

Death Notice

SISTER MARIA VALERIA

ND 5064

Johanna MELGES

Maria Regina Province, Coesfeld, Germany

Date and Place of Birth: 04 April 1936 Briedel, Mosel
Date and Place of Profession: 11 April 1961 Mülhausen
Date and Place of Death: 22 March 2025 Mülhausen, Haus Salus
Date and Place of Funeral: 28 March 2025 Mülhausen, Convent Cemetery



“In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” (2 Cor 6: 2)

Johanna Melges was the fourth of 6 children born in Briedel on the Mosel. Her parents Josef and Luzia Melges ran a winery. After completing 8 years of elementary primary and secondary school, she helped in the family business, in the household, in the vineyard and on the farm.

Even then, she loved music and took piano lessons. In 1953, she spent a year with relatives in Düsseldorf. Here she got to know the Sisters of Notre Dame and when she experienced the celebration of an investment and profession, she learned about the aspirant school there. After careful consideration, she decided to enter there to prepare for religious life and to train as a kindergarten teacher. Even during her training, she realized that this task did not suit her

Johanna began her novitiate in 1959 and was given the name Maria Valeria when she was invested. She had chosen this name in memory of her sister who had died as a child.

After her profession, she took part in a course as a choir director and completed her training in organ music at the Church Music Seminar in Essen. She completed the courses with good results. Although Sister did not enjoy educational work, she received a positive assessment after 9 years working in the kindergarten in Duisburg-Meiderich. After leaving this job, she was able to pursue her love of music. In Rheinbach, she directed the school choir, gave music lessons and worked as an organist.

After the closure of the community in Rheinbach, she spent two years in Ratingen, where she took over the service at the reception and domestic duties and was in demand as a temporary organist in the parish. In 2009, Sr. Maria Valeria came to Mülhausen, took over the service at the reception in the convent and shared the organist duties with Sr. Maria Bernardis.

In 2018, Sister Maria Valeria was diagnosed with a serious cancer; the tumor could not be completely removed during the operation. She was only predicted to live for a short time. She moved to Haus Salus. The following years were characterized by ups and downs in her health. Sister strictly adhered to the dietary advice recommended by the doctors and was anxious to do everything she could to delay or stop the progression of the disease.

She had to stop some therapies because the side effects were too stressful. She lived a self-determined life until the end and was very active. She was aware of the seriousness of her illness and was preoccupied with dying, but was also full of plans for the future. For example, she had already made something for her co-sisters weeks ago, which she wanted to give them on her birthday on April 4.

She enjoyed nature and was proud of her strawberry plants in the raised bed and the bean plants, as well as the meadow flowers she sowed every year. She enjoyed going on bike rides on her e-bike whenever her health allowed. At Haus Salus, it was also important to her to embellish the prayer service with her musical accompaniment and to practise new songs from the hymnbook with her sisters.

She always managed to pick herself up after a low point due to illness, so her sudden death came as a surprise to us all. In the early afternoon of March 22, Sr. M. Valeria passed away after a long illness.

Sr. Maria Valeria was a great devotee of Mary; we will always remember her with the rosary in her hands. So, it can be seen as a sign that she was taken home by God on a Saturday, which is traditionally dedicated to Mary.