



## Br. Anton (Bernhard) Streitel OSB

Missionary Benedictine

4 January 1931 – 22 October 2019

Brother Anton Streitel died peacefully on 22 October 2019 in the infirmary of Sankt Ottilien Archabbey surrounded by his confreres. Two weeks earlier, the eighty-eight-year-old brother had to give up his regular daily routine because of increasing weakness and withdraw completely to the infirmary of the monastery.

The deceased came into the world on 4 January 1931 in Daxberg, Lower Allgäu, as the son of the farmer Xaver and Viktoria Streitel, née Schöpf. His parents already had a boy born two years before. After attending primary school (1937–45) and vocational school (1945–48) in Daxberg, he worked on his parent's farm that his older brother later took over. He completed the agricultural school in Memmingen in the winter months of 1951/52 and 1952/53 and each time performed exceptionally well. The final certificate characterizes him as "deliberate, reliable and careful."

In his home parish he was known as a zealous church goer, but decided, based on the situation at the time, only to enter the monastery at a later age. In May 1961, when he was thirty years old, he began the postulancy at St. Ottilien Archabbey only 60 km away. In his application for admission, he justified his decision by saying that in the monastery he would like to lead a "life of atonement pleasing to God." Therefore, he was surprised to read in the conditions for acceptance into the monastery that you entered in order to become "happy" because that was not his intention. In the novitiate he was given the name of the popular Saint Anthony of Padua whose simple piety also characterized Brother Anton. He made his temporary profession on 13 May 1963 and his perpetual profession on 29 June 1966.

In St. Ottilien Br. Anton from the beginning worked in the agricultural field, in which he had been trained, and was initially responsible for raising the pigs. Since a confrere was to be appointed to the newly opened Bingen monastery of Jakobsberg, he began to work there on the "Holy Mountain" in winter right after his temporary profession. After final profession in 1966, he was sent to the Palatine foundation on a permanent basis. Although Br. Anton never lost his native Swabian way of speaking, his new homeland suited him very well. In a newspaper interview on the occasion of his fiftieth year at Jakobsberg, he stated that "from the beginning the area and the friendliness of the Ockenheimer" appealed to him.

In its early years the monastery still had a large agricultural operation for self-support. Here Br. Anton had a wide field of work with cows and pigs, meadows and fields. In 1978 the farm was largely given up in favor of a spirituality center. Although it was hard for Br. Anton to relinquish the animals, he desired to remain at Jakobsberg and so he took over caring for the garden.

A first hip operation, followed by others over the years, limited his mobility and led to stooped posture. When the position of receptionist at the monastery was open in 1988, the choice fell on him. This was probably not easy for him since he was by nature somewhat reserved. He performed this task responsibly with his usual reliability until further operations and increasing deafness forced him to withdraw more and more. Finally, when serving as receptionist was no longer feasible, he concentrated on waste separation and disposal in the house and general cleaning.

Brother Anton was engaged to a great extent in his activities and in his prayer life and performed all his tasks reliably like clockwork. Among his few hobbies was the feeding of the fish, where he had a special place in his heart for the very old koi "Gerda," and in sports, an admiration for the tennis wonder Steffi Graf. Although his external life varied little, he was in his humble way satisfied with everything.

The increasing decline in physical strength made the move to the motherhouse of St. Ottilien in December 2016 necessary. His farewell was celebrated honorably and even acknowledged in the press where Brother Anton stated that you could live a "fulfilling monastic life" at Jakobsberg. As at Jakobsberg, Br. Anton also proved to be an exemplary man of prayer at the archabbey. He could always be found in the same place with a view of the tabernacle for long periods of time before and after the common prayer times. Although walking was more and more difficult for him, he did not give up going by himself around the monastery even with the numerous steps. By nature he was rather sparing with words, though with a sense of humor, yet a severe deafness in recent years restricted an active community life. Nevertheless Brother Anton took part in a little way in community events as in its prayer life. Despite initially different intentions, he was no doubt happy in his own way. He lives on in peace!

*The Funeral Mass with burial is on Saturday, 26 October, at 10:30 a.m., in the abbey church of Sankt Ottilien.*

*Archabbot Wolfgang Öxler and community of Sankt Ottilien Archabbey  
Father Rhabanus Maurus Petri and community of the priory of Jakobsberg*