

**Obituary of our
Sr. M. Friedberta Leutgeb,
+ 19.06.2022
in the Missionshaus Neuenbeken**



Sister Friedberta - Maria Leutgeb - was born on 3 March 1928 in Unterstiftung, Bad Leonfelden in Upper Austria (Diocese of Linz).

After attending primary school, she first worked for about eight years in an agricultural business. On 1 September 1950 she entered our Congregation in Wernberg and made her first profession there on 8 December 1952, and her perpetual profession on 8 December 1955.

In March 1957 she came to Paderborn and completed a two-year training for nurses and the corresponding practical year in our then Herz Jesu Hospital. Not only did she receive the grade "very good" there, the word appeared several times in her discharge certificate. On 17 November 1960, she left for Lisbon, learned the Portuguese language and on 26 February 1962 she travelled to Lourenço Marques, now Maputo and the capital of Mozambique. From March 1962 to January 1967 she worked as a nurse in Namaacha, then as a nurse and superior in Malehice, and from 1969 in Sao Paulo. This was a station of the Sacramentine Fathers, located deep in the bush. Here Sr. Friedberta worked in a small hospital that was the refuge of sick people of all ages. A fellow sister writes:

"It was amazing how Sister Friedberta knew how to treat each patient with kindness and great understanding. She pulled out many a tooth, very often she had to take the place of a doctor. Her very special place of work was the "Maternidade", the maternity ward, which was always completely crowded; in front of the door, the expectant mothers were lying under the mango trees and were cared for by their families until their hour had also come. Sr. Friedberta was a genuine, loving, competent, humorous missionary who somehow managed to cope with every situation."

On 25 June 1975, the independence of the People's Republic of Mozambique was declared, and a 16-year long civil war followed, combined with a public smear campaign against the Catholic Church, which caused many Christians to leave the church. Also our sisters had to suffer greatly.

Sr. Friedberta herself suffered a serious motorbike accident with multiple leg fractures on her way to the hospital in March 1976. She was taken to the hospital in Maputo, but could not be treated there and was therefore transported to Mariannhill.

After her hospital stay in Mariannhill, Sr. Friedberta returned to Wernberg in 1977. From October 1977 to April 1980 she worked in our former old people's home in Langen near

Bregenz, but in 1980 she was transferred back to Germany and in May began the work as a ward sister in the Josef Hospital in Paderborn.

In 1989 she was able to leave for Mozambique once again. The civil war in the country finally came to an end due to the peace negotiations from 1990 to 1992 under the leadership of the Community of Sant' Egidio in Rome.

In June 1995, Sr. Friedberta returned to Germany and was assigned to the infirmary at the Neuenbeken Mission House. In 2008 she retired from this ministry, still helping in the vegetable cellar until she herself had to move to the infirmary.

She has always remained the same. Her affection and openness, her smile and her humour will remain in our memories. Also unforgettable was her fondness for drama, with which she gave us much joy in the mission house. The members of the Precious Blood Mission Circle gratefully appreciated her participation in the monthly meetings. We are happy that her relatives also made the long journey from Austria to say goodbye to Sr. Friedberta and to thank with us God for her life.

He took her home on Sunday, 19 June. May she, who helped so many people in her long life, now hear the word of Jesus:

*"Come here, you who are blessed by my Father, take possession of the kingdom
that has been destined for you since the creation of the world ...
Amen, I say to you: Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren,
ye have done it unto me." (according to Mt 25)*

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A greeting from Irmã Maria do Céu and Irmã Angelica Balate on behalf of the Sisters in Mozambique:

Dear Sister Friedberta,

In this hour of farewell, we want to thank you for all that you were to us: a woman of faith and prayer; humble, compassionate and silent.

From you we learned to be the presence of God for the people and to bring Jesus to the most needy.

We thank you for all the work you have done in the health and family ministry for the people of Menssano, Malehice and Namaacha.

Our gratitude also for your participation in the life of the community, the care given, the love and respect in simplicity towards all, will remain always in our memories.

Thank you, Sister Friedberta, for the life you gave for the Church of Mozambique, Grandmother Kanimbambo, rest in peace and pray for us by God.

R.I.P.