

On Friday, 25 February 2022,
at the most peaceful morning hour of 3:20, our beloved confrere

Brother Basilius (Willibald) Hepp OSB

was taken from this life into another. Four years that became more and more quiet and inward looking prepared him for this homecoming. Laid out in the coffin, he lies there with an almost young, bright face.

Br. Basilius came into the world on 17 November 1929. His parents, Alois Hepp and Anna, née Dorn, gave him the baptismal name of the missionary Willibald. Two sisters and two brothers grew up with him. It was during the war years that he had to pass through his early education and vocational training (1936–1944 primary school, 1944–1947 apprenticeship and vocational school).

Br. Basilius began his apprenticeship with the aeronautical industry in Berlin-Mariendorf. It was there he experienced the collapse of the Third Reich. On 15 August 1945, his training was taken over by the Aschaffenburg Pulp Mill Company. Willibald entered the abbey on 5 September 1947 with a journeyman's certificate as an electrician. His postulancy began the same year on 5 October. Abbot Burkard gave him the habit on 7 October 1948 and the monastic name of "our Father Basil" (RB 73.5). This name, which stands for dependability, has proved to be fitting for the long life of our Br. Basilius. He professed his temporary vows on 14 October 1949 and his perpetual vows on 26 October 1952.

For fifty years, he served in our electrical workshop, first as a journeyman (1947–1958) and then forty years as the workshop foreman (1958–1997). Additional work and training in the administration was included from 1955 to 1958. This had to be done on a part-time basis.

An incomplete list can only hint at what was hidden behind all this time: on call day and night for the electricity and water turbine, all his skill related to the planning and execution of the new buildings of the gymnasium and boarding school, guesthouse, print shop, kitchen construction and church renovation.

In all this, Br. Basilius was a competent and ardent expert. From 1959 to 1980 he was the second in command of our monastery fire brigade. The fact that from 1976 he was also the security officer for all abbey operations justifies his warning and admonishing finger. In this area he educated us, sometimes seriously, sometimes ironically. His conscientiousness and reliability always came through in all his work. When he technically accompanied the countless performances on the stage of the school theater, his big heart for the youth and the concerns of the school showed itself. He was also a master teacher for his numerous apprentices.

Having reached retirement age, Br. Basilius handed over all his responsibilities in the electrical area, electricity production and turbine, as well as safety oversight and planning to a younger worker who succeeded him as foreman. However, Br. Basilius now pursued another matter of the heart and moved on to the library. His rich knowledge of the history of religious life had always attracted him. Until 2018 he oversaw the daily operation.

There then followed the move into assisted living. Br. Basilius felt very well accepted by the nurses and the confreres who took special care of him, and he was accepted among them. A rich and varied life as a monastic brother has now come to an end, a life that has very much left its mark on our house.

We will carry Brother Basilius to his grave on Monday, 28 February 2022, at 3:00 p.m. Unfortunately, the burial can only take place in the presence of a small group because at the moment a large number of the community is ill with the Corona virus. As soon as the circumstances allow, in a liturgy celebrated with all the friends and acquaintances of Br. Basilius, we will entrust his rich life to God, giving thanks in the Eucharist.

Münsterschwarzach, 28 February 2022



Abbot Michael and the Community of Münsterschwarzach