

OBITUARY of our

Sister Maria Emma Santer

***25.04.1936 + 14.08.2021**



Sr. Maria Emma was born on 25 April in Villach, Carinthia, Austria, and died on the morning of 14 August in Wernberg.

Sr. Emma, you and your twin sister Fritzi were born at home, by petroleum light, as you often told us. Fritzi is the elder of you two. In 1945, your family was enriched by your brother Peter. You liked to talk about your family and were full of admiration for your father, who was a pharmacist and an enthusiastic photographer. In 1942 you started primary school in Villach, but already in 1944 your mother was evacuated with you twins and you came to live with a host family in Weißenstein. Until now you have been in contact with them. You continued to go to school there and in 1945 you were able to return to bombed-out Villach. After finishing secondary school you started an apprenticeship as a textile saleswoman. In the shop the prices were written with secret numbers, you still used these to write down the date! After passing the commercial assistant's examination, you stayed on as a saleswoman in the same textile shop.

Since the age of 10, the group meetings of the Catholic Youth have you greatly influenced. At the age of 15, you became an enthusiastic member of the Catholic Workers' Youth. The youth camps on the Flattnitz, the pilgrimages to Rome and Lourdes, especially the retreats with Prelate Stöger formed your religious life and gave you the foundation that has always carried you. You were very independent in your spiritual life, never withheld justified criticism and only took instructions after examination.

After the Lourdes pilgrimage in 1961, you entered Wernberg on 4 October. You received your religious formation here and took your Temporary Vows on 3 May 1964. Only a few months later you received your first transfer as a cook of the Mariannahill Missionaries in Fribourg/Switzerland. You returned to Wernberg in 1966 to prepare for your Perpetual Vows. During this time the International Reform Chapter of our Congregation took place in Wernberg. You enjoyed gaining worldwide impressions. Then you went away again to Neuenbeken/Paderborn, where you attended the domestic science school. The language of instruction was English - in preparation for a missionary assignment in an English-speaking area. However, after graduation your assignment was Mozambique. You were able to learn

Portuguese in Lisbon for a few months. You had to teach in Maleisse in our domestic science school. You prepared the theoretical lessons with the dictionary - everything practical came easily to you. You were then also in our novitiate in Namaacha until your stay became too dangerous due to the turmoil of the civil war. You were between the fronts during that time and none of us will ever know what you went through.

You were able to share your experiences of Africa with many Christians in Austria within the framework of "Action Missio", until you were sent out again, this time to Spain, as a cook at the CPS Convent in Palencia. Some years later, you went to Lamego in Portugal - you were a much sought-after cook everywhere!

You only settled down again in Salzburg in the study house of the Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood. There I often experienced how well you contributed to the education of the young fathers. They learned a lot from you during the twenty years of your work. Due to illness you returned to Wernberg in 2007 - but your thirst for adventure drove you out of the house again, to the rectory in Maria Landskron. There you were not only for me, but also for so many people of the parish a sunny and calm pole. Your radiant smile and your sociable nature were contagious and we see you looking out of the window as you do here in this picture. You wanted to take care of me while I was in the parish. When we left the parish in summer 2017, you were already waiting for us in the sewing room in Wernberg, no question of going into pension!

You were always very close to your family and in the last years, you wanted to spend your holidays in the form of visits. You had great joy with your grandnieces and grandnephew. You were always happy about visits from Landskron. During the last few months your heart was giving you trouble and an operation was considered, but you did not want it. You became weaker and all efforts to make you move about a little did not work for you. You still had one great pleasure in the last few weeks, witnessing the Olympics!

On the morning of 14 August, you fell asleep with a smile on your face, and you were still smiling when you died. This is how you went home after so many eventful years.

We thank you for your life in our community, for all your goodness. Now the eternal banquet is prepared for you, the enthusiastic cook.

Sr. Pallotti and fellow Sisters