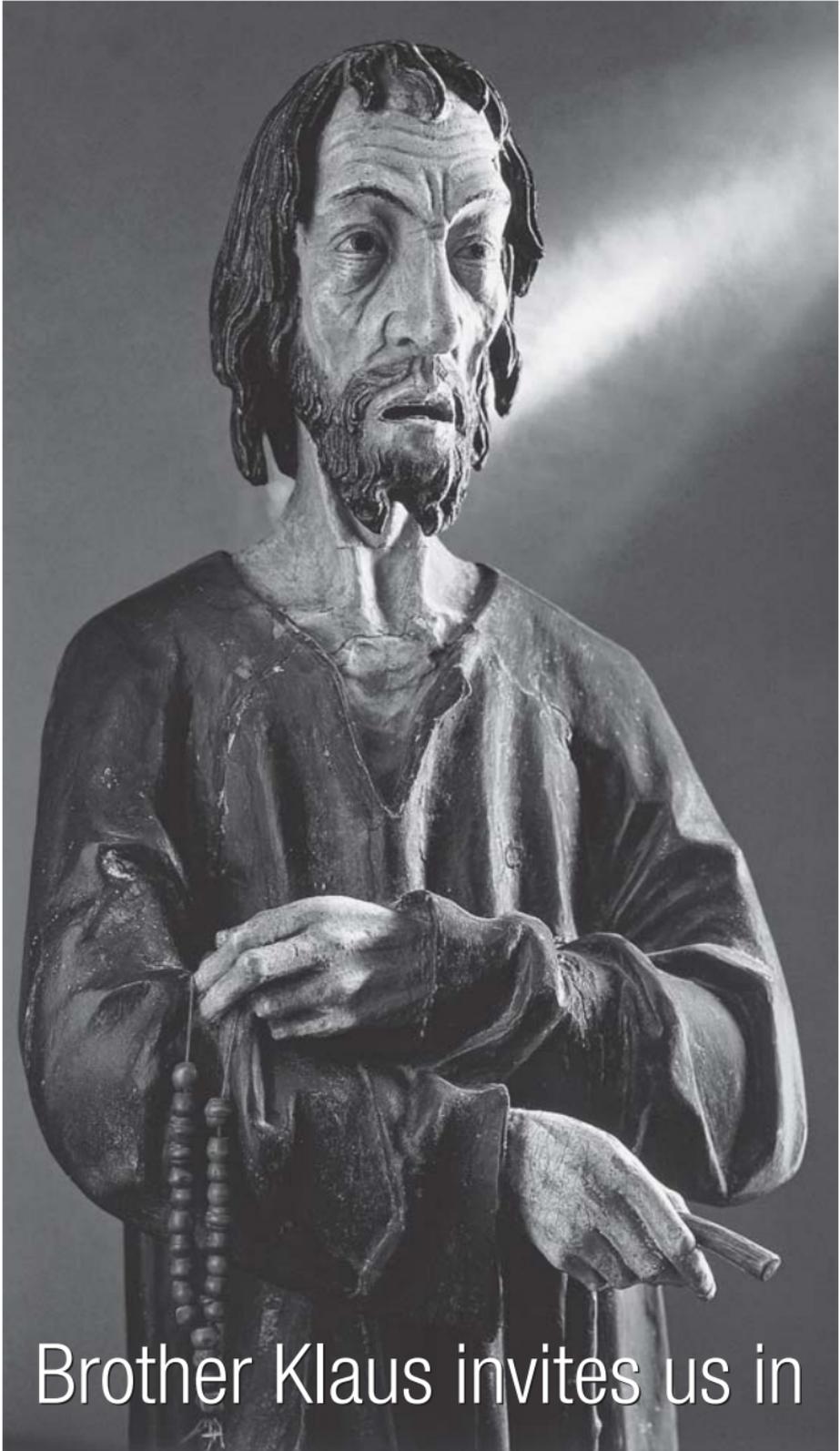




**BRUDER KLAUS**



Brother Klaus invites us in



## Niklaus von Flüe

Niklaus von Flüe (1417–1487) was looked upon as a «living saint» by his contemporaries. People from far and wide came to the Ranft valley to seek advice from «Brother Klaus», the peacemaker. This deep respect and admiration lasted for centuries and gained fresh impetus after his canonisation in 1947. Today even many unbelievers discover this outstanding mystic of the Middle Ages. Many people are shocked at his way of life, how he left his family, and cannot understand his «miracle fasting». Brother Klaus is no «easy-going» saint, rather a «difficult» one. His life is not easy to understand. We cannot view his life romantically.

Niklaus von Flüe had to fight hard in life but proved his worth. He shouldered responsibility in business and in public affairs, in family and social matters, always supported by his wife, Dorothea, and withstood the pressure

from the outside world. The will of God was not always recognisable. At a mature age Niklaus gave up everything he loved and left home. But God led him back as if to say: you cannot begin a new life just anywhere, you have to go back there where you lived as farmer, father and politician.

Whoever carefully opens his doors to Brother Klaus will understand him and become a good friend of his. We meet with him when we visit the place where he lived, or go down to the Ranft or linger by his grave. He still gives us peace and wisdom. He is our own personal companion and confidant.



