

## *My Vocation Story*



I was born in Limerick on 19.05.1949 and lived in Ardpatrik. Having attended Ardpatrik National School and St Paul's School in Kilfinane I entered the Congregation in September 1967. Even though the journey from the airport struck me as strange with all the red brick houses in a very built up area, there were so many Sisters from Limerick in Selly Park, Birmingham where I was doing my Novitiate, that I felt very much at home. Two other girls who had been in school with me entered on the same day – Eileen Kelly and Kathleen Neenan. Despite this very different life style to what I had experiences up to then, I knew I was in the right place and soon settled into life in the convent.

After the Novitiate I began my teacher training course in Yorkshire in The North East of England. These three years were extremely enjoyable as I discovered my talent for teaching the younger aged children. Life settled into a pattern after the period of training. I have taught in many schools in different areas of England with very different social environments. It is a pleasure to work with young children and experience with them the fascination of the printed word as they mastered the technique of reading or the importance of mathematics as they came to terms with numbers etc.

I'm glad to say I have enjoyed all the challenges these different situations afforded me. I feel the relationship with the children's parents is vital to their success. Working with parents and parishioners in general takes on a different meaning when we fulfill this



task as Sisters. I have always found that the level of trust and respect

has helped to create an atmosphere where they can be “at home” with me and share as they feel necessary. This is a very important role in the life of a Sister of St Paul. Our lives are for others to enable them find their way in life as God wants them to live. He helps and supports us as we fulfill this role as do the congregation as a whole. We are never on our own and so are able, in love and faith to cope with the situations we find ourselves in.



These years of teaching and managing schools in England were preparing me for what was to come later. Little did I think as I learned my geography in school that, one day I would live at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains in Romania. Apart from the climate and language, living in another country poses its own challenges. Basically people are the same all over the world but their circumstances create different difficulties and challenges that need to be met and resolved as far as possible. Life for many people in Romania is very difficult as they emerge from the communist regime to a more acceptable way of life. Again as Sisters

we are in a position to help these people to try and make sense of their lives as they take responsibility for their future as it is being formed.

Thus as a Congregation we decided to help with resources and personnel in the area of education and with those marginalized in any way. We can only do so much but if we can be a sign of hope and empower these people to help themselves then they are in a better position to live a life that makes a difference.



This experience continues to show me how dependent we are on God and each other, and that it is only together we can continue to dream dreams, to make our vision a reality and to appreciate that as we discover who we are we can make a difference to other people's lives.



Class 8 pupils – children have the same needs wherever they are.

*Sr. Kathleen Murphy*