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REMEMBERING AND CELEBRATING

In the months of May and June 2011 the communities in Dresden and Wessobrunn had good reasons to look back into history and to celebrate. Sr. Hedwig Willenbrink and Sr. Georgia Otto tell of the events:

Protestant Church Day in Dresden

This year, throughout the month of June, we celebrate a lot!

It starts with the "Protestant Churchday" („Evangelischer Kirchentag“) with its motto: ...there is also your heart“.



From June 1-5th, Dresden is really „full“: 120,000 full-time guests have arrived, at times are said to have been 300,000 participants. A visitor from California who addressed me, was astonished that Dresden was „so crowded“. He thought it was always like that, not being aware of the special situation of the Church Day! - From beginning to the end, we had bright weather, the mood was very relaxed. Many young people are here and everywhere one can hear singing, blowing of trumpets... The streetcars are constantly on the run and always overfilled. After the Church Day was an article in a Dresden newspaper entitled: „God is dead? – Not at all!“ Another

title page read: „The Church Day – Joyful, Pious – and Political!“



The Frauenkirche in Dresden

We have 2 overnight guests who are praying Lauds and take breakfast with us. Sr. Claudia Maria is a Niederbronn Sister from Chemnitz. She represents the „Bahnhofsmission“ (Railway-Mission) in several railways stations. Dagmar is a young woman from the Upper Palatine. Naturally, both of them tell us always of their experiences. Thus, the following happened on the arrival day at the main railways station: A woman at a bakery of the railway-station remarks a suitcase standing in the hall. She informs the police. In her

excitement, she forgets her buns in the oven, they burn and are smoking. This causes the sprinkler system to start all over the entire railway station. The guests who are just descending from their trains get a gratis shower, and soon everything is under water! Fortunately, the weather is warm and sunny. –

Once Dagmar wanted to participate at the morning prayer at 6:00 a.m. on the tower of the *Frauenkirche*. But who arrives at 5:00 a.m., is already too late. Only 400 guests can participate and this number has been reached before 5:00 a.m.!

The days are long: our guests come home hardly before midnight. There are famous speakers and visitors: Federal President Christian Wulf, Chancellor Angela Merkel, Minister of Defense Lothar de Maiziere, Brother Alois from Taizé, the former female Bishop Margot Kässmann, Jörg Zink is being transmitted via video, Fr. Anselm

Grün is there, Archbishop Zollitsch, and many more!

Catholic parishes are offering their churches and rooms for events and concerts.

Sr. Marie-Therese Brodmann joins in the preparation for an ecumenical noon prayer; we three have duties on different days - supervision and information services - in the Cathedral. Thereby we experience many beautiful and interesting encounters.

The Church Day started with an Encounter Evening where especially the Celebration of Light at the Elbe River remains impressive and unforgettable – 20,000 candles swimming on the Elbe, participants holding candles in their hands. – It ended with a grand religious service on both sides of the Elbe. The Church Day ends with a grand Feast of Faith which hopefully will remain effective and radiant with many people also in their daily lives.

Sr. Hedwig Willenbrink



300 years' Existence of the Fraternity of the „Mother of Beautiful Love“

- Opening Service -



Picture: Regina Wahl-Geiger

In the parish church of Wessobrunn, at the left side altar, there is the image of the „Mother of Beautiful Love“. This image came to Wessobrunn shortly after 1700 and was soon greatly venerated. The painter, Brother Innozenz Metz, was a Benedictine from the Abbey of Prüfening near Regensburg. The image was brought to Wessobrunn by Fr. Placidus Angermayer towards the end of the 17th century. After the turmoil of the Spanish Succession War (Erbfolgekrieg), Fr. Placidus and the then Abbot of Wessobrunn, Thassilo Bölzl, applied for permission to found a fraternity. For this reason, a copy of this image was brought to Rome. At the sight of this image, Pope Clemens XI is said to have remarked: „There is something heavenly in this image, it deserves a fraternity.“ Also Prince-Bishop Alexander Sigismund of Augsburg granted approval for this fraternity. On May 17, 1811, this fraternity was solemnly opened. Fr. Placidus Angermayer became the Presider (Präses) and he endeavored to spread it over the entire German-speaking territory. By the end of 1711, already 12 000 members had registered, and until the 1000-years existence of the Abbey of Wessobrunn, the fraternity had 600 000 members. The membership of the nobility contributed to the speedy spread of the fraternity. The objective of

this association was and is the veneration of Mary's Immaculate Conception.

