



In Memory of our

Sr. M. Christiana (Maria) König, OSB

Born on August 28, 1913 died on August 02, 2007

On the 2nd of August we sang this Antiphon to Psalm 5 at Lauds,

"You hear my voice in the morning, in the morning I look out to Your face."

A few hours before that, our dear Sr. Christiana's call to God was answered. He transformed her search and longing into the vision of His eternal presence. Her heart's desire to come to the eternal home was fulfilled.

Maria, that was her baptismal name, was born on August 28, 1913 in the Westfalian small town, Iselohn, Archdiocese of Paderborn. She grew up with 4 brothers and 5 sisters in a farmer family wherein it was a matter of course to be raised up and to live in Christian tradition. Her eldest brother became a priest and lived on a mission station in Brazil. In her whole life she maintained close ties with her Westfalian hometown and family by spending vacations there.

After finishing her apprenticeship in domestic economy and after some years of work experience at a doctor's family in Iselohn, she entered in Olpe on April 15, 1937. On November 17, 1937, on the feast of St. Gertrud, Maria was clothed and received the name, Sr. M. Christiana. She remained in Olpe and also made her first profession there on November 21, 1938. Because of the vicissitudes of war and the impoundment of the Motherhouse, she made her final profession on January 10, 1942 in Kerschlach. During the war, Sr. M. Christiana continued working, at first, in Olpe, in the familiar region of Sauerland. In 1941, she witnessed the painful evacuation of sisters. She had to seek refuge at home, in her family during this period of four weeks. In 1952 she was given a new assignment in Tutzing. In June of the same year, she was appointed as superior to a four-member community in Rome. And this was to be the start of her Roman mission that, but with a short interruption, lasted for 50 years until her transfer to Tutzing priory in the year 2002.



From 1954 to 1980, she held the office of the general treasurer, at first in our Generalate House in the Casa Santo Spirito in Grottaferrata, and later, in the newly-constructed Generalate in der Via dei Bevilacqua in front of the gates of Rome. It became a vital necessity for Sr. M. Christiana to be able to deal with money and financial statements, although she would have preferred more to do practical work in the house or at the garden. Whoever enjoys the lovely garden around the "Casa" now, either while on vacation or between sessions during a chapter, should remember that, it is due to Sr. Christiana's love of nature, her enthusiasm in planting, and her care that we have the fruit trees, palm trees and the whole garden area. She left behind her traces on the garden!

Because of her friendly and cordial nature, her readiness for duty, her reliability, and openness to understand and because of her generous heart, Sr. M. Christiana was entrusted with important responsibilities also for the following years. So she was a delegate for the general chapter in 1970. In 1980 she was appointed as superior for the Roman community. Meanwhile, Rome became her second home. She spoke fluent Italian and loved Rome's churches and squares. It was a natural thought for her to spend her twilight years in Rome and to be buried in Roman soil.

But a putative serious medical finding necessitated in August 2001 a transfer in the Tutzing infirmary. She took this transfer in stride knowing that death was near. However, she left behind her thinking and her feelings in Rome. Her room furnishings and her books reflects her inner life: the walls were decorated with pictures of familiar churches and popes, squares and fountains; on the table one would find books in Italian, the language which became dear to her. For nearly six years she lived with us like someone who was just on a stop-over on a

journey. Her wish was – Eternity! She would often tell a fellow sister, “I would be happy to die. How beautiful that would be!” Her longing for her Roman home and the familiar sisters there sometimes hampered her from allowing nearness. But she actively took part in community life in the Infirmary and she was an entertaining conversational partner up and until a few weeks before her death. And she was an amiable fellow sister.

On July 1, she had a stroke while having lunch that left her paralysed on the left side. This subsided at first and gave her this strong wish that everything would be back to normal soon. However, already two weeks later, she again suffered another stroke that made eating and drinking impossible and her power of resistance waned. In these days of helplessness and total dependence on the others, she began, like that of Psalm 5, her unceasing call to God and to plea for His mercy. Her eyes bespoke of her longing to see God’s face.

For our dear Sr. M. Christiana, who, through her energy, kindness and stability, gave a home to so many fellow sisters at the Generalate, is also given a home now, to which Jesus spoke of in the Gospel, “And after I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself so that you will be where I am.” John 14, 3

What we hope for in praying the Psalms has now become a reality for our Sister:

“But all who find safe in you will rejoice; they can always sing for joy. You bless those who obey you, Lord; your love protects them like a shield.” Ps 5: 11-12

Tutzing, August 3, 2007

Prioress and Sisters of Tutzing Priory



House and garden in Rome

