

Sheila Datson

Sheila was born in Kenilworth, Warwickshire on 1924 and died in Worcestershire on 30th June 2015. She grew up in an ancient country town from which as a young woman she witnessed the bombing of Coventry. She served in the WRNS and at the age of 20 she married a fellow naval seaman, David.

They had four children and settled in Bexleyheath in a much loved family house which became home to generations of Datsons. Alongside her own family Sheila fostered newborn babies until a permanent home was found for them. In her forties, to her great delight, she trained as a primary school teacher. She was ordained deacon in 1978. Later, David felt called to ministry but disappointingly he was not selected for ordination training. Sheila was nevertheless persuaded to test her vocation and was selected for training for the priesthood. They undertook this training together. Sheila was ordained priest in November 1994. David was a Reader and their ministry was shared in every way until David died in 2009.

It was during their training that they encountered the Third Order and decided it was for them. They were professed together 1982 and lived out their tertiary vocation with characteristic enthusiasm.

They retired to Stourport in 1991. Their ministry carried on unabated in their new parish and in the Third Order. They fostered new vocations. Twice they were members of local groups which grew and divided, so that where there was one Kidderminster group, now there are also groups thriving in Ludlow and the Teme Valley. They lovingly nurtured and encouraged us in our formation as Tertiaries, and in leadership. We shared with them their Diamond Wedding Celebration in 2004.

Sheila was Chaplain before reorganisation, and was much valued in spiritual direction. For many years she organised an annual retreat which just hit the spot. Her preparation was meticulous and her choice of leader always inspiring.

After David's death Sheila, gentle and strong, continued to minister in the parish and in her local group. She was an active member of the local Justice and Peace Group and always helped with Christian Aid. She took services, officiating at baptisms, weddings and funerals until the last, although her health was failing. She died peacefully, surrounded by her precious family. We hold her example in our hearts. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

Sally Jones, TSSF Wyevern Area Minister