home every few years so Sr Mary Pauline returning was a huge event in our lives. Up to Dublin airport to welcome her off the plane, over to see Granny in Dublin, back to Portlaoise, where her brother Tom lived and down to Cappabane to her brother Kevin and her home place. Adults and children loved her company and she loved theirs. While her habits changed over the years, she was always smiling, singing, telling stories and catching up on and celebrating people's lives. Whether it was a wedding or a funeral she was a joy and support to us all.

Sr Mary Pauline was a great card and letter writer. On her many travels, she kept diaries, which were always greeted along with her photos with great excitement, particularly from her mother, who hadn't the same opportunity to travel.

The mass rock in Cappabane was a great symbol of faith to the Bleach family. Every visit to Cappabane included a walk to the mass rock, with stops to Paddy Joe, Brodericks and Collins on the way. It was a iconic reminder how we kept the faith during penal times. Sr Mary Pauline lived a life of faith with you all. While we will miss her, we know that she is at peace with Eileen, her many sisters in faith, parents and brothers in heaven.

Ar deis De go raibh a hanam dilis. May her faithful soul be at the right hand of God.

*Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her May she rest in peace.  
Amen.*