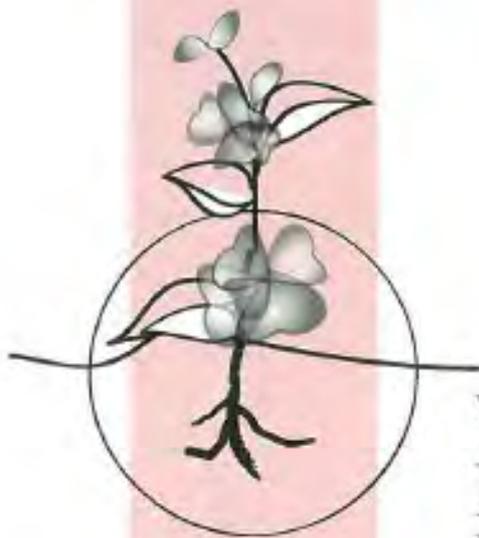


Letters of
Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger

*"All the works
of God..."*



Volume 13
Mission to Austria
Mission to England

School Sisters of Notre Dame

Letters
of
Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger

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Letters
of
Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger

Foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame

Volume 13
Mission to Austria
Mission to England

Translated, Edited, and Annotated

by

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School Sisters of Notre Dame Printing Department
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“All the works of God proceed slowly and in pain;
but then, their roots are the sturdier
and their flowering the lovelier.”

Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger

No. 2277

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Preface to Volume 13

Volume 13 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger* includes documents that refer to missions that Mother Theresa founded in two world capitals—Vienna in Austria and London in England—as well as the areas surrounding them.

As part of the process leading toward the beatification of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, 5,337 documents, which she either wrote or signed, were gathered and copied by hand. These copies were numbered, notarized, packed in a large trunk, and taken to Rome. On December 17, 1929, they were presented to the Sacred Congregation of Rites for further examination. This material is referred to here as the *beatification collection*.

Since it was beyond the scope of this work to locate original letters still extant in numerous archives, translations were done from the notarized copies in the beatification collection. Some of the material in this collection was copied from archival copies of the original documents and these archival copies did not always include a signature. This does not imply that the original document was unsigned.

A few documents in the beatification collection were either undated or misdated. Further study of these documents and their context helped determine probable dates, which are indicated in brackets. Since the documents in this volume are arranged chronologically, they do not always appear in numerical sequence. A numerical list of documents appears at the end of the book.

Words in the texts of the letters that appear in brackets were added in order to help identify persons or places mentioned in the letters. Italics are used to indicate underlined

text found in the documents of the beatification collection.

Mother Theresa's use of the name, *Poor School Sisters (Arme Schulschwestern)*, as well as the word *order*, has been retained in this translation.

Place names are those commonly used in Mother Theresa's time. If the same place is known by a different name today, a footnote supplies this information.

Efforts have been made to identify the recipients of each letter. Titles are used in the headings and salutations, but the nineteenth-century practice of repeating titles throughout the text and closing of a letter has been dropped for the most part in this translation. Formal closings have been simplified and are usually given as *Respectfully yours*.

After the beatification collection was delivered to Rome in 1929, additional documents were found that can be attributed to Mother Theresa or were commissioned by her. Five of these documents are included in this volume and identified with a number followed by a letter, e.g., 2996 a.

In this volume, documents that were not included in the beatification collection are classified as (1) an autograph, (2) a transcript, or (3) a typescript. An autograph is a manuscript in the author's handwriting. A transcript is an early, handwritten copy of an original document. A typescript is a typewritten copy of a document.

Mission to Austria

Introduction

Concerned about the physical and moral dangers to which many children in Vienna were exposed, the Maria Elizabeth Society under the direction of Countess Flora Fries decided to establish a home for poor children whose parents had died or were unable to provide proper care for their children. In 1857, a building in Fünfhaus, a suburb of Vienna, was donated for this purpose and given the name *Mater Misericordiae* (Mother of Mercy). The Sisters of the Holy Redeemer came from Niederbronn to care for the children but they left the following year. The society then entrusted the children to Anna Haldenwanger.

On July 20, 1860, Countess Fries wrote to Mother Theresa and asked whether she would send sisters to conduct the orphanage. There was no hesitation in Mother Theresa's response, "We do this with even greater joy because so many bonds connect us to the imperial city of Vienna. Our founder of blessed memory, Fr. Sebastian Job, lived and worked there for a long time as confessor for Empress Mother Caroline."¹ By the end of October, three sisters were at *Mater Misericordia* and close to Schönbrunn Palace where Fr. Job completed *Spirit of the Constitutions of the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame* on August 14, 1833.

With one exception, the missions established at the heart of the Austrian Empire during Mother Theresa's lifetime were initiated and supported by women. They recognized the great need for the education and character formation of girls and young women and, from their wealth, generously shared with those who had less.

True to *Spirit of the Constitutions*, Mother Theresa responded with all she had and sent sisters and candidates to staff these missions. Although "the works of God

1. Document 3101, p. 5

4 *Mission to Austria*

proceeded slowly and in pain,”² she trusted that “God’s powerful help would sustain them.”³ Her trust was not in vain and School Sisters of Notre Dame continue her mission in Austria today.

2. Document 4033, p. 23

3 . Document 3233, p. 10

1860—1868

3101: *To Countess Flora Fries*
Vienna

Munich
 August 30, 1860

J!M!

Noble Countess!¹

Your gracious letter reached me after I returned from my last visitation journey. I am honored to reply that, in accordance with your wish, we will begin our work at *Mater Misericordiae* Institute on October 15, 1860. We do this with even greater joy because so many bonds connect us to the imperial city of Vienna. Our founder of blessed memory, Fr. Sebastian Job,² lived and worked there for a long time as confessor for Empress Mother Caroline.³

We will give you further information on the sisters' date of arrival as soon as possible.

1. Countess Florentine (Flora) Fries (1814-82) was a member of a prominent Viennese banking family and an heir to its wealth. As president of the Maria Elizabeth Society, she directed the association's charitable work for people in need.

2. Francis Sebastian Job (1767-1834) was ordained in Regensburg in 1791. He was a professor of philosophy and theology in Regensburg until 1808, when he became court chaplain, first in Stuttgart and, beginning in 1816, in Vienna. In 1833, Fr. Job wrote *Spirit of the Constitutions of the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame* and provided financial support for Caroline Gerhardinger and the congregation she founded in his hometown, Neunburg vorm Wald.

3. Caroline Augusta (1792-1873) married Emperor Francis I (1768-1835), who was the last emperor of the Holy Roman Empire (1792-1806) and the first emperor of Austria (1804-35). After his first three wives preceded him in death, he married Caroline Augusta in 1816. The imperial and royal couple had no children. Caroline Augusta devoted her life to charitable works, fostered and promoted several religious communities including the School Sisters of Notre Dame, and established various educational institutes.

We wish to express our gratitude to the noble [Maria Elizabeth] Society for covering the sisters' initial travel expenses. The sisters will travel as simply and economically as possible and will present an account of their expenses after they arrive in Vienna.

We would be greatly indebted to the noble society if, at least on Sundays and holy days, Holy Mass could be celebrated in the institute chapel. We trust in God's goodness that you will succeed in giving the sisters this consolation.

Expressing our deep gratitude for all the proofs of your noble benevolence and accepting the stipend offered, I remain respectfully yours,

Mar. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

P.S. Enclosed is our request to the prince bishop⁴ for the approval of our conducting *Mater Misericordiae* Institute. The entire cause depends on this approval. For this reason, I must ask that you would kindly take care of this and let us know the results. Only then will the sisters be able to leave for Vienna.

3108: *To Cardinal Othmar von Rauscher*
Vienna

Munich
September 1, 1860

J!M!

Your Eminence!

Most Reverend Cardinal and Prince Bishop!

Under the presidency of Countess [Flora] Fries, the noble women's Maria Elizabeth Society appealed to the respectfully undersigned to take charge of *Mater Misericordiae* Institute for Girls in Vienna this fall since it is in need of immediate help.

4. See Document 3108 addressed to Cardinal Joseph Othmar von Rauscher (1797-1875), Prince Bishop of Vienna (1853-75).

During my absence from the central motherhouse, my assistant in the generalate⁵ gave the honorable president an affirmative statement of our willingness to conduct the institute. This would not be our first mission in Austria because educational institutes have already been given to us in Hungary and Upper Austria.⁶

Before making a binding commitment to conduct this institute, I request that you would grant episcopal approval for the entrance into your diocese of the Poor School Sisters from Bavaria in order to conduct the institute under discussion. Our founders are the now deceased confessor⁷ for Her Majesty, Empress Mother Caroline [Augusta] in Vienna, and Bishop [George Michael] Wittmann of Regensburg.⁸

Respectfully submitting this petition, I remain,

[No Signature]

General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

5. Sister M. Margaret of Cortona Wiedemann

6. By the time this letter was written, missions had been opened in Temesvár, Hungary (now Timișoara, Romania), in Freistadt and Traunkirchen in Upper Austria, and in Gorizia on the Illyrian Coastland. All of these places were located in what was then the Austrian Empire.

7. When Caroline Augusta married Crown Prince William from Württemberg in 1808, she called Fr. Francis Sebastian Job from Regensburg to be her confessor at the court in Stuttgart. This marriage was annulled in 1816 and Caroline Augusta married Emperor Francis of Austria. The new empress then called Fr. Job to be her confessor in Vienna.

8. George Michael Wittmann (1760-1833) was ordained in Regensburg in 1782. He was appointed subregent of the seminary in Regensburg in 1788 and regent in 1802. In 1804, he was appointed cathedral pastor in Regensburg and became the school inspector in Stadthof, where Caroline Gerhardinger was attending classes. He became her spiritual director and guide and introduced her to his vision of a religious congregation dedicated to the education of girls. In 1829, he was appointed auxiliary bishop of Regensburg. In 1832, Bishop Wittmann was named the bishop of Regensburg, but before his appointment was confirmed by Rome, he died on March 8, 1833.

3158: *To Countess Flora Fries*
Vienna

Munich
October 5, 1860

J!M!

Noble Countess!

We mailed a letter to you yesterday,⁹ but your letter of October 3 arrived today and answered the most important point of yesterday's letter.

My representative¹⁰ must also travel to Gorizia in Illyria around the same time that we take charge of *Mater Misericordiae* Institute. The sisters will arrive in Vienna on October 19 so that, in accordance with your wish, they will be able to open the institute on Saturday, October 20. By that date, we expect to have received a response from the cardinal of Vienna.¹¹

May the most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Our Order, bless and protect both the poor orphan children at *Mater Misericordiae* and those in charge of their education and character formation so that the institute may flourish to the joy and consolation of God and all its noble patrons!

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Theresa of Jesus

9. On October 3, 1860, Sister M. Ludovica Pfahler, one of Mother Theresa's assistants, wrote to Countess Fries and asked if Cardinal Rauscher had given permission for the transfer of the orphanage to the Poor School Sisters. See *Copia Publica* (Transcript, Generalate) 4467-68.

10. Sister M. Margaret of Cortona Wiedemann

11. Cardinal Rauscher

3160: *To Cardinal Othmar von Rauscher*
Vienna

Central Motherhouse in Munich
 October 6, 1860

J!M!

Your Eminence!

Most Reverend Cardinal and Prince Bishop!

This morning we received from Countess [Flora] Fries, president of the Maria Elizabeth Society of Vienna, your decree approving the transfer of the *Mater Misericordiae* Orphanage in Vienna to the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame from Bavaria.

The respectfully undersigned wishes to express her deep gratitude for the favorable recognition that you have given to our order by this approval. The names of the sisters who will be sent to Vienna to conduct the institute are M. Mathilde Petri, M. Adriana von Stadelmann, and M. Aurea Lutzenberger.

Would you kindly appoint an ordinary and an extraordinary confessor for these sisters.¹²

Recommending these sisters to your protection and benevolence, I also ask for your episcopal blessing. I trust that our holy founder, Francis Sebastian Job, will intercede at the throne of God for this, our first mission in Vienna, the city where he worked so long with such manifest blessing.

Respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
 General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

12. An ordinary confessor was appointed by the bishop for each convent in the diocese to administer the Sacrament of Penance to the sisters living there. An extraordinary confessor was also appointed for each convent to administer the sacrament four times a year during Ember days.

3233: *To Cardinal Othmar von Rauscher*
Vienna

Central Motherhouse in Munich
February 26, 1861

J!M!

Your Eminence!

Most Reverend Cardinal and Prince Bishop!

May you be pleased to accept the enclosed copy of this year's small directory of our religious institute!¹³ As you will gather from its few pages, the mustard seed has already become a tree and, by the grace of God, has spread its branches into some regions of Austria, including your archdiocese.

If our little house in the parish in Reindorf¹⁴ resembles the birthplace of our dear Lord in Bethlehem, then, with God's grace, we hope for much good.¹⁵ May the orphanage at *Mater Misericordiae*, which has been entrusted to us, become a seedbed of piety and virtue and bring forth modest and reserved young women and faithful, industrious, and capable servants! This is the goal of the sisters' endeavors. God's powerful help will sustain them, but I also ask for your support through your episcopal blessing.

How the good sisters rejoice over the grace of having the Blessed Sacrament in their house and Holy Mass celebrated in their chapel a few days each week!¹⁶ Please accept the expression of my deep gratitude for this proof of your benevolent recognition of our society as well as for your pastoral

13. Beginning in 1853, the generalate in Munich published an annual directory listing the motherhouses, missions, and personnel at each place. Statistical information and a report on the significant events in the congregation during the previous year were also included.

14. The parish church closest to *Mater Misericordiae* was Most Holy Trinity in Reindorf, a small community outside Vienna.

15. The sisters began their ministry at *Mater Misericordiae* by caring for 24 children in a very small building marked by great poverty. See M. Liobgid Ziegler, *Magd des Herrn*, (Typescript, Milwaukee) 295.

16. According to the Vienna Chronicle, the Blessed Sacrament was reserved in the chapel on Christmas in 1860.

care in meeting the spiritual needs of the sisters by appointing Court Chaplain Zwerger¹⁷ as their ordinary confessor. As successor of our deceased founder, [Francis Sebastian] Job, in his position as court chaplain, we trust that he will protect and defend the work of God and continually strengthen the sisters in the true spirit of the order.

Once again recommending the new institute and the sisters, I remain respectfully yours,

Mar. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

3351: *To Countess Flora Fries*
Vienna

Munich
April 23, 1862

J!M!

Noble Countess!

To your friendly letter of April 21, I am honored to reply by return mail that we are satisfied with the monthly contributions in Austrian currency of 35 florin for the sisters and 6 florin per child in the institute.¹⁸ This amount will cover all their expenses with the exception of clothing.¹⁹

However, if the number of children would rise above 50 and another sister would be required, or if prevailing circumstances would make it impossible for the sisters to exist on that income, we reserve the right to apply to the noble society for an additional allowance.

In consideration of the expenses that the noble women's society has taken upon itself up to now, the sisters will limit

17. Besides being the imperial court chaplain, Canon John Baptist Zwerger (1824-93) was a professor of pastoral theology at the Augustineum in Vienna where priests from the Austrian Empire had the opportunity for further study.

18. After a currency reform in 1857, one florin in Austrian currency equaled 38¢ in American currency, whereby 35 florin equaled \$13.30 and 6 florin equaled \$2.28.

