

[October 12, 1842]¹

Excerpt

The city council also continues to refer to the so-called convent fire that happened a year ago, and recently brought it up again to the royal government in order to withdraw from us the royal government's good will whenever possible. Through the city council's contrived presentation of the case, the sister, who was always considered to be outstanding, is now supposedly bereft of all common sense, as if she did not know that, in such cases, necessity knows no law.

Therefore, I consider it my duty to submit a truthful presentation of what really happened so that the royal government can judge the case for itself.

We accepted from the council for the guardianship of poor people and the city council a few neglected children so that we could care for them and give them an education for a very small fee. Some of these children are afflicted with physical weaknesses so that they wet their beds nightly, even though the sister sleeping near them wakes them and helps them get up during the night so that they will get over this problem.

Since they lack a change in bedding, the sisters had and still have to dry out the bedding by the stove in the cramped quarters every day during the winter. One day, while the sisters and children were attending Mass in the same building, one of these mattresses caught fire, which caused more smoke than fire. When the neighbors saw the smoke, they screamed as if the entire house were on fire, ran into the house, scolded the sisters, threatened to throw them out the window, and so forth.

The sisters, deeply shaken by the unexpected fright and the wild clamor, did not allow these uncouth people to storm immediately into the entire house. Since the entire affair was of little significance, they allowed only a few men to come in instead. The city council continues to make such blazing charges against this behavior in such a pitiful situation, but I leave it to God to judge and defend us in this case—as well as in our entire painful situation in Amberg—and I will not add one more word for our justification.

If the royal government proceeds with us in accordance with what is right and lawful, we will show our complete submission.

Respectfully yours,

Mary Theresa of Jesus

Unpublished translation and note by Mary Ann Kuttner, SSND

1. The date was added to the copy of this letter which was prepared for the beatification process. The first page of this letter seems to be missing.