



PAM SHEPHERD

After many years away from the Catholic Church, in the Church of England, I returned in 2006 after a long and sometimes tortuous journey.

Almost immediately Sr Meg asked if I had thought about becoming an Associate. I hadn't heard of them but my heart leapt. It seemed just what I needed and has given me so much over the years!

Throughout 57 years of marriage, four children and eight grandchildren, and a career working for what used to be called the Marriage Guidance Council as a tutor, I had always been involved with the environment. In many ways I had never left the Catholic church ("once a Catholic, always a Catholic"), and St Francis was an inspiration when I looked at

his love for the natural world and the simplicity of his life.

I first visited Ladywell as a "Young Wife" nearly 50 years ago, and have a memory of being told that its shining surfaces were all polished for "the glory of God"! Then over the years quiet Days and Retreats with the Third order of St Francis, the Anglican equivalent of the Seculars.

Finally I knew I could not postpone my return to the Catholic Church any longer and so much has followed! I am blessed that I live in Guildford so not far from Ladywell. The love and peace I find there from the sisters is another blessing for which I thank God. And humbly try to follow their charism.