19. According to the Vienna Chronicle, the Elizabeth Society promised to provide the children at *Mater Misericordiae* with shoes, clothing, and beds. The society was also responsible for repairs on the building.

themselves to the absolute necessities in order to burden the noble society as little as possible.

Finally, thanking God and you for the good news and the assurance of the noble society's satisfaction with the achievements of the institute up to now, I hope that the latter will flourish and that the children of the institute will go forth as worthy and industrious servants.

Appealing to your kind forbearance, I must request that the noble society would turn to me with its wishes and views in all openness and sincerity at any time so that, with united strength, we can further the best interests of the institute.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Theresa of Jesus

3368: *To Empress Mother Caroline Augusta*

Munich
May 20, 1862

J!M!

Most Illustrious and All-Powerful Empress!
Most Gracious Majesty, Empress Mother!

You were pleased to grant our house²⁰ the favor of a visit, for which I venture to present a belated written expression of our deep gratitude.

This evidence that you are still mindful of us gave us great consolation. Your address from a motherly heart and your gracious manner filled our hearts with happy jubilation in your presence. Nevertheless, I must apologize once again for my welcome. Even now, my soul is still overwhelmed by all the precious memories of the past and of the favors bestowed upon us by your gentle hand. The spontaneous welcome given at this most unexpected visit was the natural outpouring of how my heart felt.

20. The motherhouse in Munich

A thousand thanks to God and to Your Imperial Highness for this great joy!

Recommending our religious institute to your continued noble benevolence, I remain respectfully yours,

Mar. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

3513: *To Canon John Baptist Zwerger*
Vienna

Munich
February 27, 1863

J!M!

Very Reverend Canon!

According to the news we received from our sisters at the *Mater Misericordiae* Orphanage in Vienna, you have resigned your position as their confessor because you have been promoted to a higher position.²¹

On this occasion, we owe you the expression of our deep gratitude for the pastoral care you have given the Poor School Sisters in Vienna ever since they took charge of the orphanage. We are grateful for your patience in bearing with their faults and limitations and for your kindness in continuously leading them to Jesus, the Good Shepherd. You have showered them with good deeds by adding corporal works of mercy to the spiritual works of mercy—a most beautiful memorial and, as God has assured us, a memorial most deserving of heaven.

In closing, I have another request—that even if you are far away, you will not forget the Poor School Sisters but remember them in prayer instead. I also ask that you kindly accept the enclosed copy of our little directory.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

21. According to the Vienna Chronicle, Canon Zwerger said his last Mass for the sisters on January 16, 1863, and then left for Trent where he was later appointed cathedral provost.

3563: *To Countess Flora Fries*
Vienna

Munich
June 16, 1863

J!M!

Your Excellency!

We were deeply moved by your expression of heartfelt sympathy at the death of our beloved Sister M. Aurea.²² Your words of condolence prompted our prayer to the merciful God that you would continue to be a support for our sisters in Vienna for a very long time.

We will certainly do whatever we can in response to your request that we send someone immediately to fill the vacancy left by the departed sister. Since it is the middle of the year, however, it will be difficult to make a transfer before autumn when we make personnel changes. I ask for your patience.

If *Mater Misericordiae* Institute is flourishing, then we thank God who alone can give success. We pray for God's continued help because "unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build."²³ This is especially true in the area of teaching and character formation.

Please accept our request for your continued good will and care for us.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

22. Sister M. Aurea Lutzenberger, who cared for the kitchen and garden at *Mater Misericordia*, died on April 22, 1863.

23. *Psalms* 127:1

3650: *To Countess Flora Fries*
Vienna

Munich
 March 21, 1864

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

In your gracious letter of March 17, you told us that the noble Maria Elizabeth Society is willing to extend a helping hand to the project under consideration, but first wants to know *how* the proposed undertaking is to be initiated and what considerations and advantages for the society would be guaranteed.²⁴

Forgive me if I reply that we had hoped to receive, through your mediation, some kind of outline stating the society's expectations regarding the project's goals and our part in it. This has been the usual procedure with our missions. I venture to repeat my request because we do not want to be presumptuous and we are not entitled to make demands on the noble society. Please be assured that we are acting from a good and pure intention and that we will do what we can. Great unity of effort will be necessary if the work is to begin and prosper.

Far from the scene, I can only restate our willingness to carry out the noble Maria Elizabeth Society's intentions with regard to needlework classes and a proposed fourth level of instruction, which the local superior²⁵ of our central motherhouse here told me about in a previous conversation. At the beginning, however, I think that we should limit ourselves to providing the young women who work in factories with a place to stay and classes in needlework.

24. The members of the Maria Elizabeth Society asked the sisters to open a home for young women working in the factories of the rapidly growing industrial quarter where the sisters lived. The society collected 10,000 florin (\$3,800) to help the sisters purchase, repair, and furnish a building adjoining *Mater Misericordiae* for this purpose.

25. Sister M. Margaret of Cortona Wiedemann

If it would be more practical, we would not hesitate to accommodate these factory workers in the space now used for the orphanage and move the orphans from *Mater Misericordiae* to the new building that will be acquired.

We have no objection to the proposal that the noble Maria Elizabeth Society would purchase the building, but wait with signing it over to the order until the latter has obtained corporation rights so that, with God's help, the project could begin sooner. If God grants the grace, all the rest will work out in time.

In order to contribute our mite, we offer to furnish the young women's dormitories. This will not be easy, but we hope for help from God who has command of heaven and earth.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3658: *To Countess Flora Fries*
Vienna

Munich
April 5, 1864

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

Still proclaiming a joyous Easter alleluia,²⁶ I am honored to respond to your friendly letter of March 30. From your sickbed²⁷ you are endeavoring to carry out the work begun, and God has blessed it thus far so that the building designated for our purposes has now been acquired.²⁸

There cannot be any objection to the notice to vacate the apartments in this building because the purchase cancels previous agreements. The tenants may stay only as long as the new owners allow them to remain and then they must

26. Easter was celebrated on March 27 in 1864.

27. After the death of her oldest son Louis on April 9, 1860, Countess Flora Fries became ill and remained an invalid until her death in 1882.

28. See Document 3650, pp. 15-16.

leave the building. At least that is the way it is done here in Bavaria.

The conditions set regarding payment seem reasonable, and it is apparent that God is pleased with the undertaking. Since it is God's work, any obstacles in the way will not prevent us from acting but give us strength and courage instead.

You wrote that the noble Maria Elizabeth Society intends to turn over the recently purchased building to the School Sisters as their unrestricted property with the stipulation that they admit girls who are orphans. For this reason, the society hopes that we would apply for corporation rights with the proper authorities.

In response, I venture to appeal to your charity and ask that you would kindly help the sisters with this. We do not know how to proceed in this matter or to whom we must apply. Sister Mathilde [Petri] will keep us informed so that we can carry this out together, or I could give the necessary directions to Sister Margaret [of Cortona Wiedemann], my representative. She is leaving for Vienna in a few days because I am unable to come until later.

In the meantime, we will entrust the cause to God and pray that you will fully recover soon, gain strength to bring this new work to life, and continue to be its mother as you have been to the orphans up to now.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Ther. of Jesus

3766: *To Countess Flora Fries*
Vienna

Munich
December 7, 1864

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

After so many painful circumstances, including the inexplicable delay in the arrival of our letters, God has ordained the completion of the good work as confirmed by your letter of December 4.

The order accepts the sum of 10,000 florin, graciously collected by the noble Maria Elizabeth Society, and the attached conditions for the establishment of a home for young women who work in factories. With the same charitable willingness to sacrifice, the order has acquired a separate building for this purpose and spent a considerable sum of money to furnish the home appropriately, trusting that the project undertaken solely for the glory of God and the salvation of immortal souls will enjoy God's blessing and protection for all time!

We request the transfer of the 10,000 florin to us as soon as the home is opened—and there can no longer be any doubt that it will be opened. We will issue a receipt immediately and will try to have the opening ceremony as soon as possible.

The noble Maria Elizabeth Society also decided to donate the orphanage building to the order as its sole owner with the stipulation that the orphanage would keep the name *Mater Misericordiae* and give appropriate care to a specified number of children sent there by the society.

The order also accepts this building for use as an orphanage for the time being with the condition that, if necessary, ownership would revert to the respective prince bishop of Vienna. Its current condition requires very expensive repairs. With the order taking responsibility for these repairs now and in the years to come, the noble society is released from a great burden.

Since the donation of the orphanage is an act of generosity on the part of the noble society, it is entitled to stipulate the number of orphans and the cost of their care. When this is done, the order can include these conditions in its statement of acceptance, which will be written in accordance with the arrangements made.

We also ask that you determine a suitable day for the transfer of the building, *Mater Misericordiae*, possibly January 28. The memory of the deceased grandmother and foundress of this institute must not only endure in a marble

image²⁹ but also be kept alive in the hearts of the orphans who will continue to pray for her.

Looking forward to your kind suggestions, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3791: *To Countess Flora Fries*
Vienna

Munich
January 27, 1865

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

Before I could answer your gracious letter, it was necessary to hear from Sister Mathilde [Petri], which explains why my reply is coming only today. As your letter indicates, the business with *Mater Misericordiae* has taken a completely different turn. According to the expressed will of the deceased foundress, the building may neither be sold nor given away.³⁰

We recognize this as an act of Divine Providence. When we accepted the proposed donation of the orphanage, our only motive was to preserve the single purpose of *Mater Misericordiae*. By enlarging the building, we could admit a greater number of children (and support the poor life of the sisters besides).

The building will never become the property of the order, however, and the order cannot build at its own expense on property it does not own. At any time, all of this could be re-

29. Baroness Henriette von Pereira-Arnstein (1780-1859) generously supported various cultural and charitable works. A marble plaque at the entrance of the motherhouse in Vienna states: "On February 2 in the Year of Salvation 1857, the noble Baroness Henriette von Pereira-Arnstein and her daughter, Countess Flora Fries, gave this building to the Maria Elizabeth Society, which was founded for charitable purposes. The building, entitled *Mater Misericordiae*, was designated and furnished as a home for poor children under the protection of the Most Holy and Immaculate Virgin Mary."

30. On February 12, 1858, Baroness von Pereira-Arnstein signed the deed of donation with the stipulations described in this letter.

turned to the society without compensation. Therefore, in its wisdom the noble Maria Elizabeth Society will realize that the order cannot sign the proposed rental agreement.

Under the prevailing circumstances, the only thing left would be for the noble Maria Elizabeth Society to keep and maintain the building as its own property. The order could continue to conduct the institute as formerly, except that 100 florin³¹ per child would be paid annually for three years on a trial basis. The mending of clothing would be included in these 100 florin so that the sisters need not burden the noble society members with every little thing.³²

Three years from now, everything will be clearer and we will be able to make further arrangements. The six beds that we promised to keep ready for the proposed changes could be used if we admit an equal number of boarders. This will be necessary because the former annual stipend of 420 florin³³ for the sisters will cease and remain for the society.

We cannot continue the institute without the subsidy formerly given for the priest. A priest is always indispensable for children like those who are admitted to the institute.

We are returning the rental agreement, therefore, with the expression of our deep regret that we cannot do anything else in this unsettled situation and that all the previous efforts on both sides have been in vain.

God's angels have counted every step that you and the noble women of the society have already taken out of love for God's work and for the salvation of these poor, forsaken children and recorded them in the Book of Life for the day of reward. Nevertheless, we cherish the joyful hope that with

31. \$38 in American currency at the time

32. Prior to this time, the members of the Maria Elizabeth Society not only provided the orphans' clothing but also took care of mending it.

33. \$159 in American currency at the time

God's help, the institute will develop and flourish to the consolation of the noble Maria Elizabeth Society.³⁴

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Theresa of Jesus

3864: *To Cardinal Nicholas Clarelli-Paracciani*
Rome (Excerpt)

Munich
April 26, 1865

J!M!

Your Eminence! Most Reverend Cardinal Protector!³⁵

. . . In Vienna, we will soon be opening a home for young women who are working in the factories. The Maria Elizabeth Society, an association of prominent, devout women, asked that we take up this extraordinary work of charity for poor women who are exposed to every kind of temptation in unfamiliar accommodations. Although the society contributed 10,000 florin, the building renovations will require a significant additional sum.³⁶ The Jesuits are very happy about this work of charity. They are helping us as much as they can and are unanimous in wishing us well. Both the

34. The sisters continued to use the building that belonged to the Maria Elizabeth Society for an annual fee of 5 florin (\$1.90). At their own expense, the sisters both maintained the building and later added a second story to it. With the consent of Count August Fries, son of Countess Flora Fries and grandson of Baroness Henriette von Pereira-Arnstein, the Maria Elizabeth Society donated the building to the Congregation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Vienna by means of a deed of gift signed on December 28, 1911. See *Erste Ausfertigung Notariatsakt* (Typescript, Generalate) 1-4.

35. Cardinal Nicholas Clarelli-Paracciani (1799-1872) was appointed cardinal protector of the congregation in 1859, a position he held until his death. On October 10, 1860, he was appointed prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Religious.

36. According to the Vienna Chronicle, Empress Mother Caroline Augusta visited the institute in 1865 and soon after sent the sisters a considerable sum of money for the necessary addition to the building.

prince bishop,³⁷ who also encouraged us, and the imperial city government have already approved the home. . . .³⁸

3966: *To Cardinal Nicholas Clarelli-Paracciani*
Rome (Excerpt)

Munich
November 30, 1865

J!M!

Your Eminence! Most Reverend Cardinal Protector!

. . . Our plan to establish a home for young women working in the factories of Vienna, Austria, was finally approved by the prince bishop and cardinal³⁹ and the imperial government. This new foundation was opened on May 7. A chapel and another story were added to our orphanage in Vienna. To show his keen interest in this new work of mercy, the cardinal of Vienna adorned the altar with a picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary and personally dedicated the chapel. . . .⁴⁰

4033: *To Countess Flora Fries*
Vienna

April 24, 1866

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

We were very embarrassed by your gracious letter. What Sister Margaret [of Cortona Wiedemann] presented to you the last time she was in Vienna was only a sign of our deep gratitude for the motherly love that you continuously bestow upon our sisters.

Our loving God, who cares for orphans and needy children, never forgets and stores up the only reward worthy of

37. Cardinal Rauscher

38. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 5 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

39. Cardinal Rauscher

40. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 5 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

your noble deeds. The greater our joy in giving to the orphans, the greater is the reward!

Please do not grow tired of being the protector, support, and mother to our sisters in Vienna as you have been up to now, because in the words of our founder Bishop [George Michael] Wittmann, “The works of God proceed slowly and in pain.”

Please accept the assurance of our daily prayer.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister of Notre Dame,
Mar. Th. of J.
General Superior

4216: *To Madame Adelpodinger*
Hietzing

Munich
December 15, 1867

J!M!

Madame!⁴¹

In your kindness, you told us about the work of our sisters in Hietzing⁴² and asked if they might go to the school for the Christmas gift exchange. Our affirmative answer will have already reached you by telegram because, to our deep regret, your letter remained unanswered for so long. We received the telegram from Madame Kletzl only on Sunday morning.

We are grateful to God and to you for all your loving kindness. We also ask for your patience and forbearance, which is always needed in double measure whenever an institute of this kind is accepted. I hope that the sisters will comply with the noble society’s wishes so that your united efforts will promote the glory of God and foster the salvation of the immortal souls of the children.

