

*Reconciliation with Sister Rosa Franz*

1417: *To Sister M. Rosa Franz*  
*Rottenburg in Württemberg*

Our Dear Motherhouse in Munich  
Eve of the Assumption [August 14], 1853

J! M!

Maria Rosa!

On returning from visitation, I found your request to be readmitted.<sup>1</sup>

I respond sincerely when I say that, for a long time, I saw you in spirit, standing before me in sorrow and tears, but I did not know why. Therefore, your letter did not surprise me.

So that you will see, dear Rosa, how very concerned I still am about your well-being, I state my willingness to readmit you in Jesus' name on a trial basis. Nevertheless, I must leave it entirely up to you to settle everything in and with Rottenburg first so that you can enter here again like every other aspirant.

Let us entrust ourselves to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary!

*Mary Theresa of Jesus*

1423: *To Archbishop Carl August von Reisach*  
*Munich*

Munich  
August 30, 1853

J! M!

Your Excellency! Most Reverend Archbishop!

*Return of M. Rosa from Rottenburg in Württemberg*

M. Rosa [Franz], from the religious institute at Rottenburg in Württemberg, has requested to be readmitted into our congregation.

The respectfully undersigned stated her willingness to readmit her in Jesus' name on a trial basis, but under the

express condition that she first settle everything with Rottenburg and then enter here as every other aspirant does. She responded that this condition is already fulfilled and that she will arrive in the motherhouse soon.<sup>2</sup> Her reply came yesterday and, according to her letter, she should arrive today.

Bringing this to your attention, I remain respectfully yours,

*Mar. Theresa of Jesus*

1424: *To Archbishop Carl August von Reisach  
Munich*

Munich  
August 31, 1853

J! M!

Most Reverend Archbishop! Your Excellency!

After receiving permission from the bishop of Rottenburg,<sup>3</sup> M. Rosa [Franz] arrived in our motherhouse yesterday evening, August 30.

Bringing this to your attention, I remain respectfully yours,

*Mar. Theresa of Jesus*

1428: *To Bishop Valentine von Riedel  
Regensburg*

Our Motherhouse in Munich  
Feast of the Guardian Angels  
[October 2], 1853

*Excerpt*

Most Reverend Bishop! Your Excellency!<sup>4</sup>

Now something else has happened that will surprise you. M. Rosa [Franz], tortured by pangs of conscience and, as it clearly emerged, impelled by God, could no longer remain in Rottenburg. She returned and told the archbishop<sup>5</sup> that she would submit to everything asked of her. Much more could be said in person than in writing.

During his visitations in the archdiocese, the archbishop

never stops to visit our sisters, even when he passes by their houses along the way.

The apostolic nuncio<sup>6</sup> considers M. Rosa's return a good sign for us. May God's holy will be done!<sup>7</sup>

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,  
*M. Ther. of J.*

*Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*, translation and notes by Mary Ann Kuttner, SSND, vol. 4, *Vigorous Growth, 1853-1858* (Elm Grove, Wisconsin, 2009), 54-56, 61-62

1418: *To Fr. Frederick Bruns*  
*Brakel*

Motherhouse  
August 23, [1854]<sup>8</sup>

*Excerpt*

Very Reverend Pastor!

To the detriment of our boarding school here, we are sending our French teacher to St. Anna Institute. All her certificates and recommendations are excellent. She has given us complete satisfaction as a competent and gifted teacher and as a woman of modest, upright character. While her demands regarding an annual salary are significant (600 francs), the Brede Convent will have a highly qualified teacher in her.

Sister Rosa [Franz] will travel with Miss Léonide and teach German. Sister Rosa is an experienced teacher—Sister Alphonsa<sup>9</sup> will tell you the rest in person. May the poor soul be *recommended* to your wise, pastoral guidance! I have no qualms about entrusting her to you. . . .<sup>10</sup>

Requesting your continued kindness and united in prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,  
*M. Ther. of Jesus*

*Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*, translation and notes by Mary Ann Kuttner, SSND, vol. 8, *Mission to Prussia, Brede* (Elm Grove, Wisconsin, 2008), 41-43.

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1. On October 21, 1851, Dr. Joseph Mast insisted that Mother Theresa appoint Sister M. Rosa Franz as superior at the mission in Rottenburg in Württemberg. When Mother Theresa refused, Dr. Mast appealed to Archbishop Carl August Reisach, Archbishop of Munich-Freising (1846-56), who ordered the same appointment. This incident sparked the painful conflict between Archbishop Reisach and Mother Theresa referred to in these letters.

On April 2, 1852, Sister M. Rosa signed her request to Archbishop Reisach for a dispensation from the vow of obedience to Mother Theresa. (Typescript, Generalate)

According to the house chronicle, the mission in Rottenburg was declared independent of Munich on May 7, 1852, and Sister M. Rosa Franz was installed as superior four days later. On May 31, 1852, five candidates, including Emilie Stiegele and Walburga Schwarz who had been candidates in Munich, were received into the novitiate, and Emma Dreher, who left the novitiate in Munich on April 27, 1852, professed her vows.

On August 2, 1853, Sister M. Rosa wrote to Mother Theresa and asked to be readmitted because she could no longer stay in Rottenburg. She promised to obey Mother Theresa and was determined "to remain faithful to this vow for the rest of her life." (Typescript, Munich) 16862

2. On August 27, 1853, Sister M. Rosa wrote to Mother Theresa and thanked her for her willingness to readmit her on a trial basis. "With the grace of God," she promised "to be a child of humility and simplicity." (Typescript, Munich) 16863

3. After Bishop Joseph von Lipp, Bishop of Rottenburg (1848-69), dismissed Sister M. Rosa, she left Rottenburg on August 29, 1853.

4. Bishop Valentine von Riedl, Bishop of Regensburg (1842-57)

5. Archbishop Reisach

6. Archbishop Carlo Sacconi (1808-89), Apostolic Nuncio to Germany (1851-53)

7. Sister Rosa returned to Munich and, after one year in the novitiate, was sent to the Brede Convent in Brakel, a town in Westphalia, in August 1854.

8. Although the year 1853 is given on the copy of this letter in the beatification collection, internal evidence indicates that it was written in 1854.

9. Sister M. Alphonsa Holzmann, Superior at the Brede Convent (1852-55)

10. Four months later, both Sister Rosa and Miss Lèonide became ill during a cholera epidemic and died. Sister Rosa died on December 20, 1854, at the age of 32.

"How Mother Theresa's assessment of Sister Rosa was justified is shown by the fact that, after one year, the bishop of Rottenburg pronounced her unfit to be the superior, relieved her of her office, and dismissed her from the congregation.

"It took years for the house in Rottenburg to establish interior strength, and the first mission was opened only in 1857. Seven more missions followed, but almost all of them had to be given up again for lack of personnel. In 1927, the last two houses of the Congregation of the Rottenburg School Sisters, Ravensburg and Wurzach, asked to rejoin the Munich Motherhouse, which they did." *Mutter Theresia von Jesu Gerhardinger*, M. Liobgid Ziegler (Munich, 1950), 182.