

**Griffin, Madeline, 1995, *A Study of Poor Sisters of the Mother of God and their contribution to Education in Ireland, 1995***

## **DISSERTATION ABSTRACT**

Frances Margaret Taylor was born in 1832. When she was eight, her father died of tuberculosis and the family moved to London. The poverty of the children in the streets of London made a deep impression on her and she gathered them into her "Ragged School" where she fed and taught them. At nineteen she went as a volunteer to nurse the sick and wounded in the Crimean War and was converted to Catholicism. On her return to London after the war, she went through the grueling task of discernment for her future life, resulting in the foundation of the Congregation of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God.

The opening chapter outlines the family background and life story of this extraordinary and gifted woman. Chapter two tells of the growth of the Congregation in Ireland from its first foundation in Clongowes Wood, Kildare, to the present day. In Mother Magdalen's day the two great evils which she hoped to remedy were poverty and injustice. Service of the poor, therefore, was foremost in her mind whenever and wherever she founded a new convent of her congregation. Chapter Three is an exposition of the philosophy of education of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God with special emphasis on their particular charism for the poor. It outlines the progression of Mother Magdalen's strategy from her first identification of a great need to her decision to give herself totally to the task of Christian education.

Chapter four is a Case History of Carrigtwohill Convent and Schools telling the story of the impact made by the Sisters on a community of a faith-filled people who were struggling to recover from the havoc of Penal Laws, the Potato Famine and the Land Wars.

A projected view of what lies ahead for the Poor Servants of the Mother of God is the subject matter of Chapter five. This chapter sounds a note of hope that the Lord of History who raised up a Fanny Taylor is still at work for the good of mankind because we know that "His love endures forever." (Psalm 118)