41. Madame Adelpodinger lived in Hietzing, a suburb of Vienna.

42. The women's society of Maria Hietzing Parish provided needlework classes for poor girls but then asked for sisters to continue this work. According to the Vienna Chronicle, Mother Theresa came to Vienna to open the new institute in Hietzing on October 15, 1867. Two sisters were assigned to this mission.

It gives me consolation that our founder [Francis Sebastian] Job, whose resting place is so close to our sisters in Hietzing,⁴³ will intercede at the throne of God for grace and blessing on all their works.

We were very happy to hear about the favor which Her Imperial and Royal Highness, Archduchess Gisela,⁴⁴ granted the institute in Hietzing. As its sponsor, she will be present at the children's Christmas gift exchange. The sisters have already received word that they are to take part in the celebration.

I look forward to visiting this new institute again.

Please accept our sincere request that you would grant our sisters and the institute your continued kind benevolence and motherly protection.

For the coming feasts of Christmas and the New Year, I wish you health and blessing.

United in prayer and respectfully yours, I remain,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

4217: *To Madame Kletzel*
Hietzing

Munich
December 15, 1867

J!M!

Madame!

We want to follow our telegram with this letter. Your telegram reached us only today, Sunday, at 7:00 a.m. We hope that our response will not take as long to reach you!

43. Francis Sebastian Job died on February 13, 1834. Although he wished to be buried as a pauper, Empress Mother Caroline Augusta ordered that he be given a proper funeral. She selected, as his place of burial, the parish church cemetery in Penzing, a community outside Vienna, since it was close to Schönbrunn, the imperial castle, and on the way to his Bavarian homeland.

44. Archduchess Gisela (1856-1932) was the second daughter of Francis Joseph (1830-1916, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary and Bohemia, 1848-1916) and Elizabeth (1837-98) Empress of Austria (1854-98) and Queen of Hungary (1867-98).

We told our sisters in Hietzing that they should go to the school for the Christmas gift exchange. Sister Mathilde [Petri] will accompany them and attend the celebration. May God grant that all will proceed in a worthy manner to the glory of God and everyone's satisfaction!

Recommending the institute and our sisters to your gracious benevolence and that of the entire society and asking that you would remember us in prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

Mar. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

4228: *To Maria Rothmayr*
Hietzing

Munich
January 9, 1868

J!M!

Miss Rothmayr!

Christmas Eve brought us—as it has for several years—a package from Vienna with such a wide selection of seashells and other dainty things that we could not admire them enough. How delighted and jubilant the dear children were when we told them about the gifts! They will not neglect to pray with us for their benefactor. You will be rewarded with the consolation that whatever you have done to these little ones you have done to the Divine Child Jesus. This capital will yield high interest now and in eternity.

How is your health during this severe winter?

Asking to be included in your worthy prayer and benevolence, I remain gratefully and respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Ther. of Jesus

4270: *To Madame Adelpodinger*
Hietzing

Munich
June 8, 1868

J!M!

Madame!

I was very consoled by your gracious letter of June 1 with its assurance that God is with my dear sisters in Hietzing and blessing their efforts.

You deserve the greatest merit, however, because you called the sisters to Hietzing⁴⁵ and continue to support them so lovingly in word and deed.

In your charity, you are now graciously offering a completely enclosed place in your house where the sisters can take part in the Corpus Christi procession. You are also offering them your garden for their recreation.

I am very sorry that we cannot take advantage of these proofs of your genuine motherly concern. According to our religious statutes, we may walk only to church and school when they are not connected with the sisters' living quarters.

The good sisters must offer this sacrifice to the loving God until the noble society succeeds in finding another place for them that is closer to the church and has a little garden for their recreation. This certainly is a great concern for all of us if we are to continue the institute in Hietzing!

If it does not mean neglecting the needlework school, we have instructed the sisters to go to Fünfhaus⁴⁶ on free days and during their vacation.

Hoping that your health will soon improve and recommending my poor sisters to your continued benevolence, I remain prayerfully and respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Theresa of Jesus

45. See Footnote 42, p. 23.

46. *Mater Misericordia* was located in Fünfhaus, a suburb of Vienna until it was incorporated into the city in the late nineteenth century. The mission in Hietzing was approximately 1.8 miles (3 km) from *Mater Misericordia*.

1869—1876

4308: *To Countess Flora Fries*
Vienna

Munich
 January 5, 1869

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

You placed a gift into the Divine Child's manger for the Poor School Sisters—just as the three Magi from the East once did. According to what the sisters wrote, you cancelled their debt of 1,000 florin.¹ Deeply moved, we looked to heaven with tear-filled eyes, asking that our God, in whose name the gift had been made with such great love, would reward you with divine heavenly graces. Temporal things that perish are far too little reward for noble persons who do deeds that deserve a nobler, better, and everlasting reward.

We would also like to add our petition that you would not withdraw your benevolence from the poor children or the sisters because of the gradual development of the institute. With this encouragement, the sisters will strive even more to teach and train the poor orphans to become capable and upright servants.

Once again wishing you health and blessing, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mary Theresa of Jesus

1. \$380 in American currency at the time

4311: *To Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas*
Neuschloss near Wildon in Styria

Munich
February 1, 1869

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!²

At the same time that your gracious letter arrived, another came from our dear Sister M. Mathilde [Petri] in Vienna with an enclosure from the prince bishop of Graz,³ telling us that you are requesting School Sisters for the market town of Wildon.

Based on all of this, I would like to express our willingness to accept the girls of your domain who are of school age for teaching and character formation and to send four sisters of our order for this purpose. As you stated in your letter, three elementary teachers and one needlework teacher would be necessary since each of the three elementary classes would have 50 girls. Then the school will be well organized and, with God's help, progress can be expected.

In response to your request for information regarding their support, an annual salary of 200 florin⁴ is usually sufficient for one sister. The sisters bring along their beds, bedding, table linens, and clothing, as well as the necessary textbooks for teaching. The order also covers travel expenses.

We always ask for very simple furnishings made of soft wood with an oak finish.

In accordance with your expressed wish, we are enclosing a sketched plan. If the needs of the school are carefully provided, our sisters are content with a few small rooms as their living quarters and a small kitchen. A garden next to

2. Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas and her husband, Count Henry, owned large tracts of land and the castle, Neuschloss, near Wundschuh and Wildon in Styria, now a province in Austria that is located south of Vienna.

3. Canon John Baptist Zwerger, was appointed Prince Bishop of Seckau (now Graz-Seckau in Austria) in 1867 and remained there until his death in 1893.

4. \$76 in American currency at the time

the building is desirable so that the sisters can walk outside.

We would be very grateful if you would kindly send us a syllabus with the elementary school subjects as they are taught in Styria⁵ because we comply with existing laws and educational directives in any country where we teach.

Our joy would be especially great if a church-related school would begin in Wildon because our founder [Francis Sebastian] Job, confessor to Her Majesty, Empress Mother Caroline, had a special preference for Styria and was its special benefactor.⁶ Prince Bishop [John Baptist] Zwerger, under whose pastoral protection the sisters would be, is already a friend of our sisters because he gave them genuine support in word and deed when he was in Vienna.⁷

Leaving the proposed work to God in prayer and asking that you would continue to show us your gracious benevolence, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

4340: *To Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas*
Neuschloss near Wildon in Styria

Munich
June 7, 1869

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

How very sorry I am for causing you worry and double work because of the delay in my response! My letter is so late because I was away when your gracious letter of May 17 reached the motherhouse.

5. At the time this letter was written, Styria was a crownland of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

6. Fr. Francis Sebastian Job established an endowment to provide scholarships for seminarians from Styria. The first recipients began their studies at the *Carolinum* in Graz in 1832.

7. See Document 3513, p. 13. In 1867, Canon Zwerger was appointed bishop of Seckau (now Graz-Seckau) in Austria, a position he held until his death in 1893.

We would gladly comply with your expressed wish that we draw up a contract regarding your foundation but, without sufficient knowledge of Austrian law and educational directives or the proper form of contracts, it would probably be a futile effort. Therefore, we would like to submit a copy of the usual procedures in our country. In places where the sisters receive financial support—as they will from your noble family in Wildon—we do not take any tuition from the children, but leave it to the male teacher.

We cannot determine, however, if the sisters—who give up their claim to a pension when incapacitated by old age or illness—will be able to cover the cost of the necessary firewood for the three classrooms from their income of 800 florin in Austrian currency.⁸ Since we do not know the cost of firewood there, now or in the future, we must leave this entirely to your wise judgment. In other places, the town provides the firewood.

You asked how the maintenance and continued existence of the new school will be secured. We must leave this entirely up to God and your wise care and decision. We are in agreement with all the other points that you kindly mentioned.

Recommending this blessed work to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Theresa of Jesus

4347: *To Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas*
Neuschloss near Wildon in Styria

Munich
June 29, 1869

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

In order to spare you the trouble of having it copied, we are now returning two signed copies of the contract that you kindly sent us. Our generalate seal is also attached.

8. \$304 in American currency at the time

The great sacrifice you are making in order to provide a Catholic education for the girls of your domain is pleasing to the bountiful God of heaven and earth who will surely bless such a noble gift of love!

With trust in God, we are happy to come to the dear children in Wildon under the conditions you described in your last letter and in the contract. We will come to work as long as we can in the Lord's vineyard for the glory of God, the consolation of your noble family, and the well-being of the girls and young women there.

We do not claim a pension for our elderly or incapacitated sisters anywhere.

Recommending ourselves to the gracious benevolence of your noble family, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mary Theresa of Jesus

4348: *Contract*

June 29, 1869

Contract
Between the Noble des Enffans d'Avernas Family
and the Generalate
of the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

The count⁹ and his family enter into the following legally binding contract with the generalate of the Poor School Sisters, subject to approval by the imperial and royal government.

I.

1. The generalate of the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame is obliged to send four sisters to assume teaching duties at the school for girls with three classes in Wildon. These sisters will begin conducting the school after the building, which will accommodate the school and the sisters, is finished and ready for occupancy.

9. Count Henry des Enffans d'Avernas

2. The School Sisters are obliged to teach the girls of school age elementary subjects and needlework in accordance with the legally prescribed school schedule and curriculum.

3. They will also clean the classrooms, but the necessary cleaning materials will be provided.

II.

1. On their part, the noble count and his family will provide a building with the necessary furnishings for the charitable purpose of conducting a school for girls. An adjoining garden for the exclusive use of the School Sisters is included. However, the building remains the property of the noble count and his family. They will also take responsibility for the building including repairs, painting, and paying the chimney sweep as well as any debt or taxes on the property.

2. The noble count and his family will give the four teaching sisters 800 florin in Austrian currency annually in quarterly payments.

3. If girls from outside the area or young women beyond school age apply for instruction in elementary or needlework subjects, it is understood that earnings from this or from private lessons belong to the School Sisters.

III.

The foregoing contract is drawn up in two original copies that are signed by both parties and given to them for their use and safekeeping.

Neuschloss, June 21, 1869

Count Henry des Enffans d'Avernas
Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas,
née Countess Wilczek
*Countess Anna des Enffans d'Avernas*¹⁰

Munich, June 29, 1869

M. Theresa of Jesus
 General Superior

10. Count Henry des Enffans d'Avernas' daughter from an earlier marriage

4356: *To Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas*
Neuschloss near Wildon in Styria

Munich
 August 4, 1869

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

From your friendly letter of July 24, it is evident that you are working continually on the worthy project you have undertaken.

We ask that the furnishings be very simple, of soft wood, and with an ordinary oak finish. A bedstead with curtain rods, a washstand, a small table with a wooden chair, a crucifix, a picture of Mary, and a holy water font are needed for each cell. We would also be very grateful for a chest of drawers, a cupboard for linens and clothes, a house clock, and a very simply furnished kitchen. We are enclosing some drawings of our usual house furnishings for your examination if they will be helpful.

Please be assured that the sisters will bring hearts full of love to the children of Wildon and that they will do all in their power to repay you for all the trouble and expense you are taking upon yourself for them. The best reward, however, will be stored up for you in heaven.

Respectfully yours,

Mar. Ther. of Jesus
 General Superior
 Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

4368: *To Madame Adelpodinger*
Hietzing

Amberg
 August 25, 1869

J!M!

Madame!

Although on a journey, I would like to respond to your recent kind letter. Word has come to us from several sources that there is dissatisfaction with our sisters in Hietzing. Due to various remarks, the members of the women's soci-

ety and even the chairperson have changed their attitude. The parish priests denied the sisters their only spiritual consolation, and the parish, equally upset, wanted them removed. With heavy hearts, therefore, we considered it necessary to withdraw our sisters from Hietzing.

Then your letter of August 1 arrived, describing a situation that is different in many ways.

We would like to respond to your letter by saying that under these changed circumstances, we are happy to offer the noble society our services, just as we were in the very beginning.

Nevertheless, we must repeat our urgent request that from now on, the sisters will be provided with living quarters that are appropriate for a religious community and as close to the church as possible.¹¹ The better the sisters keep the spirit of the order, the more blessed their influence on the children will be—but for that to happen, an external safeguard¹² is also necessary.

Once again, therefore, we entrust this concern to your motherly care. We are consoled in the conviction that the women of the noble society will succeed in fulfilling our request. If only we could get the building on the parish property! Even if the passage through the yard is not entered into the land register, perhaps we could still be allowed to walk through it.

United in prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Ther. of Jesus

11. The two sisters lived in a private apartment.

12. Enclosure

4369: *To Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas*
Neuschloss near Wildon in Styria

Amberg
 August 25, 1869

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

Your last kind letter was forwarded to me while I was on a journey. First of all, I want to express my sincere gratitude for the motherly concern you have shown the sisters who are coming by not allowing them to move into the newly constructed building before it is completely dried out. Our hearts are moved by this loving concern. We will be happy to wait until spring to send the sisters to Wildon.

You asked for further information about the dishes and silverware. I would like to say that in this regard we are also used to simplicity and poverty and use very ordinary porcelain dishes and plain silverware. If it is not asking too much, we would like to have a dozen sets of silverware, as well as a dozen each of plates, bowls, and drinking glasses.

Please accept the expression of our sincere regret that you met with such difficulty when repairing the proposed building and that tearing down the old one and putting up an entirely new one caused such great expense. Our God who has helped thus far will also help bring it to completion. This is our hope and our prayer.

We also hope and pray that God will abundantly reward what your noble family is doing for the glory of God and the physical and spiritual well-being of those entrusted to you.

Requesting your continued gracious benevolence, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus
 General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

4400: *To Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas*
Neuschloss near Wildon in Styria

Munich
December 27, 1869

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

In your last letter, you discussed the date for opening the new mission in Wildon. If it is agreeable to you, either April 6 or April 7 would be appropriate. If another day would be better, we are very willing to comply with your wishes.

We ask that the stoves in the workroom, refectory, and cells would be the type that can be heated from the inside because these closed stoves hold the heat better and usually prove to be more practical.

The sisters will bring their beds, straw mats, and mattresses.

There is no need to hurry with the furnishing of the chapel, which may also be very simple. The chapel can always be arranged after the sisters are there.

We will pray in the meantime that God will reward you in abundance for all the efforts and sacrifices you are making so willingly and joyfully for the glory of God. God grant that the new foundation will blossom with consolation and joy!

