



*Father Andreas Hornig-
Oberwaltersdorf, near
Vienna*



5106 Gifford Avenue

We are indebted to Father Andreas Hornig, a priest from St. James Church in Oberwaltersdorf, near Vienna, Austria, pictured here, for his help in interpreting the documents on Sister Mildred's family background, some written in the Czech language. Father is a devotee of Our Lady of America and feels very connected to Sister Mildred's family and to America. The steeple on his church was erected in 1776, the year of our American independence. Father wishes to make his little church a place of prayer, especially for Americans living in Vienna.

Sister's father, John Neuzil, a convert to the Catholic faith, came from a family of modest income, while her mother's family was of a more prosperous social background. After moving to Vienna, John was employed as a gardener for Johann Strauss, "King of the Waltz." The couple was very religious, as is evidenced by the beautiful chapel Anna maintained in their home. Sometime between 1908 and 1911, they came to New York and their fourth child, William, was born in Brooklyn, New York on November 20, 1911, followed by Geraldine on October 17, 1913, and Mildred on August 2, 1916. Mildred was baptized at Most Holy Trinity Church in Brooklyn, New York. Between 1916 and 1919, the family moved to Cleveland, Ohio, and their seventh child, Grace, was born on June 13, 1919 in Cleveland. Here John took up construction work to make a living for his family. The Citizens Bureau document shows them living at 5102 Gifford Avenue in the old Brooklyn section of Cleveland. John's Naturalization document shows that he became a citizen of the United States on June 5, 1925 and that he was living at 5106 Gifford Avenue in Cleveland. Sister's father died on December 17, 1951, before her visions of Our Lady of America had officially begun, but after she had entered religious life with the Sisters of the Precious Blood on September 12, 1930, twenty-one years earlier. Her parents would have called her Sister Mary Ephrem. Her mother died on November 12, 1962, six years after her visions of Our Lady of America. Before her mother died, Sister had entered the Our Lady of Nativity Cloister in New Riegel, Ohio, in May of 1958. By that time or shortly after, Sister returned to her baptismal name of Sister Mildred **Marie**. The 1993 copyrighted version of her Diary shows her name as Sister Mildred **Mary** Neuzil, the name she used the rest of her life. She wrote to Father Paul F. Leibold, her spiritual director, on July 30, 1955, regarding her mother and how happy she was that Cleveland was not so far away from New Riegel, and that her mother could visit her from time to time at the cloister.

I told my mother, my very dear mother, about the cloister. It was a bit hard because she gets so much joy out of seeing and speaking to me. But because she herself loved God so much, I knew she would accept this sacrifice in that spirit of strong faith that has always been the mainspring of her whole life. It will be hard for me, too, as I so dearly love my mother. My father has already gone to God. So I know where he is; he will smile down upon my little cell and will enjoy the added happiness of a second sacrifice. Mother will miss my visits too, but since New Riegel is not far from Cleveland, she will be able to come down now and then. You know, Father, that I would be willing to make the complete sacrifice of never seeing or speaking to my mother again if our Lord really wanted it. But so far, He has not asked it so I shall take advantage of His goodness and be a consolation to her. I owe her a great debt of gratitude for I believe it was her love for and continual prayers to the Mother of God that has obtained for me so many graces. If I love Our Lady so much, it is because she, my mother, first taught me. God gave me wonderful parents.

On the feast of the Holy Name of Mary, September 12, 1955, Father Paul Leibold responded to Sister's letter with his simple but great wisdom in this way.

I know your mother gets a great deal of joy from the visits of her little girl who is so much a part of the goodness in her own soul; I surely do not recommend advising her not to visit New Riegel; we gladly make sacrifices if the making only concerns us, but we do not seek sacrifices which mean someone else must make the sacrifice, too, perhaps even greater than ourselves; so in this case, the visit gives joy a ray of sunshine to your holy mother, it is not for you to remove that from her life, even though her joy necessarily also reflects in your heart—if I am any judge, I am sure Our Lord and his Blessed Mother do not want that from you. I am sure when we are able to see in the beatific vision the formation of the elements that made up our service to God, we will find the real basic elements in the whole formation was our parents; next to our faith, good parents certainly rank with God's greatest blessings.

Venerable Jozef Cardinal Mindszenty, the Archbishop of Estergom and Primate of Hungary, was a courageous and unrelenting force of opposition to Nazism and to the communist attempt to take over and nationalize Catholic schools in Hungary. He wrote a

book called MOTHERHOOD, published in 1917. World War I ended in 1918, one year after the Fatima message with its warning of a worse world war, and a possible third world war, if the world did not sufficiently repent of its sins and stop offending God Who is already too much offended. Most likely, Sister Mildred's parents would have known about this staunch defender of the Catholic Faith and his imprisonment as more than an item of the news. The Cardinal has given us a magnificent piece on motherhood that should be offered as a challenging reflection in all our pro-life work against the evil of abortion. It is a popular gift offered to all mothers for Mother's Day. But



God has given us the Mother of all Mothers, His own, who quite literally became **the Immaculate Tabernacle of the Indwelling God.** Let us joyfully celebrate motherhood, physical and spiritual, our own mothers, and most especially the gift of our Heavenly Mother

from the God Who made us all masterpieces of His creation!

A Mother



The most important person on earth is a mother. She cannot claim the honor of having built Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not. She has built something more magnificent than any cathedral--a dwelling for an immortal soul, the tiny perfection of her baby's body . . . The angels have not been blessed with such a grace. They cannot share in God's creative miracle to bring new saints to Heaven. Only a human mother can. Mothers are closer to God the Creator than any other creature; God joins forces with mothers in performing this act of creation . . . What on God's good earth is more glorious than this; to be a mother? -- Jozef Cardinal Mindszenty