

Sister Anna Brigitta de Koning (Anna Christina)

Deceased on 14th Febr. 2024 in Boxtel, The Netherlands

At the age of 89

Born on 20th Febr. 1935 in Voorburg, The Netherlands

First Profession on 15TH August 1959 in Esch, The Netherlands

Annie came from a large family with ten children, she was the first girl. Due to the war and setbacks in the gardening business, she had to leave school early and help out at home. She took a sewing course and another 4 months of secondary school. A pastor wanted her to join his household, but Annie preferred to join the White Sisters and to go to Africa.

On 7th January in 1957 she entered the Postulate in **Maarn** and went on to the Novitiate in **Esch**. She went to the international formation year in **Algiers** and on the 15th August 1959, she made there her First Vows. She was appointed at the hospital in **El Affroen** and got paratyphoid fever. She returned weakened to the Netherlands.

After some time, she was asked to work in the **Bible Society** in the Eikenhorst-estate, opposite in the Motherhouse **Sancta Monica in Esch**. She also took a cooking course and cooked in the novitiate in Esch for several years.

But this was not her calling, she wanted to go to Africa. Fortunately in 1966, after her Eternal Profession, she was appointed to Mwanza and started teaching home economics and cooking in high school. She has done this for over 20 years to her complete satisfaction. She encouraged the girls to continue learning.

In 1990 she was in Esch for a holiday and went to Frascati for the Special Session. Back in Mwanza, she was asked by the Tanzanian government to set up courses for women through Caritas: sewing lessons, learning about healthy food, hygiene and self-development. She also remained part-time at the local domestic science school.

When this stopped, Anna Brigitta continued to work for girls and women in all kinds of places. Because she had a large network in Mwanza of former students and other (foreign) donors to help her, she was able to organize all kinds of things for people in need.

She went to the leper colony to bring food, she provided school fees and scholarships, she donated sewing machines to women to become self-sufficient etc.

She also supported two Montessori kindergartens. Albino children had a special place in her heart, because they were often excluded. During the AIDS epidemic and afterwards, she was involved in the Shalom Care House, together with fellow Sister Corrie Vork. The many AIDS orphans affected her deeply.

Because her health deteriorated and she was already over 80, she had to permanently return to the Netherlands in 2020. She arrived just before the corona period, and only after a few months she was able to move into her flat at the **Molenhof**, where she met her sisters who also lived there. In the meantime, she stayed with her brother Frans.

From Boxtel she still had daily contact with the people in Mwanza. Integrating into the Netherlands was difficult, although she was happy to see her family more often. She struggled with her health and experienced increasing pain and limitations. She eventually moved to the **Wereldhuis** in September last year, where she received better care.

Anna Brigitta was a strong woman with great perseverance. She stood up for the women and most vulnerable in Africa until the end. It was extremely difficult for her to let go of her work there and give up her mission. However, she gave what she could and many people in Mwanza will remember her forever. Unfortunately, she was no longer able to celebrate her 89th birthday, the day before her funeral, and her 65th professional anniversary on 15th of August 2024. She died on Ashwednesday after she got fluid in the lungs.