

**Obituary of our
Sr. Anna Maria Ploner,
+ 18. 07. 2023
Missionshaus Neuenbeken**



Sister Anna Maria was born on 26 January 1929 in Kronhof in Gailtal/Carinthia - Diocese of Gurk-Klagenfurt - and baptized on 29 January, she was given the name Maria. According to her own account, she was a weak infant and nobody knew, whether she would pull through. Obviously, however, God had plans for her. Her school-leaving certificate shows her to be a very good pupil; a parish certificate shows her to be "active in all aspects of the youth movement". In 1950, at the age of 21, she attended a housekeeping course with the Sisters of Mercy in Maria Saal and completed it with very good results.

Two of her sisters entered in Wernberg, Sr. Ferdinanda Ploner, who died in the civil war in Zimbabwe in 1977, and Sr. Celine Ploner, who died in South Africa in 2012. Sr. Anna Maria would have liked to enter in Wernberg with them, but this was not possible for her before her youngest brother was married and the parental farm was in good hands.

On 21 November 1960, at the age of 31, she entered our Congregation. She was clothed on 7 December 1961 in Wernberg and made her first profession on 3 May 1963. In November 1963 she was transferred to Riedegg, where the Mariannahill Fathers had built a house of formation for their young religious. In March 1966, she returned to Wernberg and made her Final Profession on 3 May. On 20 June 1966, she took on a new task in Lindau at Lake Constance. The two sisters of the community took care of the CMM household, which consisted mainly of two priests and three brothers. The community ran there a well-attended healing practice. Brother Fridolin, known to many of us by name, lived and worked there.

In 1970 the Sisters were withdrawn and in January 1971 after a short stay in the Motherhouse, Sr Anna Maria left for her new place of work, the Nordvangaard in Birkerød, Denmark.

For 25 years she was working in the kitchen and caring for the residents of the old people's home, the sisters, the staff and the priests. Above all, the monthly meetings of the priests organized by the bishop at Nordvangaard were very close to her heart. For many years, together with the parish priest and some lay people, she was involved in the diocesan magazine, especially the sermon series "Word on the Way". Like the other sisters of the community, she led the Service of the Word - when no priest was available. The prayer group "Living Rosary", which she co-founded, continues to exist there after her departure. In 1996 she took over the responsibility as sacristan, took care of the priest's flat, the parish office and two small guest houses. Not to forget the knitting club which met weekly and

made blankets for Mother Teresa. After Sr. Anna Maria suffered a stroke in 1999, she was for a time only sacristan, and then continued to be responsible for the above-mentioned areas on a voluntary basis.

On 13 June 2015, she came to us in Neuenbeken and found her new home in the St. Anna Home. At first it was not easy for the then Provincial Superior, Sr. Maria Georg to persuade her to make the move, but on her arrival at the Mission House Sr. Anna Maria was delighted with her new hospital room, which was equipped with a wet room and had both a television and a telephone and above all an internet connection. There she lived quietly and modestly, taking part in all the prayers of the community, praying frequently and attending all meals in the refectory until a few weeks before her death. She remained warmly attached to her family, as well as to the people of the former church community in Birkeröd. Yes, via the internet, she was even still active as far as sermon series and the "living rosary" were concerned. There was hardly a day when she did not go for a long walk in all weather or let the sun shine on her in a quiet place.

On 2 February this year, Sr Anna Maria celebrated her Diamond Jubilee together with two fellow Sisters. She had turned 94 in January, and age was now becoming more and more noticeable. Since some weeks she could no longer come to the refectory.

It was a great joy for her, who always felt close to the priests in Denmark, that the Vicar General of her diocese, Niels Engelbrecht, came to visit Neuenbeken for a few days at the beginning of July, as he does every year, and was able to administer the anointing of the sick to her. Late in the evening of 18 July, she fell asleep peacefully.

On the morning of 19 July, before Lauds, her death was announced to us. The closing hymn of the service seemed fitting for Sr. Anna Maria's going home, for the future she will be given with God and also for her commitment for so long to him, his Church in Denmark and the Congregation:

Land of great hope, future that beckons us:
God in our midst, sun that does not sink.
God gives us trust and a field of work.
He wants to build a new world with us.

Yes, Sr. Anna Maria certainly contributed to this in her place!
May she now live in God's peace!

R.i.p.