

## Memories of St. Teresa's R.C. Primary School Lexden.

It is a pleasure to go down "Memory Lane" and recall my very happy teaching years in St. Teresa's. (1968-1977) The school was just one year old when I arrived, fresh from La Sainte Union Teacher Training College Southampton. I was truly blessed to join a Head Teacher, staff and governors that oozed energy and enthusiasm for the children and everything connected to the school. It left a lasting impression on me of what teaching is all about and it fitted well with my philosophy of child-centered education.

The Head Teacher, Mr Walker, was in my eyes, truly charismatic. He saw and brought out the best in teachers and children. He was trusting and allowed staff to explore new ideas. He was quick to discern the talents of others and encourage development. For eight of my nine years in the school I had the top class - my favourite year group, he gave unstinting support and encouragement and indeed on many occasions challenged me as well. His own dedication to the success of the school was inspirational. I clearly remember the names and comradeship of the loyal, dedicated and highly talented teachers, supportive governors, catering staff, the caretaker and his staff, as well as the most efficient admin staff.

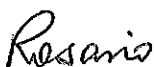
Because I had the top class I was privileged to be responsible for most of the competitive sport, netball, athletics and rounders. What gifted children and parents who supported all competitive events. We had winning teams every year!! One could judge the mood of the class, especially when prep for the eleven plus was getting a bit tedious so we could take a refreshing break in the fantastic playing field next door. I had super children, how I wish I could be with you today to meet at least some of them or possibly their children and grandchildren. In all my years of teaching the best pantomimes I was ever involved in was in St. Teresa's. I can still visualise the amazing life-like backdrops painted by Mr. Denham and his class.

Having the church so close to the school enabled us to make it part of our daily life. This was greatly enhanced by two wonderful Parish Priests, Fr Saurin, who built and was so proud of his school and new church, and Fr Pat Taylor who brought the church into the school with class and school Masses. I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to them and their assistant priests including Fr Breen from Ireland.

Yes, St. Teresa's was my first love and it gave me a sincere love of teaching. From Lexden I went to teach in Kenya for a couple of years and started a secondary school for girls. When I came back I spent 5 years in St. Peter's Romford and then almost twenty in St Helen's in Brentwood as head. After retiring I spent four years in Ethiopia in teacher training. Six years ago, I started teaching in South Sudan initially in teacher training but the civil war disrupted this so I now teach in a diocesan seminary. As I write this I am packed and ready to return to South Sudan. Proof that a good beginning lasts a lifetime. Unfortunately, I will miss your celebration, but I will be with you in spirit.

Congratulations to Fr. Lavin Parish Priest, all staff, governors, children and parents connected to this wonderful school. Have a great celebration. I wish you continued success in the years ahead.

Blessings and love



Sr. Rosario