The name of the image: „Mother of Beautiful Love“ („Mutter der schönen Liebe“) is taken from the Old Testament Book of Sirach (24,23-32). There Divine Wisdom says: „I am the mother of beautiful love, of the fear of God, of wisdom and of holy hope.“

The once significant fraternity has lost its center through the termination of the monastery in 1803. Dr. Albert Mayer, the long-time parish priest of Wessobrunn, has tried to revive it anew, and today it counts 175 members.

This year, the Fraternity celebrates its third-centenary jubilee. Some events have been planned, An opening Mass for the beginning, an exhibition showing many copies of the Image, a solemn divine service in August and a meeting of the members at the conclusion in December. Invitations have been sent out to numerous communes in German-speaking lands and even as far as Southern Tyrolia, wherever a copy of the Image is found or where there fraternity-members are living today.



On May 22, the Opening Mass took place in our convent yard. In beautiful weather, the community and the fraternity-members living nearby were present in great numbers. The preacher of the feast was Regionaldekan Werner Dippel, Burgheim, and beside him the parish priest Fr. Mayer, and also Fr. Joyice, our parish priest, and an Indian confrere, Fr. Zacharias, were all

at the altar which stood at the entrance door to our convent.



A special „frame“ for the opening service was the presence of a historical association who happened to be in Wessobrunn for that weekend. Originally, this „former Bavarian Chevaulege-Regiment“ with about 50 horseriders in uniform had planned their own religious service. And this would have meant that the people of Wessobrunn would have attended this service. Finally, it was agreed upon that this regiment would celebrate their service together with us. The group gladly agreed and, with their trumpet corps, made the celebration of the Eucharist very solemn and quite zestful. Moreover, with their uniforms and banners they contributed to the colourful picture which certainly fitted to a jubilee celebration.

For the evening, after the May devotion, a candle procession to the Marian Grotto had been planned, but this had to be cancelled on account of the weather which had turned bad in the meantime.

Of course, a 300-year jubilee cannot be celebrated on one day only. The commune of Wessobrunn invites to an exhibition about the „Veneration of the Mother of Beautiful Love“ in the parish yard. This exhibition will be opened on July 30, at 14:00 o'clock in the *Tassilosaal* and will last until August 15. Opening times are daily from 14:00 to 17:00 o'clock; the entrance is free.

A special highlight will be the solemn Holy Mass with Archabbot Jeremias Schröder of St. Ottilien. The church choir will sing

at the solemnity. Right after the Mass will be a procession with the Blessed Sacrament in the convent yard.

The celebration will continue with music by a brass band and exquisite dishes in the monastery farm.

A candle procession to the Marian Grotto at 20:00 o'clock will end the feast.

The commune of Wessobrunn and our community will be happy to meet numerous participants at this feast.

Sr. Georgia Otto

Luise Rinser-Monument and Jubilee



Many people know it since a long time that that the writer Luise Rinser as a child lived temporarily in Wessobrunn. A great uncle of hers was parish priest in Wessobrunn, Pfarrer Hörtensteiner, and it was also at this time when the sisters moved to Wessobrunn in 1913. In her book „Die gläsernen Ringe“ („The Rings of Glas“) Mrs. Rinser describes her childhood remembrances of Wessobrunn in the form of a novel. Anyone who knows Wessobrunn ought to read it once - there are well-

known rooms and places where we can understand well the experiences and adventures of a little girl.

This year, on April 30, the author Luise Rinser would have been 100 years old. She died on March 17, 2002. As Mrs. Rinser always considered Wessobrunn as her spiritual home, she wanted also to be buried in Wessobrunn, and this wish has been fulfilled. She is resting with her son Stefan, who had died already in 1994, on our village cemetery. On April 30, the Lord Mayor of Landsberg Ingo Lehmann, his representative Norbert Kreuzer and Helmut Dinter, the mayor of Wessobrunn, placed a wreath at the cemetery of Wessobrunn.

