

Death Notice

SISTER MARIA BIRGIT

ND 6253

Marianne WESTERMANN

Maria Regina Province, Coesfeld, Germany

Date and place of birth:	March 14, 1940	Mühlen/Steinfeld
Date and place of profession:	March 28, 1965	Vechta
Date and place of death:	March 22, 2026	Vechta, Hospital
Date and place of burial:	March 31, 2026	Coesfeld, Convent Cemetery



"Show me the path I should go and make me willing to walk it!"
St. Birgitta of Sweden

Marianne was the youngest child of master painter August Westermann and his wife Anna. She had three older siblings. Her father died in the war in 1945. Her mother then married the master painter Alwin Pille in 1948. Marianne grew up in a Catholic family. The children were able to build up a trusting relationship with their second father.

Marianne attended the Catholic elementary school in Mühlen from 1946 to 1954. After leaving school, she worked for 18 months as a helper in the kindergarten of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Vechta. During this time, she made the decision to become a kindergarten teacher. She pursued this goal single-mindedly. From 1957 to 1958, she attended the state-approved housekeeping school of our sisters in Coesfeld and obtained her secondary school certificate in March 1959. From 1960 to 1962, she attended the women's technical school for kindergarten and nursery teachers in Coesfeld. In the same year, she joined the Congregation in Vechta. When she was invested in 1963, she was given the name Sister Maria Birgit. As a young sister, she took over the management of the kindergarten in Oldenburg. From 1969 to 1970, she attended a Montessori teacher training course. This became the basis for her many years of commitment to the Montessori children's house in Vechta. When she ended this work after 24 years of management, the parish priest at the time gave her a very good report. He described Sr. M. Birgit "as a recognized and valued superior, who not only succeeded in providing new impetus time and again, but also in ensuring harmonious cooperation as a figure of integration." Sr. M. Birgit played a decisive role in shaping the construction of the new Montessori children's house, and the concept became a model for other facilities.

Sr. M. Birgit ventured into a new world in 1992. She was one of the founding members of a community in Ludwigslust in the former GDR. For 15 years, she contributed her pedagogical experience as a Caritas consultant in the further training of kindergarten teachers. She got to know countless kindergartens in Eastern Germany and supported their development with her heart and hands.

After leaving Ludwigslust in 2007, Sr. M. Birgit ministered as a local coordinator in Marienhain and from 2008 as a provincial councilor. When a refugee home was set up in the neighborhood in 2015, she went to the children and mothers and offered play and educational activities. She also enjoyed participating in a knitting circle with other women to support charitable causes for social services in Vechta, for the homeless in Dinklage and for the needy in Haiti.

She was very close to her family, as well as to local single and elderly people who were happy to receive her visits.

On the 5th Sunday of Lent, she gave her life back into God's hands after a short, serious illness. We trust that the good God also showed her the last path she had to take.