Wishing you health and blessing for the new year of grace, 1870, and requesting your continued benevolence and kindness, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Ther. of Jesus

4412: *To Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas*
Neuschloss near Wildon in Styria

February 5, 1870

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

We rejoiced greatly when we heard the news that the prince bishop is returning from Rome for Easter¹³ and will visit our new mission in Wildon. It is even possible that he will dedicate the new mission himself. If this makes a different date seem more suitable for the opening of the new mission, please disregard our suggestion, since any day is agreeable to us.

I asked our local superior in Vienna, M. Mathilde [Petri], to get in touch with you about your wishes with regard to furnishing the kitchen. She is sending the beds and other items from Vienna to Wildon. If it would be agreeable to you, she could obtain all these articles in Vienna and then send them to Wildon with the sisters' belongings.

Requesting your continued, gracious benevolence, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus

4438: *To Prince Bishop John Baptist Zwerger*
Rome

Munich

April 11, 1870

J!M!

Most Reverend Prince Bishop! Your Excellency!

There has been sufficient progress in Wildon so that the sisters can arrive there on April 19. We are entering a new diocese and ask for your special blessing so that, supported by God's help, the sisters' work will flourish for the glory of

13. Prince Bishop Zwerger was at the first Vatican Council, which took place in Rome from December 8, 1869, until September 1, 1870. Easter was celebrated on April 17 in 1870.

God and the well-being of the young women and girls of Wildon.

The sisters sent to this mission are Sister M. Dionysia Reichart as superior, Sisters M. Symphorosa Eberle and M. Alphonsa Forster, and Candidate Felicitas Hellriegl.

All are teachers with Austrian certificates.

I heard, to my regret, that Sister Mathilde Petri had already sent the certificates to the imperial and royal governor's office. During my last visit to Vienna in October, influential persons pointed out to me that, in the current political situation and for the well-being of the house there, it is very necessary for the local superior to be thoroughly initiated into all the circumstances and know the respective authorities.

Moreover, the sisters named above could stay in Wildon for a longer time, which must also be taken into consideration. If our institutes in Vienna become stronger, God could ordain that Sister Mathilde would come to Wildon later since, in any case, Wildon would be under the house in Vienna.

Finally, may I ask you to assign an ordinary and an extraordinary confessor for the sisters who are being sent to Wildon. We have also presented this petition to the diocesan ordinariate in Seckau.

Respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

4439: *To Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas*
Neuschloss near Wildon in Styria

Munich
April 11, 1870

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

Since it was impossible for me to accompany the sisters assigned to Wildon, I entrusted the superior of our mother-house and first general assistant, M. Margaret [of Cortona] Wiedemann, with the responsibility of introducing the sisters and recommending them to you in my name.

Please be assured that the sisters understand the purpose of their call to Styria. With God's help, they will strive to do all in their power to respond to this call through the instruction and character formation of the girls of Wildon so that they will become devout young women and energetic mothers of families.

We ask that you would please support us by your prayer. "Neither the one who plants nor the one who waters, is anything, but only God, who causes the growth."¹⁴ If these words are true anywhere, it is in the work of teaching and character formation.

Respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus

4480: *To Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas
Neuschloss near Wildon in Styria*

September 25, 1870

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

It will soon be six months since the Poor School Sisters took over the school for girls on your property.¹⁵ Please do not be annoyed if I ask whether the efforts of the good sisters are meeting with success and whether they have earned the satisfaction of the authorities.¹⁶ Do you have any further wishes?

14. 1 *Corinthians* 3:7

15. According to the Wildon Chronicle, the sisters arrived in Wildon on April 19, 1870, and were solemnly installed on Sunday, April 24. Prince Bishop Zwerger was not present since he was still in Rome.

16. According to the Wildon Chronicle, there was deep prejudice against women religious in general at first, and a considerable number of girls did not attend the new school. The sisters were not familiar with the local customs, which made teaching and communication with parents and others difficult. As the townspeople got to know the sisters, however, they became supportive of them. After the local school inspector visited the classrooms three times and expressed his complete satisfaction, the school was granted public recognition. The school's reputation gradually dispelled the prejudice and by Easter of 1871, all the girls of school age from Wildon were attending the convent school.

From what our sisters told us, it is evident that you furnished the convent much too abundantly, yes, even with silver tableware. Please accept the expression of our heartfelt gratitude for this and for the many proofs of your benevolence. May God reward what we cannot. This is our daily plea to God's mercy. Please do not withdraw your benevolence from us and may the sisters be recommended to your gracious protection instead. With a good heart, they will do all in their power for the children.

Respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus

4620: *To Mother M. Caroline Friess
Milwaukee (Excerpt)*

Motherhouse
November 3, 1871

J!M!

Dear Venerable Sister Mary Caroline!

. . . You could not have given me greater joy than you did with the little picture of our holy founder [George Michael] Wittmann. God seems to have some plans. While all efforts are being made to do away with convent schools in Munich, especially ours, we were offered Obermünster¹⁷ where Bishop Wittmann lived, worked, and died. In Vienna, there are plans to move the Penzing cemetery, and it is possible that the sisters in Vienna-Fünfhaus will receive the remains of our holy founder [Francis Sebastian] Job.¹⁸ May the two holy founders continue to represent us at the throne of God!
. . .¹⁹

17. Obermünster housed the diocesan seminary in Regensburg when Bishop Wittmann was rector and later auxiliary bishop of the diocese. See Footnote 8, p. 7.

18. When the cemetery in Penzing was about to be moved, the sisters asked Empress Mother Caroline Augusta whether Fr. Job's remains could be transferred to *Mater Misericordiae*. Permission was granted and the solemn transfer took place on Fr. Job's death anniversary, February 13, 1872.

19. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 7 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

4776: *To Princess Alexandra of Bavaria*

Munich
February 11, 1873

J!M!

Your Royal Highness!²⁰

You kindly informed us of the death of our great benefactor, Her Majesty, Empress Mother Charlotte of Austria.²¹

How great is our sorrow over the loss of this very beloved mother! The poor have lost a benefactor in her but we weep over the loss of a cofoundress of our order. I can vividly picture her standing before me as she lovingly received and supported me in 1834 after the death of her confessor and our founder, [Francis] Sebastian Job. Her letter gave me access to King Louis I and inclined his heart toward us.²²

Whenever she came to Munich, she visited us and consoled us in our sorrow. I continued to cherish the hope that she would recover. In our distressing situation, I also hoped for a letter of recommendation from her motherly hand to our presently reigning king, His Majesty, Louis II. Never

20. Alexandra Amalia (1826-75), Princess of Bavaria, was the fifth and youngest daughter of King Louis I and Queen Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen. Princess Alexandra was an author and well known for her charitable works for people in need.

21. Empress Mother Caroline Augusta, who was known as Charlotte in Bavaria, died in Vienna on February 9, 1873.

22. After the unexpected death of Fr. Job on February 13, 1834, Caroline Gerhardinger went to Vienna to claim the remaining capital promised by Fr. Job to finance the remodeling of the convent building in Neunburg vorm Wald. Since confirmation of the religious institute by both the king of Bavaria and the bishop of Regensburg was required to make the money available, Caroline requested an audience with Empress Mother Caroline Augusta and asked that she would intercede on her behalf with her brother, Louis I (1786-1868), King of Bavaria (1825-48).

theless, God has taken her from us and she will now obtain for us at the throne of God in heaven what we can no longer ask of her here on earth.²³

Your Royal Highness graciously asked for our prayers for the deceased. My God, as if doing this would not be our most sacred obligation! May God grant eternal rest to her whose life was one continuous, untiring, good deed toward people in distress! All of us will cry to heaven for this!

We will have the *Requiem* in our convent chapel on Friday, February 14.

The desired songs will follow, but we would like to wait for upcoming negotiations with regard to the points under discussion.

With the assurance that we are daily united in prayer for our illustrious Royal House, I remain in deepest respect,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

4794: *To Princess Alexandra of Bavaria*

March 21, 1873

J!M!

Your Royal Highness!

You never tire of giving our house proof of your benevolence. How have we ever deserved this? Nevertheless, I cannot help saying that I was very pleasantly surprised with today's package. As I studied the enclosed photograph, the very majestic image of the celebrated empress mother of blessed memory came to mind, just as she stood before me in person when I had the favor of an audience with her.²⁴ It is a very good photograph of her!

23. On August 20, 1873, Mother Theresa wrote to Princess Alexandra and asked for her intercession with her nephew, Louis II (1845-86), King of Bavaria (1864-86). Mother Theresa hoped that King Louis II would declare the Poor School Sisters exempt from the law passed on July 4, 1872, expelling the Jesuits and any congregations related to the Jesuits from the German Empire. This letter, Document 4844, can be found in Volume 15 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

24. See Footnote 22, p.41.

As I read the eulogy, I wholeheartedly agreed with the inspired speaker who applied to the revered empress the words of St. Jerome in his tribute to St. Paula: “Whatever I say will never do justice to what she deserves.” This little work is a great treasure for our house.

We also treasure the copies of both letters. Please accept the expression of our deep gratitude. We will never stop praying that the blessing of heaven will be bestowed on our Royal House.

With deepest respect, I remain,

M. Ther. of Jesus

4811: *To Sister M. Mathilde Petri*
Vienna

Munich
May 29, 1873

J!M!

Power of Attorney

Today the undersigned, Sister M. Mathilde Petri, now local superior in Vienna-Reindorf,²⁵ received the general and special power of attorney from me, the general superior. Nevertheless, this is under the expressed obedience that she may make use of it only after she informs me of each case that occurs and after I have given her the power of attorney for that specific case.

Motherhouse of the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame
Munich, May 29, 1873

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior

M. Mathilde Petri
Local Superior in Vienna-Fünfhaus

25. Although *Mater Misericordiae* was located in Fünfhaus, a suburb, of Vienna, it belonged to Holy Trinity Parish in Reindorf, a neighboring suburb until 1876.

4817: *To Prince Bishop John Baptist Zwerger*
Seckau in Styria

Munich
[Before May 31, 1873]

J!M!

Most Reverend Prince Bishop! Your Excellency!

Since it will be impossible for me to be present at the beautiful celebration in our dear Wildon at the end of this month,²⁶ I want to express in writing my joy and gratitude for the undeserved grace that you obtained for us from the Holy See, that is, permission to have the Most Blessed Sacrament reserved in the sisters' chapel.

According to the Gospel, when Jesus entered the house of the tax collector from Jericho, he assured him that salvation would be granted to his house.²⁷ What are we to say of this sign of your benevolence toward us?

We hope that the sisters of our little convent in Wildon will meet the Heavenly Guest with hearts that are no less willing to make sacrifices because then God will bless them just as the tax collector was blessed.

Recommending the sisters to your continued benevolence and protection, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

26. After obtaining permission for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in the convent in Wildon, Prince Bishop Zwerger dedicated the sanctuary on May 31, 1873. This also helped to determine the date of this letter.

27. See *Luke* 19, 1-10.

4839: *To Archbishop Gregory von Scherr*
Munich

Munich
 August 13, 1873

J!M!

Your Excellency! Most Reverend Archbishop!²⁸
Reception of Five Postulants of the Poor School Sisters in
Munich

After our reception ceremony had to be postponed until August 28, our sisters in Vienna requested that five of their candidates would be admitted to reception with ours in Munich.²⁹

The respectfully undersigned hereby requests the approval of their petition as well as permission to give them the religious habit.

Their names are

a) Elementary teachers

- 1) Margaret Enders, daughter of a sergeant from Aschaffenburg, born on May 1, 1850
- 2) Felicitas Hellriegl, daughter of a master tailor from Mals in Tyrol, born on September 12, 1850

b) Needlework teachers

- 1) Anna Kellner, daughter of a vinegar manufacturer in Brigittenau near Vienna, born on June 4, 1848;
- 2) Amalie Kernecker, daughter of a master weaver from Schenkenfelden, Austria, born on June 23, 1846;
- 3) Josepha Schestack, daughter of a forest ranger from Witana in Bohemia, born September 4, 1840.³⁰

28. Gregory von Scherr, OSB (1804-77), Archbishop of Munich and Freising (1856-77)

29. There was insufficient space at *Mater Misericordiae* for a novitiate at the time.

30. These five postulants were received in Munich on August 28, 1873, and given the religious names, M. Evarista Enders, M. Palmatia Hellriegl, M. Achatis Kellner, M. Walerika Kernecker, and M. Sulpitia Schestack

Requesting archiepiscopal approval of this request, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

4864: *To Anton and Jacob Lang*
Vienna

Munich
October 1, 1873

J!M!

Honorable Brothers!³¹

You presented us with a plan by which, in the event of the dissolution of our religious institute in Bavaria, the sisters could take refuge in Austria and lay the groundwork for gradually establishing a splendid institute in Kritzensdorf.³²

We were very moved when we read your letter because we recognized not only your great zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of immortal souls but also your lively interest in our weal and woe. Please accept the expression of our sincerest gratitude!

Nevertheless, we must admit that we cannot manage the provisional establishment of an institute now. We do not want to remain idle, however, and we will continue to teach and train the orphans for whom God called us to Vienna.

If, with God's help, the sisters meet these demands as well as those placed on them in the classroom, they will have a wide field of labor for now. They may not use up their energies by having an institute at a time when there are neither sufficient personnel nor the financial means to acquire

31. The Lang brothers, Anton (1819-80) and Jacob (1822-92), were prominent textile manufacturers in Vienna. They were also in charge of the schools in Fünfhaus. Besides the Poor School Sisters, other religious congregations, parishes, and church-related associations in and around Vienna benefited from their generosity and services.

32. By 1872, the area around *Mater Misericordia* had become a heavily populated industrial area. In Kritzensdorf, a town along the Danube River outside the city of Vienna, the Lang brothers found a country house with a large fruit and vegetable garden that was available for sale. They helped the sisters acquire the property for use as an orphanage and a convalescent home for sick sisters.

another new building. The sisters are already sighing under the current unbearable burden of debt.³³

If a house in Kritzendorf is established in accordance with its original purpose, it will not lack the blessing of God if orphan girls under ten are admitted and the property is carefully managed. The Vienna house could then accommodate more orphans who are older. Time will tell.

Please continue to grant us the benevolence that you have bestowed on the sisters up to now and for which we are very grateful.

With best wishes to your wife and daughters,³⁴ I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mary Theresa of Jesus

4920: *To the City Council*
Munich

Munich
March 21, 1874

Esteemed City Council!
*Vienna World's Fair*³⁵

Reference to Decree No. 9718 of March 10 (received March 12, 1874)

With regard to the above request, the French ambassador asked us for an explanation of our teaching methods, curriculum, and other related items because he wanted to present them to his government.

Since we can give him a copy of all this, we are not re-

33. An elementary school was opened at *Mater Misericordia* in 1867. Several purchases and additions to the buildings had to be made in order to keep up with the rapidly increasing number of girls at the school and orphanage.

34. It could not be determined if only one of the brothers was married or if one was already a widower at the time this letter was written.

35. The Vienna International Exhibition (World's Fair) was held from May 1 until November 2, 1873. Exhibits on education merited particular praise at this fair. According to the Vienna Chronicle, many fairgoers from Bavaria also came to visit the sisters.

questing the return of the articles that we sent. We ask that you would inform the royal government of this.

Respectfully yours,

Generalate
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame,
Mary Ther. of Jesus

4942: *To Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas*
Neuschloss near Wildon in Styria

Munich
May 12, 1874

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

You were pleased to notify us of the solemn wedding celebration of your daughter, Countess Anna.

Even though our congratulations are late, we have not neglected to send our prayers to the throne of God who, we trust, will bestow a heavenly blessing.

