



## Obituary

### **Sr. Anna-Lucia Wannemacher OP**

**19.09.1958 – 25.03.2025**



*Do not be afraid for I am with you.  
Is 43:5*

Sr. Anna-Lucia Wannemacher was born in Reinheim, Saarland on September 19<sup>th</sup> 1958 as the eldest daughter of Willibald and Irma Wannemacher. At baptism, she received the name Ruth Maria. Her sister Jutta and her two brothers Benno and Markus were born after her. Markus who was eight years younger lived with the Down Syndrome and was a lively child who greatly influenced the family atmosphere. This experience probably helped Ruth Maria to become aware of human weakness and to love and respect challenged people. Markus died in December 2023.

Ruth Maria grew up in Bierbach, Saarland where she attended primary school until 1968. Already as a child, she came to know the Dominican Sisters of Speyer who worked in the kindergarten and in the church. She described herself as a curious and lively child, gifted in the fine arts and in music. Thus, she learned to play the organ and the flute.

From 1968 to 1977, she attended high school in Blies-Kastel and obtained matriculation. Already then, she felt drawn to the religious life. But first, from 1977 to 1982, she studied as a teacher for mentally challenged children in Landau and Mainz. During those years, she seriously reflected on the call to religious life and visited several convents. During a visit to Neustadt in June 1982, she felt that this might be the right place for her.

From 1982 to 1984, she served two practical years as a teacher of mentally challenged children in Neustadt/Weinstraße. After that she entered with the Dominican Sisters in Neustadt where she received the religious name Sr. Anna-Lucia. She made her first profession in Neustadt on November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1986 and was sent to work in our Marienkrankenhaus in Flörsheim. From 1987 to 1990, she trained as a nurse in the St. Josef's hospital in Wiesbaden.

From 1990 to 2006 she worked as a nurse in Flörsheim and served in the convent chapel as chantress and organist and especially loved jubilees and other feast days. During this time, she also took part in various work groups for religious in the diocese of Limburg and in the Dominican order.

She made her final profession on April 17<sup>th</sup> 1993; in that same year, her mother died.

Through the renowned Würzburg correspondence course, she studied theology from 2001 to 2005 and did the practical work connected with this course with the Dominican men in Mainz.

In 2006, she was transferred to the hospital in Völklingen, Saarland. There she worked in the palliative section and did social work, an approach to nursing which appealed to her.

During her stay in Saarland, she first stayed with a community of Franciscan Sisters of Waldbreitbach. When that community was closed, she lived by herself. In 2014, the 125<sup>th</sup> jubilee year of that congregation, Anna-Lucia accepted the invitation for a visit to the US, where she felt drawn to missionary work. In the following year, she was sent to our South African Area and became part of a group of sisters in the newly opened convent in Bloemfontein. She stayed there from 2015 to 2018, and even though that time was not easy for her, she saw it as an important period in her life.

After her return to Germany in 2018, Anna-Lucia took on tasks around organizing the future of the Neustadt community. She also looked after Sr. Gisela-Maria who was already suffering severe mental challenges including the tendency to walk away which caused great difficulties in the community.

In May 2019, Anna-Lucia was diagnosed with cancer and had her first surgery in Lohr. After that, she had a period of recuperation in the convent of the Sisters of St. Rita in Würzburg. During that time she made contact with the sisters of that community, among others with Sr. Rita-Maria who would later accompany her during her last weeks of life in the hospice.

In May 2020, Sr. Anna-Lucia went to live in a flat in Marktheidenfeld. This became her last home. As far as possible she took part in the life of the parish as liturgical reader and communion server. She took on duty in the “One-World-Shop” and joined a drumming group. She enjoyed these group activities and learned not only to support others but also to ask for and to receive help.

During the difficult times of chemotherapy, she endeavoured to retain her independence and tried to make the best of each day. People experienced her as alive and open for the beautiful things in life. She spoke openly about her illness which was helpful for those living near her.

People who have lived with Anna-Lucia experienced her as gifted in many ways and interested in many things: she was musical and creative in practical things such as sewing, cooking and home-making. She collected herbs and cooked jellies. She enjoyed being out in nature and found energy there.

Anna-Lucia was reliable and took things seriously. Her tendency of being too exact in every detail was not only difficult to bear for those living and working with her but even for herself. In later years this mellowed and she became more generous.

She was gifted with regard to language and could work with texts. Thus she was a support to Sr. Christiane in her work of composing letters, reports and obituaries.

Sr. Anna-Lucia saw her life with all its broken parts in the Japanese image of broken pottery the pieces of which are put together again with golden glue.

She experienced herself as a person who had received much and out of this she found forgiveness, reconciliation and peace. During Advent 2024, she bade farewell to the community in Kist, asking their forgiveness for all that could have hurt any of them. She spoke of her spiritual insight that God does not ask her to achieve anything but takes and loves her as she is.

In February 2025, Sr. Anna-Lucia could no longer live in her flat but was taken into the hospice in Würzburg. During her last weeks in the hospice she could stay in this attitude of gratefulness. Until the end, she remained clear in her mind. She enjoyed the few short visits she could still receive from those near her. In the early morning hours of March 25<sup>th</sup>, heaven opened for her as she herself had expressed it in the following text:

Rooted in the ground  
I stand upright like a tree.  
I open myself for heaven,  
Receive myself anew from your hand  
Which carries me lovingly, holds me firm  
And leads me into freedom.

Dear Sr. Anna-Lucia, may you now experience this embrace into freedom.