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## The Chapel in Flüeli

Flüeli is a small hamlet nestled in the mountains above Sachseln. The Ranft gorge is the eastern border and to the north is an outstanding rock and woody hilltop. This rock (Fluo) gives the place the name «Flüeli» and the family the name «von Flüe». And on this rock stands the Chapel dedicated to Karl Borromäus in 1618. The chapel contains many splendid examples of the workmanship of those times.

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## His birthplace

is on the homeland of the von Flüe family. It was handed down in direct male line until 1650 but now belongs to the Foundation set up by Brother Klaus himself. The house was completely restored in 1925, true to the living style of the period of Brother Klaus. It is said he was born in the low-ceilinged room.



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## Their dwelling-house

Brother Klaus built this house himself when he married and lived here with his wife Dorothea and their ten children until 1467. Then he set off on his hermit's path, with the consent of his family. The house was restored to its original state in 1946, before Brother Klaus' canonisation.



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## The Upper Ranft Chapel

After leaving home four lights pointed out to Brother Klaus the way to the Ranft, near to his dwelling-house. In the summer of 1468 friends and neighbours built him a chapel and living-cell. The chapel was consecrated in 1469, but had to be rebuilt later. The present chapel was consecrated in 1701 and contains a cycle of pictures from the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the life of Brother Klaus.

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## The Hermit's Cell

This cell, attached to the chapel, matches largely the original in all ways. Brother Klaus, as he called himself as hermit, lived here for 20 years, without food. The cell had two windows – one towards the altar of the chapel and the other to outside and the people. Brother Klaus was entirely open for God and therefore a much sought after advisor for the people. He died here in this cell on March 21<sup>st</sup> 1487.



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## The Lower Ranft Chapel

This Chapel was built in 1501, to cater for the ever-growing stream of pilgrims after the death of Brother Klaus. In 1504 this Chapel as well as the Upper Ranft Chapel were consecrated in honour of the Holy Virgin, of the penitent Maria Magdalena, of the Holy Cross and of the 10'000 Knights. This Chapel is one of the finest examples of late-Gothic architecture, and inside are frescos from the 16<sup>th</sup> century.



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## The Parish Church Sachseln

This church was built 1672–84 and Brother Klaus' grave has been here since 1679. The relics are encased in a silver-covered figure and were integrated in the Celebration Altar when the church was renovated 1974–76. The hermit habit of Brother Klaus is also in this church (in a glass case in the right side aisle). Between the left side-altars there is a true copy of the Picture of Meditation.

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## Chapel with Brother Klaus' tomb

This Chapel, by the detached tower, was built around 1600 over the original grave of Brother Klaus. In front and to the left is the old stone of the first grave, which was firstly in the side-aisle of the old church. Above this is the valuable stone-sculpture erected over the grave in 1518.

The Gothic cross in the chancel from the 14<sup>th</sup> century is also from the old church.



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## The Statue of Dorothea

When Pope Johannes Paul II visited Brother Klaus' grave in 1984 he called Dorothea «a woman worthy of saintliness».

Dorothea was buried in Sachseln but the exact place is not known. In the shade of the church tower there is a statue to her memory created by the sculptor Rolf Brem and endowed by the Catholic Farmers' Wives of Switzerland.

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## **The Brother Klaus Museum**

In 1976 this museum was set up in one of the finest traditional houses of Obwalden. It is dedicated to Switzerland's Saint Niklaus von Flüe, the family-man and hermit, the farmer and visionary, the politician and mystic.

The purpose of the museum is not only to keep alive the memory of this outstanding historical figure but also the challenge emanating from it.

[www.museumbruderklaus.ch](http://www.museumbruderklaus.ch)



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## **Pilgrim Information Centre**

Here you can obtain all general information, the annual programme of the various Masses, all necessary information for organising a pilgrimage and reserve the desired places of pilgrimage:

Wallfahrtssekretariat, Pilatusstrasse 12, Postfach 125, CH-6072 Sachseln,  
Tel. ++41 (0)41 660 44 18, Fax ++41 (0)41 660 44 45,  
[wallfahrt@bruderklaus.com](mailto:wallfahrt@bruderklaus.com)

## **Pastoral Care for Pilgrims**

There is always a priest ready to take Masses and give help to groups or private persons:

Bruder-Klausen-Kaplan, Pilatusstrasse 12, CH-6072 Sachseln,  
Tel. ++41 (0)41 660 12 65, [seelsorge@bruderklaus.com](mailto:seelsorge@bruderklaus.com)

## **[www.bruderklaus.com](http://www.bruderklaus.com)**

Here you will find all kinds of information about the lives of Brother Klaus and Dorothea, about different literature and the media, the programme of various pilgrimages, and help on how to organise pilgrimages as well as other helpful ideas.

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## **Brother Klaus Foundation**

The Brother Klaus Foundation aims to encourage the veneration to Brother Klaus and Dorothea and supports various organisations connected with pilgrims in the area. So the Foundation is reliant on generous support from benefactors.

The annual membership subscription is Sfr. 20.–. Every Thursday a pilgrim Mass is celebrated at the Sepulchre with special mention for the members and benefactors.