Requesting your continued noble benevolence, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

5156: *To Countess Marie des Enffans d'Avernas*
Neuschloss near Wildon in Styria

Munich
May 31, 1876

J!M!

Your Excellency! Noble Countess!

Although a response to your gracious letter has been due for a very long time, I feel completely confident that you will not spurn this expression of my gratitude.

Our loving God knows how necessary a mother is for

bringing up the little princes³⁶ and princesses. Therefore, God has not closed an ear to our prayers but has granted you recovery. Thanks be to our merciful God!

Our sisters in Wildon also revere you as a loving and concerned mother. May the dear Lord grant them the grace to train the children entrusted to them in the fear and love of God and to teach them what they will need in order to become useful members of society. Then you and the count, the devout founders of the little convent in Wildon, will be able to refresh yourselves with the sweet fruits of your sowing already now!

We want to recommend little Pius in particular to the motherly Heart of Mary.

We will tell Sister Felicitas³⁷ that you asked about her. She is in Vienna and, as far as we know, in good health.

Recommending our sisters in Wildon and all of us to your benevolent care and worthy prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

Mary Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

36. The des Enffans d'Avernas family promised that they would found a convent school in Wildon if God would send them a son and heir. Twin boys, Frederick and Hippolytus, were born on April 9, 1870, ten days before the sisters arrived in Wildon. Count Frederick entered the Jesuits in 1887 and was ordained shortly before his father died in 1901. Count Hippolytus was known by his second name, Pius. He died in 1894 at the age of 24. Their half-sister, Countess Anna, inherited the family property.

37. After teaching in Wildon for three years, Candidate Felicitas Hellriegel was received as Novice M. Palmatia in 1873.

Mission to England

Introduction

Greater religious freedom and growing industrialization in nineteenth-century England attracted thousands of immigrants from various European countries, including many from German-speaking countries. Some of the immigrants were engaged in business, banking, or the arts; others were teachers, governesses, or servants. Many tried to eke out a living for their growing families by laboring in factories or sugar refineries. Whitechapel, a very poor factory area in London's East End, became home to an increasing number of German-Catholic immigrants.

Since Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell studied in Munich and was fluent in German, he was assigned to St. Boniface Parish in Whitechapel. Soon a small chapel built earlier could no longer accommodate the parishioners and collections were taken up in other European countries to provide the parish with a new church, school, and convent.

In 1859, Father Dillon-Purcell asked Mother Theresa to send sisters to conduct a school and a kindergarten for the children of the parish and to provide evening classes that included religious instruction for the girls and young women who worked in nearby factories.

After five years of preparation, setbacks, and renewed hope, six sisters were finally sent to Whitechapel in October 1864 to open the first mission in England. Mother Theresa wanted to travel with them but she became ill on the way and waited in Paris until Fr. Matthias Siegert returned from London. Her prayer accompanied the sisters: "May God inspire the sisters with true missionary spirit and bless their work!"¹

Mother Theresa never had an opportunity to visit the English missions that were for her a source of great hope and great anxiety. Her letters reveal to us her faith and

1. Document 3736 a, p. 72.

trust in God, which inspired her response to the situation, whether it was characterized as catastrophic, as she wrote in 1871,² or as providing a possible place of refuge in time of persecution, as indicated several months later.³

“All that is truly good, all that is of God, proceeds slowly from a beginning that is both small and poor.”⁴ Mother Theresa’s words, written in 1863, were clearly borne out in the mission to England.

2. See Document 4584, p. 100.

3. See Document 4669 a, p. 113.

4. Document 3331, p. 61

1859—1865

2996 a *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
 November 11, 1859

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!¹

The local superior² of our mission institute in Aschaffenburg told me that you inquired whether we would be interested in conducting a German school and a kindergarten in London. . . .³

It would give us deep joy to come to the help of the young women, particularly those who work in the factories and are in such great need, as well as to take charge of the secondary school for girls. We conduct several secondary schools both here and in other countries, which—praise and thanks be to God—enjoy universal satisfaction. Therefore, I wish to state our willingness and gladly offer our services.

You requested one or other plan from our existing houses. It is my honor to present two different plans, one of which includes a chapel. The second plan only shows rooms for the school and institute because the church is next to the institute garden. You are free to choose either one, which, of course, could be made smaller or larger in accordance with the requirements in London for the purpose under discussion.

1. Arthur Dillon-Purcell, Pastor of St. Boniface Catholic Parish in London (1854-71)

2. Sister M. Vincentia Wildenrother

3. Fr. Dillon-Purcell's response to Mother Theresa on January 20, 1860, confirms that this is an archival copy of her letter, but internal evidence indicates an omission after the first paragraph.

Hoping that this letter will find you in good health and confidently entrusting this cause to the Divine Friend of Children, I remain united in prayer and respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister
[No Signature]

(Transcript, Munich) 17764

3034: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Our Motherhouse in Munich
February 21, 1860

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

I was on a visitation journey when your kind letter of January 20 arrived at our motherhouse and brought the glad news that we will have the honor of welcoming you here this summer.⁴ We extend our most cordial invitation.

Please do not take it amiss if I express my heart's quiet desire in the meantime. If you would find one or more young women who have excellent talent, a religious vocation, and sufficient temporal means to support themselves during their time of preparation, would you kindly consider directing them to us so that we would have a few native English women as aspirants?

We would be happy to welcome them here and give them the opportunity to complete their education so that if, with God's help, your efforts succeed in carrying out your blessed work, you could take them back again as laborers in the vineyard of the Lord.

In the meantime, we will present this intention to God in prayer. We also ask that you would remember the Religious Institute of the Poor School Sisters in the most holy Sacrifice

4. In his letter of January 20, 1860, Fr. Dillon-Purcell told of his plans to travel to Bavaria in order to collect money for the church he planned to build for the German Catholics. See *Copia Publica* (Transcript, Generalate) 4783-84.

of the Mass. Please accept the enclosed small directory⁵ for this purpose.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Theresa of Jesus

3221: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
February 1, 1861

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

Your kind letter asked us to send 200 copies of *Aufruf* (Appeal)⁶ to Vienna because collecting goes quite well there, and raffles are even more successful. Thanks be to God who has inspired you with this great and holy thought! All the power to carry it out rests in God's hands as reality has shown so often. You have been chosen as God's instrument to carry out a blessed work that will surely lead to far greater graces, the greatest of which will be that of saving the souls of children for heaven. What a joy this will be for you!

Immediately after your departure, Countess Arco [Zinneberg] came to inquire whether she might give us the proceeds from her raffle and we joyfully accepted her offer. Since then, however, we have received nothing for the cause, neither from the countess, nor from anyone else. No letters came for you either, but we will let you know as soon as something arrives.

We were happy to hear that you visited the Poor School Sisters in Vienna,⁷ and if they give satisfaction there, we give praise and thanks to God!

5. Beginning in 1853, the generalate in Munich published an annual directory listing the motherhouses, missions, and personnel at each place. Statistical information and a report on the significant events in the congregation during the previous year were also included.

6. *Aufruf* (Appeal) was a flyer announcing a German bazaar to be held in London to raise funds for a new church, school, and convent for German Catholics living there.

7. The first mission in Vienna was opened in October 1860.

If you are thinking of returning before the end of February and are willing to share our poor rooms and food, you are most welcome to stay here. We would be happy to see you again and to be of service. We pray for you daily.

Our father spiritual [Matthias Siegert] has happy memories of your visit and sends his best regards.

We will send the 200 copies by mail.

With prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3323: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
February 12, 1862

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

Unfortunately, your letter arrived too late. We had already packed the articles for the raffle being held for your cause⁸ and shipped them to your address through Becker and Neumann in Hamburg. If it takes too long for them to arrive, you might inquire there, so that the goods will not be damaged.

We are sorry that the raffle did not go as you wished, but this time it certainly was not our fault. The exhibit did not bring in as much as you expected either because another person was supposedly here earlier collecting for the same cause. We will send another piece of needlework that we think you could enter into the international exhibition.⁹ I hope that we will be able to send both this piece, on which we worked for several years, and another small article that came to us more recently for this purpose.

Since we had not heard anything further about your plans, I could only reflect on the selection of personnel in a

8. On January 28, 1862, Fr. Dillon-Purcell wrote to Mother Theresa and stated that a bazaar would be held in March to raise funds for the church, convent, and school in London. (Autograph, Munich) 17771

9. An international exhibition or world's fair was held in London in 1862.

general way. However, now that you have given me a definite statement,¹⁰ I will try to take into consideration your expressed wish with regard to the superior in Aschaffenburg—if her health allows.¹¹ We will do everything possible so that the children, who will be entrusted to the sisters who are coming, will not lag behind the Protestant children—but lead the way instead.¹²

In the meantime, we will pray that God will send help and blessing for the full realization of your plans and that we will be able to lay the first religious foundation stone.

You were unable to win over any young women for the religious life. Perhaps God will help you find a poor, well-mannered young woman, 15 or 16 years old, who speaks English well and knows the grammar but can only be a servant because she is poor. She could come to us for a few years, and, if she did not want to remain with us, she could always return to her own country.

A very unexpected death took from us our good friend, noble Msgr. [Jacob] von Wifling.¹³ Together with the entire kingdom of Bavaria, we mourn his loss.

We forwarded your friendly greetings to our father spiritual [Matthias Siegert], which he likewise returns. He would also like to remind you to send him, perhaps with your next letter, the London syllabus that you discussed, so that we can see what is required, not only of the elementary schools but also of the certified teachers.

10. In the same letter of January 28, 1862, Fr. Dillon-Purcell wrote that the sisters would not lack suitable “living quarters, conveniences, food, or anything else prescribed by the order.” He looked forward to further directives and a statement of her decision regarding the mission in London. (Autograph, Munich) 17771

11. Sister M. Vincentia Wildenrother

12. In the same letter, Fr. Dillon-Purcell also stated that “great tact, a good education, and scholarliness” were required “in order to compete with the Protestants.” (Autograph, Munich) 17771

13. Jacob von Wifling (1810-62), a native of Neunburg vorm Wald, was ordained in 1834. He was a professor and government advisor in Church and educational matters in Munich, where he died on February 5, 1862.

As for myself, I would be happy if you would kindly send, for our examination, a sketch of the building in which the sisters will live.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Theresa of Jesus

3369: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
May 20, 1862

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

With this letter, we would like to let you know that we took the promised piece of needlework to the customs office today. We sent it to the enclosed address as you advised in one of your earlier letters.

We are offering the rug, or rather, the income from it, to God and entrusting it to you for the establishment of our religious institute. We would only like to mention that it could not be delivered if its value were less than 1,000 florin.¹⁴ Please give us the good news of its arrival soon!

Our sisters in Heidingsfeld passed on your friendly greetings soon after you visited there. We gratefully return them, as does our father spiritual [Matthias Siegert].

We remember your cause in our daily prayer so that God will bring this new and very beneficial work to completion.

You may assure the young woman, about whom you wrote, that we will give her a cordial welcome and accommodations. She will need to bring her baptismal and education certificates, as well as a character reference.

Please give Fr. [Francis] Adler¹⁵ our best regards and thank him for his written communications.

United in prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

14. \$400 in American currency at the time

15. Fr. Francis Adler was an assistant at the German Catholic parish in London

P.S. [Apollonia] Diepenbrock¹⁶ from Regensburg sent us the enclosed 100 florin¹⁷ for your cause. Kindly do with this money as you wish, but in your next letter, please enclose a small sheet of paper with a few words of gratitude to her, which we will then give her as her receipt.

3331: *To an Assistant*
London

Motherhouse
February 21, [1863]¹⁸

J!M!

Reverend Father!

Your repeated expressions of gratitude for the hospitality extended during your brief stay here put us to shame.

The books, greatly longed for by the sisters who are dedicating themselves to the study of English, have not yet arrived.

Although Theresa O'Hea is in good health and growing daily in physical strength, she is unable to prepare for elementary teaching. She has little talent for needlework, and the permanent disability in her hand is an added impediment. Nevertheless, she is a good child.

According to your report, the construction of the intended convent building has encountered new obstacles. Although we do not know what these obstacles are, it is very evident that this good cause is God's work and, for this reason, the world and Satan will be against it from the beginning. Nevertheless, for us Christians, it is an even greater sign encouraging us to persevere.

16. Apollonia von Diepenbrock (1799-1880), the sister of Cardinal Melchior von Diepenbrock (1798-1853), was known for her many works of charity in Regensburg. Her name is listed in the flyer *Aufruf* as the person responsible for receiving donations from Regensburg for the German Catholic parish in London.

17. \$40 in American currency at the time

18. Although the year 1862 is given on the copy of this letter prepared for the beatification process, internal evidence indicates that this letter was written on February 21, 1863, in response to a letter of December 31, 1862, written by Fr. Dillon-Purcell's assistant. See M. Liobgid Ziegler, *Magd des Herrn*, (Typescript, Milwaukee) 317-318.

In the meantime, let us commend the cause to God's loving heart. All that is truly good, all that is of God, proceeds slowly from a beginning that is both small and poor. Please remember us at the altar.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3544: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
April 25, 1863

Very Reverend Pastor!

Due to an unusual circumstance, we feel obliged to break the long silence.

Fr. Chrysostom Stangl, a priest who is now an assistant at Regen in the Bavarian forest, would like to engage in missionary work among the German people in England. He is a zealous confessor and a good preacher and he is in the prime of his life. His character is open and his life irreproachable. He requested that we would tell you of his desire and ask if you could give him any further instructions about what he must do in order to realize his goal.

It is neither lack of work nor the disfavor of his superior—who is doing everything possible to keep him back instead—but love that urges him to dedicate himself to this vocation. You would certainly have a reliable coworker in the Lord's vineyard. He is already quite proficient in several languages and he would certainly become fluent in English very soon.

Now he wants to settle his affairs as soon as possible so that he can make his way to London. We would be most grateful, therefore, if you would kindly let us know as soon as possible whether, how, and under what conditions he could carry out his plan. Then we would be able to give him thorough and reliable information.

Unfortunately, Theresa O'Hea continues to be in poor health. Previously she suffered from obesity, but now she is rapidly wasting away and, among other things, complains of pains in her side. It seems that the good child cannot bear

our climate. We would like to have her return to London with Fr. Stangl because he could ensure her safety—if his transfer does not drag out too long.¹⁹

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3545: *To an Assistant*
London

Munich
April 25, 1863

J!M!

Very Reverend Assistant!

The books you sent arrived from MÜNNERSTADT through Francis Louis Fromm, a student of philosophy. This made our sisters very happy and they are already using them to practice even more for the children.²⁰

Please accept the expression of our sincere gratitude for your kindness along with our request that you would continue to remember us in prayer, especially at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Theresa of Jesus

3601: *To Fr. Chrysostom Stangl*
Langdorf, Bavaria

Reisbach
September 29, 1863

J!M!

Very Reverend Parish Administrator!

When I returned to the motherhouse after a six-week visitation trip, I found your letter of August 13. I had to leave again for further travel and was unable to answer it at home. For this reason, I am replying from here.

19. According to Mother Theresa's letter to Fr. Stangl on June 3, 1863 (Document 3556 in the beatification collection.), this request initially received a negative reply.

20. See Document 3331, p. 61.

We rejoice with you over the good news that you received from London and hope that God, who has awakened this desire within you, will also provide for its fulfillment. Although you have been transferred from Regen, you are not very far from the sisters there.²¹ I recommend them to your continued good will and ask that, as long as you are in Langdorf, you would provide them now and then with advice and help.

