

Sister Johanna Dick, SSND

Taken from "Enlarge The Space Of Your tent" by" S. Victoria Wiethaler, SSND

Magdalen, as she was called in Baptism, developed into a healthy child in the agricultural area of hilly Bavaria. During grade school years, her father gave his four daughters a sleigh ride to school during winter months. He was overjoyed to be with them for he had been deprived of their companionship during the four years of World War I.

Early in life, the thought of entering the convent took possession of little Magdalen. She had never seen sisters, except in missionary magazines and pamphlets. At fourteen, she ventured to approach her mother with the petition to enter some order but her mother thought that she was too young. Finally, in 1930, she was allowed to enter our congregation. After a four-year course in the needlecraft department in Muenchen Au she was sent on mission. But the convent peace was disrupted by evil forces. The mission was one of the first to be secularized by Hitler. Candidate Magdalen expressed her willingness to go to America. Her novitiate in Westphalia, her pronouncement of vows, her leaving her family and friends, were beautiful yet difficult experiences. Sister relates "When I arrived in St. Louis, I brightened up when I saw the Sacred Heart statue and the beautiful grounds, and the river, the Mississippi."

Sister Johanna was assigned to work in the then known ecclesiastical Department where vestments and articles for liturgical use were produced.[Today it is known as The Liturgical Fabric Arts Department.]



She specialized in fine needlework and embroidery that is seldom seen today, and for more than fifty years sister used her abilities acquired in Germany to serve all denominations. Ministers, priests, bishops, seminarians, and permanent deacons were among her customers. Missionaries, too, have carried the department's needlework around the world. These are Sister Johanna's sentiments, "I am so happy all these years. St. Louis I found very friendly and warm." ■

Examples of Sister Johanna's Needlework as a Certified Needlework Teacher



