

Death Notice

SISTER MARIA MECHTILDE

ND 4731

Anneliese KOTTERIK

MARIA REGINA PROVINCE, COESFELD / GERMANY

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| Date and Place of Birth: | 12 November 1932 | Duisburg |
| Date and Place of Profession: | 03 September 1956 | Mülhausen |
| Date and Place of Death: | 12 February 2026 | Mülhausen, Haus Salus |
| Date and Place of Funeral: | 19 February 2026 | Mülhausen, Convent Cemetery |



Anneliese Kotterik grew up with two younger siblings in the so-called “Ruhrpott,” the then-booming region on the Ruhr and Rhine rivers, which was dominated by mining and the metal industry. Anneliese's father, Heinrich Kotterik, was Dutch and had found work as a miner in the coal industry in Duisburg. From 1934, when she was two years old, until she started school, Anneliese was in the care of the sisters at the parish kindergarten. In 1939, the year World War II broke out, Anneliese began her schooling, which was repeatedly interrupted by the effects of nightly air raids and eventually by the closure of schools. After the end of the war, Anneliese was able to continue her schooling and vocational training amid the ruins of her homeland: In 1949, she obtained her high school diploma, began her vocational training as a “commercial office clerk” at the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, and worked in the administration of a trading company in the inland waterway transport department.

At the same time, as we read in her curriculum vitae written in 1953: “In addition to my profession, I enjoyed participating in youth work in our parish. I led a youth group myself and took part in the deanery folk dance and singing circle. I particularly enjoyed working in the parish library.” This quote reflects what shaped Sr. M. Mechtilde's personality throughout her life: her joy and confidence in life, her ability to help shape and influence a community, her openness to all things beautiful, to new paths and developments, and above all, her deep connection to God, which was deeply rooted in her life.

In 1953, Anneliese became a member of our religious community, which very quickly recognized, encouraged, and demanded the young nun's talents, enthusiasm, leadership skills, vision, sense of responsibility, and organizational skills. Sr. M. Mechtilde obtained the qualification to study for a teaching degree at a secondary school, studied at the University of Bonn, passed the state exam in German and History in 1965, and began her professional career as a teacher at the Liebfrauenschule in Cologne in 1968. However, after only a few weeks of enthusiastic teaching that inspired her students, she was appointed principal at the Notre Dame grammar school in Vechta.

From 1974 onwards, Sr. M. Mechtilde took on important leadership roles within our congregation for many years: she led the Mülhausen Province for 12 years. In 1986, she was elected to the General Council in Rome as Assistant General for Germany for 12 years, later also for the Netherlands and Korea. For six years, she was the representative of the Superior General as “First Assistant.”

After her term of office ended, Sr. M. Mechtilde remained in Rome for another four years, initially working on translations at the Generalate and later taking on the organizational management of our guest house, Villa Maria Regina.

After returning to Mülhausen in 2003, Sr. M. Mechtilde remained active: she familiarized herself with the administration of the provincial archives, which led her, among other things, to write the comprehensive “History of the Mülhausen Province from 1888 to 2007.” She accompanied groups of sisters from foreign provinces who wanted to learn about the origins of our congregation in Germany and was finally appointed to the Provincial Council in 2005 until the Province of Mülhausen was dissolved.

In 2019, Sr. M. Mechtilde decided to move to the Haus Salus retirement home for sisters. Here, too, she quickly settled in and took an active part in the life of the community. Staying in touch with her family remained important to her, and she enjoyed their visits. She also maintained lively contact with many companions from her earlier areas of activity.

In her final years, as her strength gradually declined and her circle of life narrowed, she would respond when asked how she was feeling: “I am fine. I am content.” With this devotion, Sr. M. Mechtilde surrendered her life into God's hands on the morning of February 12.