

Eulogy for Mary Pauline

I would like to thank Josephine for sharing some of Sr Mary Pauline's early childhood and the family memories they have of her.

Sr Mary Pauline first met the Daughters of Mary and Joseph or the Ladies of Mary as they were called in those days, when she came to train as a teacher in Coloma, Tavistock Road, in 1948, she had applied to three colleges in England, the Sisters of Mercy in Hull, La Sainte Union and Coloma, but she said, she chose Coloma because she liked the tone of the letter Sr Mary Benignus wrote to her. After finishing the 3 year course, Mary Pauline taught for 2 years before entering with the Daughters of Mary and Joseph.

A year and half of her Novitiate was spent in Forest Hill, before going to Belgium to complete it. She made her first vows on the 11th April 1956 and her final vows on the 12th April 1961.

After making her first vows Mary Pauline returned to England and began her teaching career, from 1956 until 1998 when she retired, an astounding 42 years. Most of her teaching career was spent in New Addington where she worked from 1966 till 1998. Initially she was an assistant teacher at Good Shepherd, becoming head of the infant school in 1970 and then when it amalgamated with the junior school, she became head of that. She was a great teacher and during that time helped many pupils and their families. On retirement she said, "I will miss all the enjoyment that comes from the children's frankness and sense of humour."

After retiring Mary Pauline moved to Portsmouth, and worked as a Parish sister for 16 years in the Cathedral Parish. She then moved to Herne Bay for a couple of years before moving to the Emmaus Retreat Centre community.

During her life Mary Pauline was a keen traveller. She attended Eucharistic congresses in Kenya, Korea, Spain as well as visiting Sri Lanka, Australia, Thailand, and various places in Europe to mention a few, wherever she went she kept a daily diary and took many photos. When she lived in the Emmaus Community, I remember how she enjoyed her trips to Cyprus and Tenerife with her twin sister Eileen and when they could no longer travel abroad there two weeks in Eastbourne.

Mary Pauline is well remembered for her dedication and sincerity; she took a great interest in people and life, be that her family, her pupils or the people she met in the parish or the retreat centre.

A few years ago, Mary Pauline wrote a brief life history which started with 'I have had a very happy life', and I know that this is true, she loved life and made the most of all the opportunities she got. She was a real extrovert, she loved to socialise, any outing she was there, and even up to recently she loved her glass of wine on feast days and celebrations.

In everything Mary Pauline has done in her life it is clear to see how she has been a woman of faith, she has always remained constant to God's call, giving to others an example of remaining steadfast in faith.

Mary Pauline moved to St Joseph's community in 2016, for health reasons and has been beautifully cared for by the staff here, for which we thank them. She died peacefully on 6th July aged 97.

May she rest in peace.