

Death Notice

SISTER MARIA BERNADITA

ND 5134

Elisabeth REINHARDT



Maria Regina Province, Coesfeld, Germany

Date and Place of Birth:	October 25, 1934	Datteln
Date and Place of Profession:	March 20, 1959	Coesfeld
Date and Place of Death:	April 29, 2023	Coesfeld, Kloster Annenthal
Date and Place of Burial:	May 4, 2023	Coesfeld, Convent Cemetery

“You will draw water joyfully from the wellsprings of salvation”. Jes 12, 3

This verse from the book of the prophet Isaiah accompanied Sister Maria Bernadita for many years. It gave her strength and joy to pass on what God gave her in abundance. She was convinced that God's wellsprings never run dry, because she herself was able to "refuel" again and again and so let her own wellsprings bubble up for others.

Sister Maria Bernadita, Elisabeth Reinhardt, was the daughter of the miner August Reinhardt and Ida, née Essmann. She grew up with two older sisters and four younger brothers. From Easter 1941 Elisabeth attended the Catholic elementary school in Datteln. After graduating from school, she completed a commercial apprenticeship. In 1953, she received her merchant's assistant's certificate. After gaining some more experience, she took over the management of a supermarket. This task gave her great pleasure. In her free time, she was active and took some responsibilities in the parish youth. During this time, the decision matured in her to join a religious community.

In May 1956, Elisabeth began her religious training in the Liebfrauenburg in Coesfeld and received the religious name Sister Maria Bernadita at her investment in 1957.

She found her first areas of service in the boarding schools attached to the schools in Vechta, Büren, Ahlen and Coesfeld. While she was in charge of the boarding school in Coesfeld, she prepared for the examination for the specially gifted, which she passed in 1967. This entitled her to take up studies, which she began immediately at the University of Education in Münster and completed in 1970 with the first state examination. Then she put her trainee teacher training on hold, because she was entrusted with the training of candidates and novices in Mönchengladbach, where the novitiates of the four German provinces were merged. Since she was not prepared for this task, it was a special challenge for her, but she faced it with faith. She passed the 2nd state examination in 1974. After the Archbishop of Paderborn had granted her the Missio canonica, she began her work as a teacher of religion and biology in the Liebfrauegymnasium in Büren. Sister M. Bernadita was a teacher with heart and soul. This was experienced in a special way by the younger students, who especially appreciated her biology lessons. She was the local coordinator of the community in Nottuln for three years, after which she returned to teaching.

After leaving active school service, Sister Maria Bernadita took over the duties of sacristan in the sisters' house and also in the hospital in Büren. In addition, she volunteered in various areas of the parish. She was very happy to prepare converts for baptism and other sacraments.

When the convent of sisters in Büren was closed in 2016, Sister Maria Bernadita came to Coesfeld to the Annenthal convent. Here she took on small tasks in the community and experienced a few carefree years. Health problems which affected her led her to transfer to the senior care center in the house. Her physical strength was visibly declining. After a stroke, she was ready to give her life back into God's hands. With Him, we now know Sister Maria Bernadita is safe.

"You will draw water joyfully from the wellsprings of salvation". From this sentence she drew strength for her own life. Through her intercession, these springs will surely continue to bubble up for us as well.