Background on the Parents of Sister Mildred Neuzil and some thoughts on motherhood

Recent documents obtained from Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil's niece, Elaine, give us more insight into Sister's family history. Austria-Hungary, often referred to as the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was established as a constitutional monarchy

THE CITIZENS' BUREAU

302 Old Court House Public Square

Fill out this form and bring it with your first paper to the Citizens' Houseau any day of the week or on Thursday coming. at To clock.

It is important that this information be correct.

My wife's name is ANNA NEW 31/

She was born. Itely 1673 1881 on Silver than

The Cap Cha Slovak;

And more resides at 2702 2 ffford Ade Cleveland of Citizens' March Clock

We were married and for your first wife came date and place of thick or contour at one with the contour of the con

onal monarchy
in Europe from
1867 - 1918. It
was composed
of many

John a



John and Anna Smerda Neuzil

different nationalities – Germans, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Moravians, Austrians, etc. The Citizens' Bureau document to the left lists the place of birth for Sister Mildred's Mother, Anna Smerda, as Sivice, a little town in the province of Moravia, near the capital of Brno, on July 16, 1881. John was born in Sumice, near Brno, Southern Moravia, on August 27, 1880. These documents indicate that Sister's parents were Czech speaking subjects of the Austro-Hungarian empire which

was ruled by the Catholic Habsburg

(Hapsburg) dynasty. The Austro-Hungarian empire collapsed during World War I, and thereafter, the independent state of Czechoslovakia was created. The Neuzil family had come to America before the War as subjects of the Austro-Hungarian empire, but with its during the War, collapse they would automatically be considered citizens of the new Czechoslovak Republic as noted on these documents when they applied for citizenship in 1925. John and Anna were married on May 4, 1903, in Pohoric, today's Pohorice, 14 km from Brno and close to their birthplace. Many Czechs, like John, moved to the capital in Vienna in search of better living conditions. The first three of their seven

200	8414		Y		To be given to Suburn	1
Patition Volume	187 Num			ÉEEE EEE	PAEZEE	as/4
Description of the	older Age, 44 ; color,uf,	_years; heigh	1 5 feet 6	inches; adur,	white	; ampleain; tistirminlina
mark		75.	no , see , sq. ,		orach ventra,n	Sugarany
Samerage and p	hav of residence o	fuil	-			
Names ages and	places obresidence	o of minor chil	gh words reliming to	wife if husband was.	naturaliyid AFTER n 10 yrs	September 22 (1922) 11111 1 1 1 1 3 1
Sames ages and Geraldino 1	l yrs. Mild:	red 8 Wrs.	Grace 5 V	to children if helder o. 18. Glevel a	<i>Ithis arthinate</i> ú a. nd. Ohio	married womun)
		TOIL	TIL	TI A IV	Intoc	00 00000
To the same of				217-71	PAPEI	13 HELUMI
The United States	of Tona Name		· Clades	Rein	Hourd of	Deputy State Super
**EMLLURY Y	T CT OHIO	\s.s	Tryw	Theres		TOWNEY, OF Election
10 10 m	mbered that	John	Reuzil		1-4-11	
then residing at n	umber 51	06 Gifford	O a see	THE PARTY	4 11	Sind
So her naturalization	Clevelm	nā	State State	" Ohio		, who precious
do pos naturalization	n was a prince of	Czechosl	orak Republ	ic ,	having opplied a	oboadmitted _e a
aican of the United	Hahis of Umorica	i pursuani letan	and the 19	THE HOME	of theDi	strict
Country Tho	United State	es , Acha Al	evaland, Oh	io make	dayof_	
on the year of our 2	lord neucleon hand	bedand_trans	ty Circhecou	d having found to	bat the petitioners	had resided,con
tenuously within th	ic United States for	rat least five yea	us and in this for	uon feral least on	ryoaremmediali	ly proating the
date of the filing of	her pelition and s	that said petition	rer, cuteruts të rëse	de permanoulogi.	a the United The	tes, trade in all
respects complied to	reth the law in rec	Gation, thereto, i	rad, thut_he we	rs, entilled soxte.	se admitted, it, i	ons sucregion
ordered by the sail	100			The state of the s		A Charles
13,000	. An destución price	III the seal of	said court is herea	nte afford en the	5 day of	June
	in the se	un of our Lord.	nineteen, handrot	and_twenty	_{2 Int} ond of our In	dependence,tho
1 3		idred, and=	harter nina			

children were born in Vienna: John on February 20, 1904; Anna, on December 27, 1906, and Irma, on March 8, 1908. https://www.britannica.com/place/Czechoslovakia/additional-info#history



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 Joszef 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 tinv 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 creation . . . What on God's good earth is more glorious than this; to be a mother? --**Joszef Cardinal Mindszenty**