

In Memory of
Sr. M. Udalrike (Anna) Wiedemann OSB
born 03.09.1923 died 27.01.2009



On January 27, we sang at Lauds the responsory: "The Lord has loved her and adorned her. He clothed her with magnificent garments. The Lord has satisfied the longing of her heart." One hour later, God satisfied the longing of our dear Sister Udalrike and took her up into his heavenly glory.

Anna, as she was named at baptism, was born on September 3, 1923, in Augsburg, the third child of the master shoemaker Johann Wiedemann and his wife Maria. In her biography, she writes about the years previous to her entry into the convent: "In 1930 I entered public school. On May 26, 1932, my mother died. As we were five small children, my father married again in 1933, to Franziska Oberhauser. On September 12, 1934, I was permitted to receive my first Holy Communion, and on May 11, the sacrament of Confirmation. After school, I worked at home where I was needed, and attended a home economics vocational school, and in my free time, I attended sewing classes in the English Institute in Augsburg. In the middle of the war, my elder and my younger sisters were drafted to military service. From that time on, my main occupation was to help in the store of my parents. In October 1944, our house was destroyed in a bombing attack. Thereby I was injured at my head. Because of my long unconsciousness, I received Holy Unction at the first aid emergency center; but after three weeks I was well and could be dismissed from the hospital. Now I joined the work at the reconstruction of our house which, with great difficulties, was externally completed in 1950. Due to the actual financial problems and the sickness of my youngest sister, who was to take over my work, my wish to become a missionary sister was put off. In 1953, my brother had his priestly ordination; then my parents also were ready to let me leave home. I was looking forward with joy to follow my vocation which I accept as a gift from our dear Lord! I shall do everything to show my gratitude and to give joy to my dear God."

On September 15, 1953, Anna entered in Tutzing. At her clothing on February 4, 1955, she received the name Sr. Udalrike. One year later, on February 7, 1956, she celebrated her First Profession, and after three years, in 1959, her Perpetual Profession. During her first years, she worked in different offices and was then assigned to the sewing rooms in Tutzing, Olpe and Bernried. In March 1962, she was sent to Africa and arrived on March 18, 1962, in Windhoek, Southwest-Africa, now called Namibia. On June 11, 1962 she came to Oshikuku where she worked as seamstress together with the Oshikuku Sisters, until 1992.

Sr. Udalrike was much loved by the Sisters. She prayed with them the Divine Office and the rosary during their work. Her favorite prayer was: "*Lord Jesus, do not be my judge but my intercessor.*" She also liked to sing religious songs with the Sisters. Sr. Udalrike loved silence and did not tolerate much talking. Then she interrupted the conversation and started to sing or pray in the sewing room.

Sr. Udalrike was a peace-loving person, according to the Rule of St. Benedict. When she was displeased with a Sister, she called her to a quiet corner of the room, looked at her lovingly and silently until the Sister responded with a smile. She encouraged the Sisters, never to take revenge but simply to pray for those who hurt them. She was never grumpy or impatient.

She was a quiet, modest, undemanding Sister who did her work conscientiously and who participated in all common exercises. She preferred rather to listen than to tell her opinion or to judge. On Sundays she loved to go to the lepers and pray the rosary with them, or she went with the Owambo-Sisters and visited old and sick people who could no longer come to church. She loved especially the poor people and helped in whatever way she could. She always carried the Bible with her and the Otshiwambo-hymnbook when she visited the people. And she also encouraged the people to help one another. Sr. Udalrike placed herself and everything into God's hands. She also went often to the cemetery, decorated the graves with flowers and removed the weeds.

In 2000, when she came to the new priory house, she worked again in the sewing room. Sometimes she also went to the neighboring slum area "Okahandja-Park", visited the people there and prayed with them. She encouraged our Namibian Sisters to go along with her.

In summer 2003, upon the request of her family, Sr. Udalrike went on homeleave on the occasion of the Golden Ordination Jubilee of her priest brother. During this time she suffered such a severe stroke that she could no longer return to Windhoek. After a short stay at the hospital she was brought to the infirmary of Tutzing, being paralyzed at her right side and unable to speak and to swallow. Since a mobilization was no longer possible and she had to be fed by a tube, she was now bedridden and in need of nursing care.

Sr. Udalrike accepted her heavy lot with great patience and resignation. In spite of her severe handicap she was aware of many things that happened around her, but could communicate only with her eyes and with her hands. In spite of her dependency, she remained amiable, contented and grateful. She manifested great joy at the daily rosary in the company of her fellow Sisters and at visits at her sickbed. For five and a half years, Sr. Udalrike, by her being with us and among us, gave a special testimony of her abandonment and trust in God.

A week ago, her condition worsened and we surmised that God would soon fulfill the longing of her heart. In the morning hours she fell asleep unnoticed and was redeemed from her long sufferings.

For our dear Sister Udalrike, who so faithfully lived her missionary Benedictine life and who has borne her sufferings without complaint, thereby leading us through a special school of the Lord, it will be fulfilled what we sang in today's hymn: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, born of the Virgin, you are the eternal reward for all who sought you alone. They follow you to glory, dressed in white robes, and joyfully sing the new song, the hymn of praise to the honor of God."

We thank God that she was our fellow Sister. May she now be a good intercessor for her Priory of Windhoek and for us all.

Windhoek and Tutzing, January 29, 2009

Prioresses and Sisters
of Windhoek and Tutzing