For the occasion of her 100st birthday, it had been long planned to erect a monument for her in Wessobrunn, though this was for Wessobrunn a „hot iron“ because she was not loved in her „spiritual home“. Thus the idea of a „Monument for Luise Rinser“ was disputed for 10 years in a very controversial manner and met rather with rejection. Shortly before her birthday, the newly published biography by the philosopher and poet José Sanchez de Murillo, „Luise Rinser, ein Leben in Widersprüchen“ roused further discussions and brought about more „dynamite“ in the diverse media - most of which was rather disadvantageous and brought no good light on the controversial author.

In Schönwang, a farmhouse and educational center belonging to Wessobrunn, a three-day symposium took place. Luise Rinser's son Christoph initiated a „Luise-Rinser-Foundation“ and representatives from Theology, Humanities and Literature participated in it. Of course, for these participants it was significant to ask also for a guided tour of the convent – which they also got.

On Sunday, May 15, in spite of all oppositions of many members of the commune, a monument for Luise Rinser at the town-hall was blessed. A stylized leaf of bronze shall remind us of the author. Christoph Rinser explained: „I wish that this monument would give food for thought.“

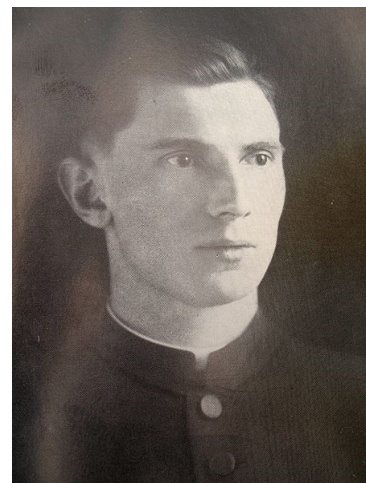
Fr. Dr. Adalbert Mayer, who had been parish priest of Wessobrunn for 35 years and had been asked to bless the monument, quoted from some of her writings and reminded of numerous conversations with her which made it clear the „she has spent the most beautiful years of her childhood in Wessobrunn.“

Besides the participants of the symposium, only a few other visitors too part at this celebration, and thus, only 60 guests were at the blessing of the monument which had been created by a lady artist from Munich.

Sr. Georgia Otto



Beatification of Chaplain Alois Andritzky



The great Catholic feast is on Pentecost Monday: **the beatification of Chaplain Alois Andritzky**. 500 year ago, the first bishop of Meissen, Bishop Benno, was canonized. Now, with Alois Andritzky, the first Saxon, a genuine Sorb, is being beatified. Since a whole year, this day has been in preparation. There are impulses by con-

ferences and sermons, at devotions, the Way of the Cross and May devotions, from his letters from prison and the KZ in Dachau. The community pilgrimage brings us to his birthplace Ratibor in the Oberlausitz.

On June 13, 8–10.000 persons assemble in front of the cathedral for the beatification ceremony. The weather is very fitting: warm, dry and in between cloudy so that the sun does not burn too hot. On a richly decorated stretcher, 4 Sorbian Easter-riders carry the urn with the ashes of Alois Andritzky, Bernhard Wensch and Alois Scholze into the cathedral choir. The latter two were also priests of the Diocese of Dresden-Meissen who had also died in Dachau. Young Sorbish women in their picturesque native attire accompany the urn. Cardinal Amato from Rome, President of the Commission for Beatification and Canonization Processes, announces in Latin that the former chaplain of the *Hofkirche*, Alois Andritzky, has lived an exemplary life, has died in the KZ Dachau as a martyr for his Faith and now may be publicly venerated. There is translation into German and Sorbish. During the Eucharistic celebration, these two languages are being interchanged. Many famous and not-so-famous persons celebrate with us: one still living sister of the newly beatified, the Saxon Ministerpräsident Stanislaw Tillich who is a Catholic Sorb, Nuntius Perisset, Cardinal Vlk, Cardinal Emeritus of Prague, bishops and auxiliary bishops from different dioceses and very many people from Saxony and from adjoining regions. Our Bishop Joachim Reinelt is beaming with joy: at his welcome speech, during the sermon - at which he also today appeals for an open confession to Jesus Christ. We are busy accepting money from the collection which the altar boys are bringing to us, and after the distribution of Holy Communion to receive the patens (dishes for the hosts) of 50 priests who distributed Holy Communion. Naturally, the music must be especially mentioned: music is made that heaven and earth highly rejoice: music composed extra for this

Feast and well-known songs which are sung so powerfully that even people of Dresden who are not present at the celebration, can hear them.