Leaving everything to God, I remain respectfully yours,
 The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3613: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
 November 11, 1863

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

After a long time, you wrote again and kindly informed us about the current situation regarding our school in London. On the one hand, it is your great desire to entrust your schools to the Poor School Sisters; on the other hand, it is still impossible to do so because of the lack of available means.

Please accept the expression of our gratitude and allow us to express our views on this.

I see very clearly that things in London will proceed just as they did with our establishment in America and as they always do whenever it involves the expansion of the reign of God. Christ, Our Lord, came into the world in a stable and lay in a manger because there was no room in the inn. His poor brides may not expect or ask for anything else.

In view of your difficult position and the urgent need for help in establishing a German Catholic school, a need that cannot be met by a single layperson as I often saw and experienced in America, I propose that we also make a sacrifice. Until the merciful God sends further help, we will send sisters to conduct a German elementary school for girls in your parish without a stipend for a few years. We will pro-

21. Langdorf is approximately 3.75 miles (6 km) from Regen.

vide for them out of our own means and furnish their living quarters very simply. Then we will send the candidate you mentioned to the Brede Convent in Westphalia,²² where she will also make her novitiate.

If this is acceptable to you, we ask for a definite response. Then we could arrange to transfer the candidate and to take charge of the school for girls in London sometime next year, that is, in 1864.

Surely you will be able to find a small place close to the school and church that could be rented for the few sisters for the time being. If it is not too expensive, we are willing to pay the rent from our own means, so that you would only have to provide for the school and the necessary materials.

In the meantime, we will recommend the cause to God and the sisters will continue to perfect their English.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3621: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Motherhouse
January 7, 1864

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

In response to our last letter, you expressed the desire that the sisters destined for London would come in the spring of 1864 rather than in the fall.

Although the reason that you gave is clear to us,²³ and we would like to comply, we are unable to do so. Since it did

22. In 1850, a mission was opened at the Brede Convent located just outside of Brakel in Westphalia. Augustinian Nuns had lived at this convent from 1483 until they were disbanded in 1810 as a result of the Secularization. Although named *Mariae Opferungsthal* (Valley of Mary's Presentation), the convent was more commonly known as the Brede Convent.

23. On November 25, 1863, Fr. Dillon-Purcell wrote that "since the English method of teaching differs greatly from the German method," it would be advantageous for the sisters to come before the current teacher leaves for the candidature in Germany as planned. See *Copia Publica* (Transcript, Generalate) 4812-14.

not seem that the cause would become a reality so quickly, we sent all our personnel to other houses. With the situation as it is in Germany, no changes in teaching personnel can be made before the close of the current school year, that is, before September 1864.

The candidate you mentioned must also be patient. After the arrival of the sisters, she must remain in England for a short time in order to give them a helping hand, which, if she has a religious vocation, she will be happy to do.

We certainly did not underestimate the sisters' living expenses—we trust in the rich Lord of heaven and earth who will not let us trust in vain.²⁴

In the meantime, would you kindly consider a small, simple cottage like the one you mentioned in your letter?²⁵ If one is available, please rent it for the sisters who will come, remembering, however, that it must be close to the church and school, or at least not very far from them.

We are grateful for your thoughts about setting up evening classes and a secondary school for girls,²⁶ but first we will limit ourselves to the elementary school until everything is running smoothly. Then God will show us what to do about your proposal.

Finally, would you please try to find out about the questions that are asked during the teachers' examinations? This would help us become somewhat acquainted with their direction and focus and the sisters could review the material.

United in prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mary Theresa of Jesus

24. In the same letter, Fr. Dillon-Purcell wrote that 30 pounds (\$137.40) would be needed for taxes and rent, and 80 pounds (\$326.40) for living expenses. *Copia Publica*, 4812-14

25. Fr. Dillon-Purcell also mentioned that the land on which the church and school stood would be sold and a new church and school would have to be built. It would be at least two years before a convent could be built. *Copia Publica*, 4812-14

26. Finally, Fr. Dillon-Purcell indicated that a secondary school would be a source of income for the sisters. *Copia Publica*, 4812-14

3666: *To Fr. E. Boeddinghaus*
London

Motherhouse
 May 13, 1864

J!M!

Reverend Father!²⁷

Your kind letter with news from London gave us consolation again.

If the young woman, whom you recommended, is of legitimate birth, healthy in mind and body, loves children, and is so well versed in her native tongue that she can teach in English, she is most welcome. We also believe that we are anticipating Fr. [Arthur Dillon-] Purcell's quiet wish if we send her to our Brede Convent near Brakel in Westphalia. We will let the sisters there know about this.

In addition to all their certificates, our candidates bring their own underclothing (at least a dozen sets), the dresses they have been wearing, and some black dresses with longer collars.

This young woman's willingness to be sent anywhere at her superior's discretion is for us a proof of her vocation. This makes us happy because, if a missionary order like ours is to fulfill its purpose, it needs strong souls as members.

We hope that the candidate announced earlier, a certified teacher, will work for some time with the sisters who are coming, as we already stated in our letter to Fr. Purcell on January 7, 1864.²⁸

You mentioned that the house is close to the church. If it also has a small garden where the sisters could walk, we ask that you would settle the rent. Please let us know in sufficient time when it would be available for us because it would be best if we could send our sisters in September. If the building has sufficient space, pupils could be accepted and accommodated, and thus a small boarding school would be opened.

27. Fr. E. Boeddinghaus was an assistant at the German Catholic parish in London.

28. See Document 3621, pp. 65-66.

Urgently recommending God's work and all of us to your prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3686: *To Fr. E. Boeddinghaus*
London

Munich
July 10, 1864

J!M!

Reverend Father!

In response to your inquiry concerning the whereabouts of King Louis I,²⁹ we asked our sisters in Aschaffenburg where he is staying at this time so that we could give you correct information. We learned that King Louis will be in Aschaffenburg for two more weeks, awaiting the arrival of Archduchess Maria Theresa of Austria.³⁰ If she likes it there, the king will stay longer. From Aschaffenburg, he plans to go to Ludwigshöhe, his villa in the Rhineland-Palatinate.³¹

One of our sisters, who was just at the Brede Convent near Brakel, brought us the news that Miss Forbes arrived safely.³² A candidate waited for her in Paderborn and then brought her to our Brede Convent. She already feels very much at home and now has the opportunity to be fully prepared as a teacher. May God bless her! According to what she wrote, Fr. [Arthur Dillon-] Purcell is also going there this fall. We certainly hope that we will also be able to meet with him here in Munich.

29. Louis I (1786-1868), King of Bavaria (1825-48)

30. Maria Theresa (1849-1919), Archduchess of Austria-Este and Royal Princess of Hungary and Bohemia, married Louis III (1845-1921) in 1868. Louis III was the grandson of King Louis I and became king of Bavaria in 1913.

31. The Rhineland-Palatinate is in southwest Germany between Luxembourg and the Rhine River.

32. According to Fr. Boeddinghaus's letter of June 24, 1864, Miss Forbes from Glasgow, Scotland, was accompanied as far as Antwerp, Belgium, and then traveled alone to Paderborn. (Autograph, Munich) 17780

With God's grace, may your great zeal succeed in finding a suitable house for rent!³³ Would you kindly let us know, as soon as possible, the state of affairs in this regard and could you please send the examination questions that we requested earlier.

Finally, we ask that you would give Fr. Purcell our best regards and that you would entrust our intentions to God in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3697: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
July 26, 1864

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

The Lord let you find a suitable house! We began the work solely for the honor and glory of God whose favorites, the children, we want to help. For this reason, we also trust that God will help us.

A bill of exchange for 60 pounds is enclosed.³⁴

We ask that only the simplest and most necessary furnishings would be ready for the sisters in the house, in the kitchen, and in the chapel. Our rule prescribes this and the sisters are used to poverty. Later, if there is a secondary school with boarders, it could be furnished differently so that it would be attractive to outsiders.

We will provide the linens.

33. In the same letter, Fr. Boeddinghaus also mentioned that since the previously mentioned house did not have a garden and was next to a large factory, he hoped to find a better house for the sisters. (Autograph, Munich) 17780

34. In his letter of July 20, 1864, Fr. Dillon-Purcell asked Mother Theresa to send 60 pounds (\$274.80) to cover the first payment of rent and the cost of furnishing the house and chapel. He also asked that, if linens were less expensive in Germany than in England, the sisters should bring them from Germany. (Autograph, Munich) 17781

We fully agree with you that, in the beginning, we should limit ourselves to school. The sisters will have more than enough to do until everything is well underway.³⁵

It is a good sign that the teacher you mentioned is willing to help the sisters for a while and we are happy to accept her offer. May God grant her steadfastness in her intent!

On your next trip, you will surely stop at our motherhouse in Munich and then we could discuss a number of things in person. We are happy to offer you the little room you occupied the last time.

Recommending all to God and to your kind concern, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3717: *To Fr. Eberhard*
Kelheim, Bavaria

Munich
October 6, 1864

J!M!

Very Reverend City Pastor!

We are very sorry to have to call Sister M. Venantia Kopp from Kelheim so unexpectedly because the new mission in England will be ready much sooner than we thought. Sister Venantia has been destined for London for a long time and we had to call her to the motherhouse immediately in order to prepare for the journey. She will leave for London with the other sisters in a few days.

Sister M. Alexia Seidl, who is prepared to teach both the elementary subjects and French, will take her place in Kelheim.

35. In the same letter, Fr. Dillon-Purcell asked for a superior, two teaching sisters, and a house sister. The sisters were expected to have a good command of English so that they could teach in English and pass the required examination. Although he was pastor of a German Catholic parish, he expected that classes in the parish school would be conducted in English. (Autograph, Munich) 17781

We recommend this sister to your good will and pastoral guidance and the entire mission in Kelheim to your special protection and worthy prayer.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3730: *To Archbishop Gregory von Scherr*
Munich

Munich
October 17, 1864

J!M!

Your Excellency! Most Reverend Archbishop!³⁶

Today a decree arrived from His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman³⁷ calling the Poor School Sisters to take charge of an elementary school for German Catholic girls in London.

With your approval therefore, six sisters and two aspirants³⁸ will leave for London on October 24, the feast of St. Raphael.

The respectfully undersigned now requests that the Louis Mission Society would graciously cover the travel expenses for these sisters. The Poor School Sisters are making a great sacrifice in accepting this mission, which is primarily for German girls who are helpless, forsaken, and poor. They will grow up as unbelievers if they do not have an education and religious instruction. Since we have no assurance that we will receive any financial support or find a house there, the undersigned hopes that she has not made this request in vain.

Respectfully yours,

M. Th. of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

36. Gregory von Scherr, OSB (1804-77), Archbishop of Munich and Freising (1856-77), was also the head of the Louis Mission Society.

37. Cardinal Nicholas Wiseman (1802-65), Archbishop of Westminster (1850-65)

38. Sisters M. Sabina Mayrl, M. Gerhardine Westermeier, M. Venantia Kopp, M. Liberta Huber, M. Agnella Rauchenegger, and M. Eleonora Schels were sent to the mission in London. Amelia Behringer was one of two aspirants who accompanied them.

3736 a: *To Archbishop Gregory von Scherr*
 Munich

Munich
October 21, 1864

Your Excellency! Most Reverend Bishop!

Today, the feast of St. Ursula, we received the 500 florin³⁹ that you graciously granted us to cover the travel expenses for the sisters who will be leaving for London.

Please accept the expression of our deep gratitude for this charitable alms, which confirmed your continued benevolence. Through the intercession of St. Ursula and St. Walburga, may God inspire the sisters with the true *missionary spirit* and bless their work in the homeland of these saints, for then they will be able to give glory to God and lead many children, especially the poor German children, to the Divine Savior!

We will strongly encourage the sisters to pray for you.

Respectfully yours,

[No Signature]

(Transcript, Munich) 17786

3737: *To Msgr. John Michael Friess*
 Eichstätt (Excerpt)

Munich
October 21, 1864

J!M!

Very Reverend Vicar-General!⁴⁰

Allow me to express our sincere gratitude for the precious relics and to recommend the sisters destined for England to your prayer at the tomb of St. Walburga.⁴¹

39. \$200 in American currency at the time

40. Msgr. John Michael Friess (1803-69) was the vicar-general of the diocese of Eichstätt (1851-69) and Mother Caroline's uncle.

41. At the request of Cardinal Wiseman, Msgr. Friess obtained 24 flasks of Walburga's Oil for the sisters to take to London. St. Walburga was an English Benedictine who lived in the eighth century and devoted her life to the conversion of Germany. In the ninth century, her relics were transferred to Eichstätt where a mysterious liquid, known as *Walburga's Oil*, collects on them. Healings continue to be attributed to the saint's intercession today.

Sister Alipia [Friess]⁴² was not assigned to England, but if, after a few years, she grows stronger in every respect, God willing, she may be sent to Sister Caroline [Friess] in America to be her support. For now, she has another mission to fulfill in our own country. Sister Bernarda [Burger] from Neumarkt is ill and Alipia must take her place as superior until the former has fully regained her strength. . . .⁴³

3742: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
October 24, 1864

Very Reverend Pastor!

We trust in God that you will have already arrived safely in London by the time this letter reaches you.

Some of the sisters' baggage has been sent to Mr. Adolp but more will follow. If you have incurred any expense, we will reimburse you on our arrival.

Since we heard that you went from Würzburg to Mainz and Aachen on business, we kept the bill of exchange so that the sisters could bring it along. Meanwhile, a letter from His Eminence Cardinal [Nicholas] Wiseman arrived, telling us that the sisters were accepted into the archdiocese.⁴⁴ The sisters will express our gratitude in person.

We will leave for London on Thursday, October 27, and, God willing, arrive on October 29. Since our father spiritual [Matthias Siegert] offered to travel with us so that we would be accompanied by a priest, we thank you for your kind offer to call for us at Dover.

42. Sister M. Alipia Friess (1840-1900), Mother Caroline's youngest sister, made her first profession in 1862.

43. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 7 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

44. On October 13, 1864, Cardinal Wiseman wrote: "We not only grant our permission to these same sisters to care for this German school, but likewise express our sincere gratitude for such a charitable proposal." See Mother Mary Loretto Gies and Sister M. Lidoria Balk, SSND, *Foundations of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in England, 1864-1981* (Cambridge, Ontario: Good Books, 1983) 107.

May the holy angel, who traveled with Tobias to Rages⁴⁵ and St. Walburga to Germany, also accompany us to England!

Asking for your protection and for your prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

3748: *To Cardinal Nicholas Clarelli-Paracciani*
Rome (Excerpt)

Munich
October 27, 1864

J!M!

Your Eminence! Most Reverend Cardinal Protector!⁴⁶

. . . Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell, the pastor of the German Catholic parish in *London*, England, worked for years to entrust to our congregation two German elementary classes, a kindergarten, and the poor, neglected, and forsaken girls from the country. We were not only to instruct these girls but, together with the clergy, we were also to prepare them, either for the reception of the sacraments or for conversion to the Catholic faith. Since His Eminence Cardinal [Nicholas] Wiseman graciously gave his approval, I am about to accompany six sisters and our father spiritual [Matthias Siegert] to London to take on the difficult missionary work there. The sisters going to London speak the new language and are very enthusiastic about their noble calling. We ask for your blessing so that God will grant grace and success. . . .⁴⁷

45. See *Tobit* 5.

46. Cardinal Nicholas Clarelli-Paracciani (1799-1872) was appointed the order's cardinal protector in 1859, a position he held until his death.

47. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 5 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

3894: *To Archbishop Henry E. Manning*
London

Munich
 August 6, 1865

J!M!

Your Excellency! Most Reverend Archbishop!⁴⁸

We received the news of your appointment as archbishop of London. As the last among the many, we wish to pay our tribute and to present our congratulations and promise of prayer as you accept this new position with its additional burden. May the Chief Shepherd and Bishop shower you with the choicest gifts of grace!

We also ask that you would bestow your gracious benevolence on St. Walburga Convent on Whitechapel Road, as your predecessor did in the past.⁴⁹ The good sisters, isolated from the rest of the world and far from home, are in need of a caring protector and a powerful shield and shelter.

We ask that you would grant us your episcopal blessing.

Respectfully yours,

Mar. Ther. of Jesus
 General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

48. After Cardinal Wiseman died at the age of 62 on February 15, 1865, Henry Edward Manning (1808-92) was appointed Archbishop of Westminster on May 16, 1865, and remained in this position until his death on January 14, 1892.

49. Cardinal Wiseman

3907: *To King Louis I*

No. 267 Whitechapel Road
London
August 23, 1865

J!M!

Most Illustrious Monarch!
Most Gracious Majesty, King and Lord!
Building a Convent in London

If enthusiasm for the glory of God gave us the courage to leave our beloved homeland, then it is this same enthusiasm that fills us with courage to approach your throne with great humility and complete trust. Your hand is always open when it involves great things for God, the Catholic Church, and the German cause.

We have been in London for almost a year, teaching the German children who were almost completely abandoned to ignorance and moral decay. Our lack of financial means forces us to live in a house with such high rent that we are unable to meet the payments.⁵⁰ Although we are in great need of a convent, there is no thought of building one because, even if it were constructed in the simplest manner, the cost is estimated at 1,400 pounds (16,000 florin).⁵¹

It is true that we are far from home, but we are still children of Catholic Bavaria and our love for the illustrious ruling house inspires us with confidence that your generosity will also reach across the sea. Therefore, we submit our request that Your Royal Majesty would please grant us your gracious support for the building of a convent.

May it please Your Majesty to lend a benevolent ear to our request! In the hearts of the Poor School Sisters in London and in their convent, a monument will be built to your

50. An advance payment of 65 pounds (\$297.70) for rent was due on September 29.

51. Approximately \$6,400 in American currency at the time

royal name, which is already spoken of with so much gratitude and respect in all the houses of our order in Germany and America.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
*Mar. Gerhardine [Westermeier]*⁵²
 Together with all the Sisters

The enclosed communication is from our sisters in London who were called there from Munich last fall by the now deceased Cardinal Wiseman.⁵³ The death of this apostolic man put us into a difficult position, and therefore I submit this petition now. I would also like to add that in all our houses, we continue to pray daily for Your Royal Majesty.

Respectfully yours,

Mar. Ther. of Jesus
 General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

52. After Sister M. Sabina Mayrl returned to Bavaria for health reasons on May 5, 1865, Sister M. Gerhardine Westermeier was appointed superior in London.

53. When Cardinal Wiseman was archbishop of Westminster (1850-65), there was a great influx of Catholics in England, most of them immigrants from Ireland and other countries. Despite opposition from several sides, Cardinal Wiseman established new parishes, provided churches and schools, and encouraged various religious orders to come to his archdiocese.

1866—1871

4032: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
 April 24, 1866

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

To my regret, I see from the date of your letter that our response is very late. Nevertheless, not a day has passed when we did not recommend you and our house in London to God in prayer.

Thank you very much for your news about our sisters and their work in England and for the abundance of pastoral concern, interest, and charity that you bestow upon the poor sisters—in material things, but especially in spiritual matters. The sisters themselves told us about this, to our great consolation. May God reward you for everything and shower the sisters with grace and blessing to help them fulfill their difficult and noble vocation in England with determination and perseverance!

If only we could give you consoling news! Our sisters' petition to King Louis I¹ brought no response. Hoping for a more favorable result, the sisters now tell me that they want to write to Queen Victoria.² May God grant it! Changing conditions in Germany and Bavaria make it impossible for us to give more financial support to England than we promised, that is, to pay the rent for two years.³ Would it be possible to borrow enough money to buy a house with a rate of interest that equals the rent paid now? We are very sorry that we have to write in this manner, but what good is a promise that we cannot keep?

1. See Document 3907, pp. 76-77.

2. Victoria Hanover, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (1837-1901)

3. See Document 3613, p. 64-65.

I cherish the confident hope that if the sisters are to remain in England, God's power, wisdom, and love will provide the means and show them how to survive. Let us continue to pray in all confidence!

I recommend our sisters to you once again, and ask that you would not grow weary in your charity.

It is still uncertain when someone from the motherhouse will come to London. An extensive trip through Franconia is before us now, so please do not change your travel plans because of us.

Enclosed is a bill of exchange to cover the rent for the second year. May we ask you again to assist the sisters with cashing it.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
Mar. Ther. of Jesus

4120: *To Cardinal Nicholas Clarelli-Paracciani*
Rome (Excerpt)

Munich
February 15, 1867

J!M!

Your Eminence! Most Reverend Cardinal Protector!

. . . On the Sunday before Christmas, our sisters in London had a beautiful celebration. Girls and young women who work in the factories attend evening classes there from 7:00 until 9:00 p.m. Sixteen girls, the oldest of whom was seventeen, received their First Holy Communion. These lambs returning to the fold were so poor that one of the girls had to beg for an old shirt so that she could wear the borrowed white dress over it. Bringing these lost lambs back into the fold gave the mission priests deep joy.

The sisters themselves suffer much from the cold and must simply entrust everything to Divine Providence. They live from one day to the next. During vacation, they had no income and the money they received from the generalate was already spent. When the sister who cooks⁴ asked for

4. Sister M. Eleonora Schels

money to buy food, the superior⁵ could give her only two shillings.⁶

The cook answered sadly, “With this, I cannot give you anything to eat tonight, tomorrow, or Saturday. I have only a few potatoes left.”

The superior replied, “Good. We will eat them, and then rejoice that God considers us worthy to suffer hunger in the service of the Lord.”

The other two sisters cried out, “God always sent us help just in time!”

Scarcely an hour later, the pastor⁷ gave the superior an English letter and, smiling, said to her, “Read it!” He knew very well that she could not read English because she had not been in London very long. She took the letter, nevertheless, and soon understood that the Duchess of Norfolk⁸ had sent her five pounds⁹ “for the present and most urgent needs,” as she herself wrote.

The superior’s heart overflowed with joy and confidence in God. With deep emotion, the sisters gave thanks in their little chapel for this proof of God’s goodness. . . .¹⁰

4138: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
March 27, 1867

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

We were just thinking about writing to you when we received your letter of March 21 that dealt with the very topic about which we intended to write.

5. Sister M. Vincentia Wildenrother was sent to London as superior on October 20, 1866.

6. Approximately 48¢ in American currency at the time

7. Fr. Dillon-Purcell

8. Augusta Fitzalan-Howard (1821-1886), Duchess of Norfolk (1821-77)

9. Approximately \$22.90 in American currency at the time

10. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 5 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

To comply with your wishes, we transferred Sister Vincentia [Wildenrother] from Aschaffenburg to London, whereby we inflicted a deep wound in our Aschaffenburg house. Therefore, we were even more deeply hurt by the news you gave us in your letter, which contradicts the very resolute convictions expressed in her letters to us.

Although the dear sister was also ill from time to time in Aschaffenburg, it was and is of no special significance. If I have to recall Sister Vincentia from England, I have to recall the rest of the sisters because I could never send another superior there.¹¹

Regarding your second point—the accusation that you no longer take an interest in the convent—you may be consoled with the thought that we share the same lot. We have also been reproached for being hardhearted, cruel, and letting the poor sisters starve, and we will have to answer to both Church and civil authorities for this.

In the meantime, the sisters have given us better information concerning your convictions. We are very grateful for everything that you have done for the poor sisters' spiritual and physical well-being.

Concerning the last point, people should be better informed about such things before they scream for everyone to hear. We have given nearly 10,000 florin¹² to this mission, but now we must state again what the superior of our motherhouse¹³ has already explained, that is, we simply cannot continue doing this.

To our great regret, the petition to King Louis I was unsuccessful.¹⁴ God grant that your request to the archbishop of Munich and Freising¹⁵ will be more successful and that a convent in London will soon become a reality!

11. Sister M. Vincentia was transferred on August 20, 1867, and Sister M. Agnella Rauchenegger was appointed superior.

12. \$4,000 in American currency at the time

13. Sister M. Margaret of Cortona Wiedemann

14. See Document 3907, pp. 76-77.

15. Archbishop Scherr, head of the Louis Mission Society

I gave the sisters the necessary instructions and I ask that you would have an influence from your vantage point.

Asking again for your continued benevolence and prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Ther. of Jesus

4143: *To Baroness Emilie Brentano*
Aschaffenburg

Munich
April 6, 1867

J!M!

Gracious Baroness!¹⁶

Having returned from a journey, I wish to respond to your communication. Grateful as we are for your interest in our weal and woe and especially for all the favors that have come to us through Baron Brentano of happy memory, I must speak openly with regard to the information about our sisters that you received from London. (Your kindness will forgive me for writing this way.) The matter was highly exaggerated and I have evidence of that, not only from reliable eyewitnesses, but also from Sister Vincentia [Wildenrother] herself.

We have done all in our power and we have made sacrifices. We will continue to do what we can. By the way, we find much greater consolation when we hear of the poverty of our sisters than when we receive reports about their living in wealth and luxury. This situation cannot shake our trust in God's promise that, if we seek justice and the reign of God, everything else will be given us.

It is easy for us to understand that others would imagine such terrible things and misrepresent the life of poverty that

16. Emilie Brentano (1810-82) was the sister-in-law of Clemens Brentano (1778-1842), an author and poet. After the death of her husband Christian (1784-1851), she gathered, edited, and published many of her brother-in-law's religious works.

we vowed for the sake of Jesus. Therefore, be at peace, dear Baroness, and I will settle matters to the extent possible.

Asking for your continued good will and for your prayers, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Ther. of Jesus

4239: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
February 15, 1868

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

Your charity and the amount of our work, to which you are no stranger, will excuse me for answering your kind letter only now. We pray for you daily and you may be convinced of our good will.

Your letters gave us great consolation when we learned of your hopes concerning the happy conclusion of the examination,¹⁷ but we were consoled even more by the assurance that you are serious about building the new convent now. Your proven character is our guarantee that you will not be deterred from this undertaking by any difficulties that may arise. Such works of God are always accompanied by God's special blessings as well as suffering. If we cast our nets in Jesus' name, God will never let our trust be put to shame. You are sowing a seed that will bring forth fruit a hundred-fold, sweet fruit for which later generations will praise you as the originator of this project. Your name will remain in blessed memory. The establishment of the church and the convent will be your greatest consolation in the hour of death.

Thank God if the sisters are carrying out their duties so faithfully in school and convent! In time, this will heal many

17. According to the London Chronicle, Sisters M. Gerhardine Westermeier, M. Venantia Kopp, and M. Magdalena Forbes passed the English teaching examination in Stockwell in December 1867. This assured them of receiving a salary for teaching.

wounds. If anything goes wrong, please let us know so that we can exert our influence.

Miss Swift arrived safely. She was ill for a short time, but is better now and feels quite at home. God will continue to help!

Recommending the sisters and all of us to your prayer and continued good will and very grateful for all the charity shown us with such loyalty, I remain respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Theresa of Jesus

4313: *To Mother M. Caroline Friess*
Milwaukee (Excerpt)

Motherhouse
February 3, 1869

J!M!

Dear Sister Caroline!

. . . Sister Xaveria Blomeier¹⁸ is the second reason for this letter. Perhaps she has written you that we sent her to London. Now she is insisting on going to America. If she comes to you, do *not* accept her for *any* of your houses in America unless she can show you an obedience with the seal of our generalate. She will probably run to Sister Mary [Barbara Weinzierl] in Baltimore first, so please inform Sister Mary of this. If we ever thought it would be good to send Sister Xaveria to America we would contact you first, but now it is not a good spirit that motivates her. This time you must obey, dear Sister Caroline! Otherwise, you will regret it, but it will be too late. . . .¹⁹

18. Sister M. Xaveria Blomeier was a novice when she arrived in Baltimore with the second missionary group in March 1848. She professed her vows on August 15, 1849 and taught in various places in North America until she returned to Europe in 1867. In 1868, Sister Xaveria was sent to England, where she remained until her return to North America in 1879. Sister Xaveria died in New York on April 16, 1883.

19. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 7 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

4335: *To Mother M. Caroline Friess*
Milwaukee (Excerpt)

Motherhouse
April 20, 1869

J!M!

Dear Sister Caroline!

We are very grateful for the remarks concerning Sister Xaveria [Blomeier]. Perhaps they will prove useful to us. She is making a lot of trouble for us with her unbending arrogance. After her arrival from America, she did nothing but scold and grumble about everything and everyone. When she found no support, the tables were turned. She praised America but was full of anger and discontent with regard to us. You may simply tell the sisters that they should not accept Sister Xaveria if she does not present an obedience with our signature and seal. Any other is invalid. May God enlighten her so that she will recognize where her salvation lies! . . .

Could you not spare a mature sister for London, one who has experience, is a good religious—perhaps one sent from Bavaria? Of course, it must be taken into consideration that she would have to withstand Sister Xaveria who is there. We could accept new missions in England now, but we do not have the personnel. In London, a small convent was built in Whitechapel that could be occupied by autumn.²⁰ We ask that you communicate with *us* about this point. Do not write to London! . . .²¹

20. According to the London Chronicle, work on the new convent began on March 1, 1869, and the sisters moved in on June 21 of the same year.

21. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 7 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

4402: *To Fr. Henry Bittlestone*
Birmingham

Munich
 December 31, 1869

J!M!

Reverend Father Superior!²²

Upon her return from a journey, the superior of our motherhouse²³ reported that you wish to correspond directly with our generalate in Munich.

To come to the point immediately, we hereby state that we do not intend to establish a convent in Birmingham.²⁴ We only want to care for the school so that it will make good progress, and we want to prevent any interruption in classes if a sister becomes ill. In order to provide for this, we will send a third sister for Birmingham, as we usually do whenever new missions are founded.

As soon as our little *Directory for the Year 1870* comes off the press, we will send you a copy so that you can have an overview of the structure of our order.

In order to prevent possible misunderstandings, we told Sister M. Venantia [Kopp]²⁵ that any wishes you might have are to be communicated to us directly *here*. If something happens, it would be a great consolation for us if you would have the kindness to follow the same procedure.

Requesting your continued benevolence and remembrance in prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus

22. Henry Bittlestone was the superior of the Oratorians in Birmingham, England. The Oratorians had rented living quarters for the two sisters who took charge of the elementary and needlework classes for girls in St. Philip School in Birmingham on April 5, 1869.

23. Sister M. Margaret of Cortona Wiedemann

24. The Oratorians' rule did not allow them to have a convent under their direction. Initially, only two sisters were sent to Birmingham, whereby the Oratorians felt that it was not an actual convent. When a third sister and a few candidates were sent later, the situation changed because it seemed that a convent would be established after all. With continued communication, the issue was resolved and the sisters remained in Birmingham until 1881.

