



## **In Memory of Sr. M. Ruthild (Klara) Singer OSB**

**born on March 2, 1915      died on October 24, 2008**

On Friday evening, during Vespers, the sisters sang this stanza of the hymn, “And if the fear of death would seize us in the last hour, lead us home in joy; let us rest in Your peace.” After a short while, God fulfilled the plea of Sr. Ruthild and took her home in the kingdom of eternal joy.

Klara Singer was born on March 2, 1915 as the second child to the couple, Karla and Josefine Singer in Stuttgart. So that the father could be present on the baptism of little Klara, the date was postponed to March 21, the feast of St. Benedict. Sr. Ruthild commented on her curriculum vitae as follows, “Through the postponement of my baptism, I already had my first ties to St. Benedict, a fact that delighted me all my life”. Her childhood years were marked by the threats of the First World War but also by going to a kindergarten with Christian education, on which the parents put great value. It was also her parents’ concern that she attended a Catholic high school and a trade school in Stuttgart. In accordance to her heart’s wish, she took up a course as a kindergarten teacher from 1935 to 1937. This professional training was enriching for her and made her happy. This also gave her the opportunity to gain much experiences in child education even before entering the religious life. Afterwards, as a sister, she also attended the course, *Missio canonica*, in Augsburg. And this gave her good fundament for her work with children in various areas, mainly in kindergartens.

She got her first contact to Tutzing through St. Ottilien, for, and she writes, “At that time, my sister already wished to join a missionary community. Because our mother was a benefactress of St. Ottilien, ... my sister and I attended the retreat for young girls in St. Ottilien in 1932. From there we visited Tutzing.” Her sister went to our mission school and was admitted into the community. In 1933, Sr. Clarita, (her religious name) was already sent to the Philippines where she lived for many decades. The separation from her beloved older sister was a painful farewell for the 18-year old Klara. All the greater was the joy when, at a later age, the two sisters were again able to live near each other and did some things together.

She herself also chose the religious life. She entered our congregation in September 1939. The first years of religious life were overshadowed by the vicissitudes of World War II. So she made her first profession not in Tutzing, but on October 26, 1941 in Munich, in the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Mercy. The convent in Tutzing was, at that time, in the hands of the National Socialists. She received the name Sister M. Ruthild. Thanks to her professional education, Sr. Ruthild was able to work partly, at the children’s ward of the Schwabing hospital, and partly, as a clerk before she returned to Tutzing in 1944. Due to war conditions, she had

to renew her first profession before she finally made her final profession on April 27, 1945 in Tutzing. It was only three months later when she learned from her father, that her final commitment fell at the same time as her final farewell from her mother who was killed by an air raid on the last days of the war.

Sr. Ruthild worked mainly as a kindergarten teacher or at a children's home. She also worked part-time as a clerk in the administration department of the school, hospital and treasurer's office. Through these varying assignments, she got to know the other communities of the priory. She was in Weiterdingen, Olpe, Bernried and Wessobrunn before she returned to Tutzing in 1966. It was a great joy for her to head the kindergarten in Tutzing from 1966 to 1976 and in her last years of work, she still helped found and build the kindergarten in Andechs. The parents and children may have regarded Sr. Ruthild as a strict teacher but they also see in her a very efficient one. A kindergarten pupil came home one day and told his mother, "Sr. Ruthild has a sweet face even if she has to reprimand us!" In 1979 she ended her active service but she still remained in contact with former pupils, received invitations and visits from them, even at her old age. The work with the children was her life's fulfilment.

Even after retirement, Sr. Ruthild was not idle. She did clerical work for the friends' association of the hospital and other tasks. She did this work until the year 2002. But after a series of heart attacks, she had to give up different activities and had to move to the infirmary.

At the infirmary, she brought joy to her fellow sisters with the talent that she had developed during her long years of experience at the kindergarten – she had the wonderful talent to read stories. She was generally a sociable person who liked to communicate with others and who was ubiquitous in the corridors and exchanged pleasantries with people. She took the difficulties that go with aging in stride, and in prayer (especially, the rosary). It was important for her to close the day with the evening blessing from the superior; only then could she peacefully go to bed. As her world of experiences became smaller, her thoughts would oftentimes wander to her deceased parents and her sister. When listening to her, one could sense the deep roots of her Stuttgart hometown and her family.

A progressive process of senile dementia began. She sometimes felt this painful fact but it also did not stop her from being always on her feet. And this led to falls, every now and then. On her last fall, she suffered from fracture of the femoral neck, from which she no longer recovered. Slowly but constantly, her strength diminished. Two days before the completion of 67 years of profession, she laid her life back into the hand of the Creator.

We are grateful for the long life of our dear sister, for her willingness of dedication in the service of children, for her energy, her originality and her witness to faith. May God grant her that what we hopefully pray for in Psalm 27, "I am certain to see the goodness of God in the land of the living."

Tutzing, October 25, 2008  
Prioress and Sisters of Tutzing Priory