At the end of the celebration, the urn is being carried to the cathedral, to the left side altar. There are also the six blessed Polish young men venerated who were killed in Dresden as enemies of the National Socialists and who had been beatified by Pope John Paul II.

And then people are celebrating round about the cathedral, with many different presentations, with music and dance, with food and drinks and ice-cream – and with many beautiful encounters.

The thanksgiving devotion at 3.00 p.m. in the cathedral is the final act of the festivities and is once again a climax. The church is overfilled. Very impressive and moving is the testimony of Prelate Hermann Scheipers, who had been imprisoned in Dachau together with Alois Andritzky. Now almost 98 years of age, he tells how the 28 years-old Alois lived in deep union with Christ and at the same time, cheered up his imprisoned confreres by his joyfulness, by acrobatic sports-performances, by friendly-attentive support.

People are praying so loud and strong that, afterwards, our chaplain remarked that it must have been Sorbs who by their singing made the walls of Jericho crumble.

Sr. Hedwig Willenbrink



Project for the Future of the World-Church Work in Germany

In the years 2006 till 2008, the project „for the Future of World-Church Work in Germany“ has brought together the German Bishops' Conference, the German (arch)dioceses, relief organisation and religious orders, in order – in the face of the challenges of our time – to develop further the missionary-world-church engagement in Germany. In their autumn plenary session in 2009, the German Bishops' Conference has studied the results of the project and accepted the recommendation to found a „Konferenz Weltkirche“ (World Church Conference) which would regularly bring together the different actors of world-church-work under the direction of the Presider of the Kommission Weltkirche (World Church Commission), at present Archbishop Schick of Bamberg. Important goals are: Deepening of the collaboration of the different holders, strengthening of world-church consciousness and of world-wide solidarity in the German society, optimal use of financial and personnel means, public presentation of the common mission.

The „Konferenz Weltkirche“ was instituted as of January 1, 2011, and comprises 21 members: Three bishops and the heads of the auxiliary works: Adveniat, Deutscher Caritasverband/Caritas International, Kindermissionswerk, Missio Aachen and München, Misereor and Renovabis, three representatives of dioceses and three representatives of missionary religious orders, as well as representatives of various church associations and the Central Committee of German Catholics.

Actually, with this conference, there exists now a parallel structure of missionary-world-church responsibility, which is not meaningful in view of the future. Therefore, the assembly of the members of DKMR have decided to close the organisation in the course of the coming year, whereby important work done up to now would be taken over by other committees. As the newly-created „Konferenz Weltkirche“ has only three representatives of religious orders, the religious orders work-

ing world-wide founded the „Konferenz missionierender Orden“ (Conference of Missionary Orders) = KMO in January 2011. This committee within the Conference of Higher Religious Superiors, consisting of 21 persons, represents the interests of ca. 120 missionary religious orders. It consists of representatives (female and male) of the higher religious superiors and mission procurators who are the connecting bond between the German institutes, the priories and establishments abroad, as well as of friends, benefactors and persons interested in the work of the respective religious order.

To the board of three persons belong the Provincial Superior of the Missionary Sisters of Steyl, the Archabbot of St. Ottilien and the Mission Procurator of the Jesuits. These three persons represent also the religious orders in the new „Konferenz Weltkirche“. On the missionary-benedictine side, I and the mission procurator of Münsterschwarzach collaborate in the KMO. Tasks of the new conference are besides competent discussions on questions of missionary, world-church and developmental-political work, also to carry impulses from the World Church to Germany, to make known the concerns of the missionaries in church and society, as well as to represent the religious orders in matters pertaining to world-church and developmental-political questions.

The newly-founded KMO is now the most important committee where questions concerning missionary-world-church work of German religious orders are discussed and are being carried from there into the sessions of the „Konferenz Weltkirche“. Therefore, our presence is important.

Sr. Hildegard Jansing

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