

## SISTER ANTOINETTE WINKELMAN (Nettie)

Deceased on the 3rd of July 2024 in Boxtel, The Netherlands at the age of 91.

Born on 30rst of September 1933 in Zwolle, The Netherlands.

First Profession on 9th of February 1959 in Esch, The Netherlands.

To our great shock and sadness, our fellow Sister Antoinette died last Wednesdaymorning, she did not feel well and unexpectedly passed away. Happily, the contactpersons were present and were able to assist her.

Sister Antoinette was born as the afterthought in a family of four in Zwolle. In her LIFE BOOK, she saw that at first the word “afterthought” seemed to belong to her name, because she heard it so often, so she called herself: Nettie “the afterthought”.

Her father was a baker, like his father, and her mother was a housewife and worked in the bakerystore. It was a hardworking catholic family.

Nettie experienced the Second World War and the Hunger Winter very consciously. She went with her mother on a food tour to the farmers and hungry children from the West also temporarily came to live with them to recuperate.

After high school, she went to the Domestic Science school and worked in the bakery. She was also very active as a girlsscouts leader. Afterwards, together with her faithful friend Annie, a butcher's daughter, she completed her nursing training in the Catholic hospital “De Weezenlande” in Zwolle.

The idea of becoming a Religious, entering the convent , was already on Nettie's mind at the time, but she struggled quite a bit with it and did not want to give in to it right away. During her training as a nurse, after seeing a film by the White Sisters, she got the idea to go to Africa, but not as a religious but as a layperson.

However, after several impressive retreats and a dating that ended, she went to see two different congregations: the “Medical Missionary Sisters” in Limburg and the White Sisters in Boxtel. She immediately felt at home with the latter. After joining in 1957, she wanted to do maternity training, again with her friend Annie, but a

White Sister advised her to do midwifery training. That would be of more use to her in Africa. So it happened...

In The 10<sup>th</sup> of February 1957 she entered the Postulate in Maarn and made her first Profession on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1959 in Esch.

In February 1959, Sister Antoinette left for Algiers for her international year, of course with her "banjo mandolin". She often told how she played music in the hold on the boat and how the sailors came to watch.

In 1962 she was sent mainly to Tanzania, first to learn Kiswahili and Kisekuma, then to started to work in the maternity ward of the hospital in Bukumbi. Here they had primitive resources for the many premature babies. Her sister's name was actually Sr. Odetta and when a small child was born who was also given her name, she wrote to her father, the baker, that a little cadet had been born.

Later she was asked to also teach student nurses, after completing a halfyear training course in Ireland. "The theoretical work suited me better than the practical", she said. She became head of the nursing and midwifery school in Bukumbi, a task that suited her. She got along well with the students, boys and girls.

In 1975, Antoinette went on leave to the Netherlands, where she continued to work for 5 years as an assistant to the Provincial Team. Her father had just died and so she could visit her mother in Zwolle more often. She also cared for the old and sick sisters in the community of Sancta Monica in Esch.

In 1983, she returned to her beloved Tanzania to work in a remote clinic in Usongo, where there was famine and a measles epidemic. Unfortunately, this work was much too heavy for Antoinette, she became overstressed and needed a long rest in the Provincial Office in Kipalapala.

After recovering, she went to Sumbawanga to set up a household school and made many home visits, as there were two new parishes of the White Fathers. It was a wonderful period in her life and she made many contacts. In 1991, she became an administrative assistant in Dar es Salaam and arranged all visas, passports and permits etc. for the White Fathers and Sisters. She was also their driver. In 1993 she returned to the Netherlands, initially temporarily due to an injury, but in the end it turned out to be permanent.

She was asked to become the secretary of the Dutch Congregation. She did this very meticulously until 2017. She also took on the task of archivist. She was also a contact person for the Sisters in the communities in Eindhoven and Nuland. She herself lived in the communities of Esch, in Molenwiek and in the Prince Bernard street in Boxtel.

In 2008 she moved in an independent apartment in the community of “Molenhof” and two years ago to the Wereldhuis, where she settled in well and often participated in the activities. Lately she has had more and more limitations, both cognitive and physical, which has caused her to end up in a wheelchair. Fortunately, she and her family were able to celebrate her 65th anniversary of her jubilee this year.

Antoinette was a down-to-earth, helpful and kind sister, who often had a dry sense of humor. She was focused on her task and did not like to be interrupted. She was efficient and goal-oriented.

Her contribution to the organization of the big exhibition The White Caravan in the Religious Heritage Centre in St. Agatha, during the Jubilee of the 150 years of the White Fathers and White Sisters in 2017-18, was evident. She has also done a lot to transfer the archives to this Heritage Centre for Religious Life in NL. She knew a lot from her administrative and archival work over all those years.

We will miss her jokes, stories and comments and are glad that you no longer had to experience a move to the psycho-geriatric department. Dear Antoinette, rest in peace in the Eternal Peace of the Lord. Amen.