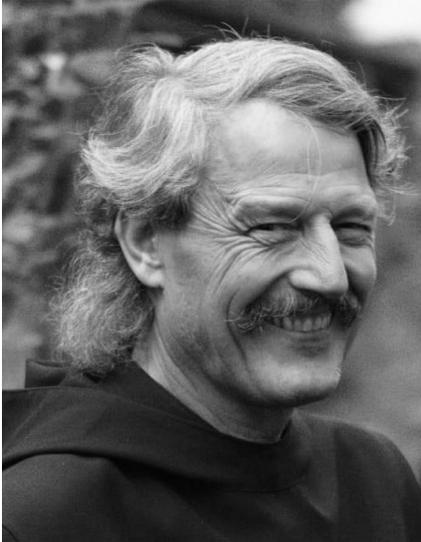


Job 1:21 The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away.

### **Father Florian (Franz Joseph Michael Maria Ignatius) Prinz von Bayern OSB.**



He was born on September 21st 1957 in the village of Leutstetten close to Lake Starnberg in Bavaria. He was the eldest son and the second child out of seven. His childhood and youth were spent on the family farm of Rieden, the former model farm of his great-grandfather King Ludwig III of Bavaria, which used to supply the Haunersche Kinderklinik, a children's hospital in Munich, with fresh milk.

During his childhood on the farm mainly young cattle were raised but there were also horses, goats and sheep. He was a carefree childhood. After the first years of primary school in the one-class village school of Leutstetten he went to school in the nearby town of Starnberg. His upbringing in agricultural surroundings formed him as a person deeply connected to animals and nature. Dealing with agricultural machinery awoke his passion for mechanics and technology.

During his education, he attempted to move to a Gymnasium (high school) in the boarding school of the Missionary Benedictine Congregation of St. Ottilien in Dillingen in order to attain the necessary preconditions for admission to university to study theology and become a priest.

After a brief period at the Munich International School, he finished high school back in Dillingen without losing sight of his final goal. Vocational School in Starnberg provided him with the qualification of educator and Kindergarten teacher. After that he went to college in Weilheim to study social science as his aim of studying theology seemed unreachable. At this time, he received a telephone call that changed his life. A path was opened for him to study theology without the normal qualifications for admission to university.

The Bishop of Regensburg in Bavaria was able to grant suitable candidates a place to study theology at the College of Heiligenkreuz (today: Benedict XVI Papal College) near Vienna in Austria run by the Cistercian Monks. With his mother's car, Franz Josef immediately rushed to the bishop's town. After a two-hour conversation with the bishop, he returned beaming with joy since now he had the possibility to become a priest as desired.

After finishing his studies in 1982, he joined the Benedictine archabbey of St. Ottilien as a novice, choosing the name Florian, and 1983 he took his first vows. As early as 1984 he was sent to Kenya for his first mission posting. On 14<sup>th</sup> September 1986 he took his final vows in St. Ottilien and the on the next day he was ordained as deacon. On 21<sup>st</sup> December the same year he was ordained to the priesthood. He then returned to Kenya where he started to work as the youth chaplain in the slums of Nairobi. After various assignments in different missions in Kenya he became the parish priest of Aror parish in Kerio Valley for a number of years. After handing over the parish to the diocesan priest of the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret, he was assigned various tasks at Tigon. This covered technical purchases, managing the farm and among others. During this time the nuncio to Kenya asked him during one of their meetings about his visions for his future. It was his vision to serve as a real missionary far away from a major city as possible.

That was how he landed at Illeret, in the very north of Kenya near the border with Ethiopia in 2003. The journey to Illeret by then could take about 3 to 4 days by car from Nairobi. Saint Peter the Fisherman Illeret parish was officially opened on 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2005 on the occasion of the solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul and Father Florian was appointed as the first parish priest where he served for about 16 years. He was also the Prior Administrator of Tigon from 2005-2009. He used to be granted a 3-month home leave in Bavaria after every 3 or 4 years.

His sickness started showing at the end of September 2020 and he had the surgery in October 2022 at Aga Khan Hospital, Nairobi. He was later moved to Germany where he underwent another surgery in 2021. After showing some signs of recovery, he returned to Tigon in December 2021. He was a bit strong and started working a little. In February 2022 his health started weakening and was moved from Tigon abbey to Ruaraka Community in Nairobi so that he could access medical services from St. Scholastica Uzima Hospital. He was receiving his treatment until his demise on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022 at 19:00 hours in the evening. Until his demise, he was the Sub-Prior of Tigon Abbey since October 2020.

Abbot John Baptist OSB  
& The Community of Tigon Abbey.