



Father Remigius (Johann) Rudmann OSB

*Missionary Benedictine of Sankt Ottilien
10 April 1927 – 15 February 2021*

Father Remigius Rudmann died peacefully in his monastery cell late in the evening of 15 February. Several follow-up treatments for his cancer had made him very weak, but he remained clear until the end and, thanks to good palliative care, was pain free. To the many people who bade him farewell in the last few days, he gave to each one the message to take with them, "It was all very beautiful."

Our confrere came into the world on 10 April 1927 in the Baden city of Freiburg im Breisgau as the son of the businessman Stefan Rudmann and his wife Anna, née Siegel. His older brother was later to become a Benedictine Missionary as Father Pirmin (1924–1985). Father Remigius remained in close contact with his younger sister Maria and her family and thus with his native Baden whose dialect he spoke in an unmistakable way. He attended primary school from 1933 and then in 1937 transferred to the gymnasium. In addition, he was involved in youth work in his home parish as a group leader. However, his schooling was interrupted in 1943 by military service which brought him to various posts in France. When he became a prisoner of war in 1945, he registered for the "Barbed Wire Seminary" of Chartres. Under the direction of the well-known Abbé Franz Stock (1905–1948), soldier prisoners there could attend theological lectures and prepare themselves for the priesthood. The young prisoner met Father Albert Rieger (1913–2013) from St. Ottilien in the camp and had many orientation conversations with him. In the process he came to the conclusion that he could find in the Missionary Benedictines "what I had been looking for for a long time": the combination of a contemplative life with a creative and active one. With these words, the 19-year-old enrolled in the newly re-opened Upper Bavarian monastery in August 1946. He took his temporary vows on 8 September 1947 and his solemn vows on 8 October 1950. He studied philosophy in Dillingen from 1947 to 1949 and from 1949 theology in Sant'Anselmo in Rome. He was ordained a priest on 12 August 1951 and completed his studies in Rome in 1954 with a doctorate in Church history as the first doctoral student of the Benedictine specialist Kassius Hallinger (1911–1991) and, in addition, a degree from the Monastic Institute.

After completing his studies, he was appointed in 1955 to teach dogmatic theology and liturgy at Peramiho Seminary in Tanzania. Besides teaching he gave numerous retreats, an activity that was to be associated with him throughout his life. In 1962 he was called back to Germany to take over the leadership of the Ottilien study house in Munich and to assist at the Missiology Institute and in training in homiletics. What he experienced there during the years 1962 to 1979 would be material for a book in itself. In 1980 he was loaned to Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem for two years. He passed on his enthusiasm for the Holy Land to many people whom he accompanied on biblical tours in the following decades. After his return, Father Remigius was assigned to be the guest master in St. Ottilien. Thanks to his approachable style, which included long evening discussions, many lifelong friendships developed. In 1993 Father Remigius went to Israel again to head the priory of Tabgha on the Sea of Galilee. Differences about the future direction of this place led to his return to Germany after three years.

Upon his return, Father Remigius again served looking after guests, but he especially took on numerous help outs, recollection days, retreats and, in particular, hiking pilgrimages in which God's creation in nature but also a cultivated social interaction played an important role. All these events were carefully prepared by him and closely accompanied. With every additional task he was offered, he gladly agreed and was ready to help. As a full-blooded spiritual advisor and gifted preacher he was able to reach and touch many people. With his versatile talents and his tireless, willing dedication, his activities could hardly be overlooked. Thus, in the monastery, thanks to his melodious voice, he served as a cantor in the schola; was a member of the seniorate; functioned as a chronicler, concert organizer, and director of *Liebeswerk*. He published on mission topics and maintained amiable contacts with the outside. He was one of the pillars of the community who appeared reliable, level-headed, straightforward and credible and with great fidelity was present in choir. However, he will be remembered above all as a pastoral and spiritual person who passed on the Word of God with noticeable enthusiasm and could become involved with each person in his own way.

He very consciously awaited the end of his life and has entered into eternity as a reconciled person. We are grateful for his lifelong and life-affirming commitment and hope to see him again.

*The Funeral Mass with burial is on Saturday, 20 February, at 10:30 a.m.
in the abbey church of Sankt Ottilien.*

Archabbot Wolfgang Öxler and the Community of Sankt Ottilien Archabbey