



**Sr Pauline FitzWalter**  
Archdiocese of Sydney

Sr Pauline FitzWalter entered the Sisters of the Good Samaritan of the Order of St. Benedict in 1948 and was professed in January, 1951. After teaching a number of years, and completing a Masters in Education, in September 1968, Pauline was chosen to go to Rome to complete a theology degree at Regina Mundi. She returned to Australia on 31st December, 1972.

Between 1973 and 1975, Pauline taught theology at the Catholic Education Centre in Sydney. In the following years, she taught in the Good Samaritan Novitiate and Mt. St. Benedict's College at Pennant Hills.

It was here that she encountered Francis Webb, an Australian poet, who suffered from bouts of mental illness. Pauline befriended Francis and this was the beginning of her inspiration to work with those on the fringes of society. By the end of 1977, this conviction that God wanted her to work with the homeless and those suffering from mental illness led her to petition the Congregation to allow her to set up homes for the homeless. With support from Bishop David Cremin, she eventually commenced this work in March 1978 in the Haymarket Apostolate, known as the Houses of St. Francis. Here, in the midst of the busy city environment, Pauline cared for homeless people offering them security, friendship and above all, spiritual nourishment. All through her work over almost thirty years, the spiritual welfare of those who came seeking assistance remained the primary incentive that kept her motivated.

In 1991, Pauline moved her apostolate to Hurstville to escape what she believed were the more dangerous elements developing in the inner city. Here she had closer contact for support from many helpers for the houses she set up. Bishop David Cremin was the Parish Priest and remained a faithful friend and supporter. Pauline persisted in the ministry of providing accommodation, succour and spiritual guidance to many who came to the various houses she had established in the Hurstville area. All through this ministry, Pauline rented houses as she depended on God for the means to continue to provide the where with all to continue.

Increasing age eventually persuaded Pauline to close the last of the houses in Hurstville at the end of 2006. She continues to live in Hurstville and her prayer and continued ministry with the parishioners sustains her to the present.