25. Superior in Birmingham

4415: *To Madame LePage Renouf*
London

Munich
February 9, 1870

J!M!

Madame!²⁶

The special benevolence that you have shown our order and given our sisters in London encourages me to write the following request.

An estate is for sale in Ramsgate where your husband is the inspector of a Catholic school. The sisters are of the opinion that this property could serve as a home where our sickly sisters could recuperate when necessary.

In order to know what to do about this, we need to know first if there is any prospect of our obtaining a school or other area of work there and how far the building is from the church. Therefore, would you kindly accompany the sister who really should examine the situation there, because as religious, we cannot move about as freely as these circumstances require. This may be a bold request, but necessity urges us and love inspires us with confidence to present this petition to your kindness. We would be very grateful.²⁷

Making use of this opportunity, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude once again for the help that has come through your mediation to our sisters in their difficult situation.

United in prayer, please accept the expression of our deep respect,

The Poor School Sister,
M. Theresa of Jesus

26. Madame LePage Renouf was the wife of the government inspector of Catholic schools in England.

27. An entry in the London Chronicle for March 7, 1870, reads: "An unnecessary trip to Ramsgate where a small piece of property consisting of a house with 12 rooms and a garden was offered for sale." A mission was never opened in Ramsgate.

5211: *To Mother M. Caroline Friess*
Milwaukee (Excerpt)

Munich
 [After March 19, 1870]²⁸

. . . Now to your letter of March 19: You want to relinquish the \$8,000—generalate property²⁹—in favor of the London sisters. That would be no small contribution or alms for London! The generalate has already made great sacrifices for the London mission and has given substantial sums. It cannot do any more because there are so many poor missions in this country that also require support. Could not every American mission contribute something in proportion to its income? . . .³⁰

4641: *Contract*

[July 7, 1870]³¹

J!M!

Contract
Between the Venerable General Superior
of the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame
—Representing Her Community—
and Fr. John Moore
*Pastor at the Catholic Church in Southend*³²

28. The autograph of this undated letter in Munich is in Sister M. Margaret of Cortona Wiedemann's handwriting. Internal evidence indicates that it was addressed to Mother Caroline, probably after March 19, 1870, since it also speaks of a visit by the bishops who were in Rome for the First Vatican Council.

29. When Mother Caroline was in Europe for several weeks in 1850, she received a loan of 20,000 florin (\$8,000) from the generalate on October 9, which was to help cover expenses for the mission in North America. This loan was to be paid back in installments. (Transcript, Munich) 14701-02

30. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 7 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

31. Although [1871] was added to the copy prepared for the beatification process, information in Document 5113, pp 126-127 confirms the date given here.

32. Now Southend-on-Sea in Essex

I.

The superior will acquire the plot of land belonging to the church at Southend at a moderate price so that—as soon as sufficient funds are obtained—an orphanage for girls can be built for the daughters of Catholic soldiers from the British army. Other Catholic orphans may also be admitted.

II.

If the community ever decides to sell a section of the property, it must be offered to the diocese first.

III.

The community may not mortgage the section that was Church property.

IV.

Unless the ecclesiastical diocesan authority has given its permission, the orphanage may not, under any circumstances, deviate from its original purpose.

V.

The orphanage is under the pastoral care and direction of the mission priests. It is the responsibility of the School Sisters to provide the orphans with education and character formation according to the precepts of their approved religious rule.

VI.

Those sisters entrusted with the care of the orphanage are not entitled to any monetary compensation for their services, but they are entitled to determine the amount of support for each orphan.

VII.

All gifts and contributions which come to the orphanage must be used for the building and furnishings and to cover the necessary expenses for the upkeep of the institute. This does not refer to what the sisters collect for themselves or receive as legacies, alms, and so forth when it is expressly stipulated that these are for the Poor School Sisters.

VIII.

The mission priest is obliged to contribute to the temporal welfare of the institute to the best of his ability by obtaining subscriptions and donations for it.

IX.

The mission priest will provide his services without remuneration until the funds of the institute are able to offer an appropriate stipend determined by the diocesan authorities.

Confirmed by the signatures of both parties:

Mary Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Sisters of Notre Dame

John Moore
Priest from Southend, Essex

4500: *To Fr. John Moore*
Southend

Munich
December 1, 1870

J!M!

Reverend Father!

When our assistant, the superior of the motherhouse,³³ was in Southend, you spoke of your plan to entrust the orphan girls of the British army to us if we would purchase a plot of land near the church. This plan was in accordance with our desire and so we consented to it.

We also explained to our sisters in London that we were unable to send the superior appointed for Southend at that time. That is why we regret very much that a beginning has already been made there.³⁴

In view of this, we ask you to tell us frankly what prospects we have of getting the orphans and if the sisters

33. Sister M. Margaret of Cortona Wiedemann

34. Although a contract was signed on July 7, 1870 (Document 4641), it is difficult to determine when the first sisters arrived in Southend. One source indicates October 13, 1870.

are suitable for Southend. Sister Agnella [Rauchenegger] wrote to us in August, saying that when we arrive in Southend we will have the orphans whom the government will support. We were asked to send money again, although we still do not have a legally valid receipt for the use of the first sum.

We receive such contradictory reports in this regard that we are under the assumption that the sisters have too little knowledge of the laws of the country and would need someone who could attend to their interests in court. We trust that you will act only with the consent of the generalate in Munich, because our house in Southend is under the direction of the generalate, as is our house in London. If the sisters' work in Southend does not provide enough means to support them, we cannot continue there.

Please do not misinterpret this, my statement, because our future depends on the answer to the above question.

Could you kindly send a response soon.

Respectfully yours,

M. Th. of J.

General Superior

Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

4529: *To Mr. Goodman*
Southend

Munich

January 8, 1871

J!M!

Dear Sir!

Since we have been assured that you are taking the necessary steps to complete the contracts,³⁵ I venture to send a bill of exchange for 300 pounds³⁶ directly to you. Fr. [John] Moore wrote that 267 pounds are necessary to secure the plot of land for us. The remainder of the sum is to be deposited in a bank. Please do not use it for any other purpose

35. See Document 4641, pp. 89-91.

36. Approximately \$1,366 in American currency at the time

and give an account of the money to the generalate in Munich.

As for the plans you sent us, we find them very suitable. However, we cannot discuss them now because we do not have funds to put up new buildings. If God sends us benefactors, we will make the suggestions we consider necessary for our purpose and then begin with the building of the orphanage.

Would it be possible to acquire or rent the hotel adjacent to our property? We could begin there until God provides the funds necessary to build.

Please do not grow tired of the responsibilities that you have borne for us. It is a work of charity and by their prayers, the poor, abandoned orphans will draw down upon you God's most abundant blessing.

Would you kindly draw up a bill for the plans and for the expenses incurred in our business transactions and send it to us. The superior of our motherhouse³⁷ will come to Southend this spring and reimburse you.

Respectfully yours,

Mary Theresa of Jesus
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

4530: *To Fr. John Moore*
Southend

Munich
January 8, 1871

J!M!

Reverend Father!

The statements you made about Southend struck us like the words of a prophet. You envision a gigantic tree that will grow from the little seed that we planted in England's soil and you encourage us to begin the work. We will do our best. We will buy the land. We are sending Mr. Goodman a bill of exchange for 300 pounds—267 of which are intended to secure the land for us. The rest is to be deposited in a bank.

37. Sister M. Margaret of Cortona Wiedemann

When it comes to putting up buildings, we must say that it is too much for us. We do not have funds, but we are counting on the appeal that you will make to the public. Our founder Bishop [George Michael] Wittmann always called orphans “God’s favorites” and therefore we are confident that God will inspire compassionate hearts to complete what we have begun by contributing large donations to cover the cost of this work of charity.

I can assure you that I was very consoled when I learned that the soldiers of the British garrison promised to give their Christmas and Easter bonuses for the foundation of the new orphanage. I am sure that many wealthy women will not hesitate to deposit a treasure into the heavenly mansions by contributing from their riches to this work of charity. In accord with you, I say quietly in my heart and then aloud, *Sursum corda*, because blessing comes from above and we must plead for it in prayer.

Would it be possible to acquire the hotel adjacent to our property so that we could begin there? The house where our sisters are living now is too far from the church. We had our eyes on that hotel from the beginning because it is close to the church and we would not have any neighbors. We do not want a boarding school. We only want to have orphan girls and limit ourselves to children who require a simple education.

Nevertheless, the sisters can still teach children and young women who want private lessons, especially those employed during the swimming season,³⁸ but I repeat, it was only because of the orphans that we acquired the property. I would like to thank you for all the pastoral care you give our sisters by saying Holy Mass in their little chapel several times during the week, giving them Holy Communion, and providing a carriage to take them to church on Sundays and holy days. May God reward you!

Asking for remembrance in your prayer, I remain respectfully yours,

[No Signature]
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

38. Southend was and still is a seaside resort at the mouth of the Thames River.

4546: *To Msgr. Frederick Bruns*
Brakel in Westphalia (Excerpt)

Munich
 March 3, 1871

J!M!

Very Reverend Dean and Monsignor!³⁹

The latest communication from England tells us about their need for a sister who is able to teach in both French and English and to give music lessons. With the situation there taking such a turn, the transfer of Sister Hedwig [von Bocholtz-Asseburg] to England is now postponed.⁴⁰ It is up to God whether Sister Bernardine⁴¹ will be the one and we must still do some correspondence on this. The dear Lord seeks the instruments for carrying out God's designs, often in very wonderful ways. . . .

Thank you very much for all your benevolent communications. I found special consolation in Sister Hedwig's heroic disposition. Setting aside her family, she would have gone to England in holy obedience, following God's will alone. I praise her for that. . . .⁴²

4553: *To the Royal Central Council*
Munich

Munich
 April 12, 1871

J!M!

Royal Central Council of the Louis Mission Society!

Although the Poor School Sisters have labored in England for seven years, they still do not have a house of their

39. Msgr. Frederick Bruns (1805-71) was the dean and pastor at Brakel in Westphalia from 1846 until his death on June 20, 1871.

40. When the first sisters were sent to London in 1864, Sister M. Hedwig von Bocholtz-Asseburg was also designated for the mission. Poor health at the time prevented her from going, however, and she was never sent to England.

41. Sister M. Bernardine Stiessberger, superior at the Brede Convent (1869-72), was never sent to England.

42. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 8 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

own and live in rented quarters that are extremely limited in space.⁴³ Moreover, young women, who would like to dedicate themselves to religious life, are frightened away from the district in London where the sisters live, partly because of the many factories whose chimneys blacken the air with smoke and partly because of other circumstances.⁴⁴

Requests for School Sisters of Notre Dame have come to us from various sides but the motherhouse in Munich is unable to fill them. Therefore, it is becoming an unavoidable necessity for us to establish a house in a suitable place where young women can be accepted and trained to become School Sisters.

Southend is desirable for this purpose because it lies at the point where the Thames flows into the sea. It has a healthful climate and is a well-frequented resort. The sisters there have land next to a Catholic church but no house. Adjacent to this property is a building that was built as a hotel but it was not profitable. It was offered to us for the sum of 2,000 pounds⁴⁵ but where will we find the money?

We trust in Divine Providence and with this confidence, we submit our request that the Royal Central Council of the Louis Mission Society would provide the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame with financial support for this purpose. Then, with God's grace and the acceptance of new laborers for the vineyard, the order will continue to spread in England and gradually be able to accept the new missions offered to us.

Looking forward to your gracious response, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

43. The sisters did not own the house that was built for them in 1869.

44. Due to the great poverty and destitution there, the area of London where the sisters lived did not enjoy a good reputation.

45. Approximately \$9,160 in American currency at the time

4554 a: *To Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell*
London

Munich
 April 16, 1871

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

During my long absence from the motherhouse, your esteemed letter sent from Southend unfortunately remained unanswered. Then we received a letter from Sister Agnella [Rauchenegger] telling us that you are being transferred from Whitechapel⁴⁶ and that the work of our sisters there will come to an end.

We sincerely regret that all the sacrifices that you made for the growth and well-being of the mission have reaped such ingratitude. Nevertheless, we believe that we may also send our congratulations because we heard that you will be assigned a better pastoral position.

With great sincerity, we shared in your endeavors and suffering through all these years. May we also continue to hope that, in your improved position, you will also try to find an improved field of labor for our sisters?

Please do not take it amiss if we ask that you would secure the little convent in Whitechapel for us,⁴⁷ as well as the sum of 130 pounds⁴⁸ that was used for the building and is still owed to us.

Finally, we want to express our sincere gratitude for the pastoral care you gave our sisters and ask for your continued good will and inclusion in your prayer.

Respectfully yours,

The Poor School Sister
[No Signature]

(Transcript, Munich) 17821

46. After serving for 17 years as pastor of St. Boniface German Catholic Parish in Whitechapel, Fr. Dillon-Purcell was transferred to Hampstead, a suburb of London, on April 15, 1871.

47. The sisters did not leave Whitechapel immediately after Fr. Dillon-Purcell's transfer.

48. Approximately \$595.40 in American currency at the time

4562 a: *To Mother M. Caroline Friess*
Milwaukee (Excerpts)

Southend
 May 18, 1871

Dear Venerable Sister M. Caroline,

Praise and thanks be to God that the good sisters have finally arrived and feel quite at home here!⁴⁹ Thank you very much for letting us have them for the new mission in Southend! They are so hearty and friendly that it seems as if we had always been together. I think that all the fear and apprehension have already disappeared from their hearts because they see that the beginning is small. They now have time to prepare gradually for an extended field of labor. Sister Willibalda [Deischer], whom you know, will surely be a mother to them, and they will only have to tell her of their concerns and needs with childlike openness.

One thing we do not want, however, is any correspondence between them and Sister Xaveria [Blomeier] whose rebellious spirit causes great suffering and disturbs the peace whenever we try to do something with her. She is demanding her return to America. I am afraid that she would have an evil influence on the good sisters, even if it would only be through *written* contact. The poor, deluded Xaveria! Let us pray!

Word has probably gotten to you across the ocean about how sad it is now with regard to religion in Germany, and especially in our beloved Bavaria. Perhaps the time is near—as predicted by Fr. [George Michael] Wittmann of blessed memory—when an emigration to the West will take place. Only England could offer a safe asylum. As God wills! We may be the first to encounter persecution. If God lets us keep our dear Reverend Mother [M. Theresa], then let come what may. Thanks be to God, she is well again and continues to make visitation journeys in our country. We do not let her go to other countries because the railroad trips are too hard on her. Fr. [Matthias Siegert] is still very vigo-

49. Sisters M. Paula de Cruce Groot and M. Justiniana Fenne were sent from Milwaukee to England in the spring of 1871.

rous in mind and body and works tirelessly. His position will also be very difficult to fill someday. . . .

Tomorrow I must leave Southend in order to complete my mission in London and then hurry home, since I have been traveling for almost four weeks. Thank you very much for your charitable donation. May God reward you with abundant blessing and the grace of divine love!

In the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,

Your poor companion sister,
Mar. Margaret Cort. [Wiedemann]

Sincerest greetings from Sister Willibalda! Forgive me, dear Sister Caroline, for this hurried writing. I was interrupted so often.⁵⁰

(Autograph, Milwaukee)

4564: *To Cardinal Nicholas Clarelli-Paracciani*
Rome (Excerpt)

Munich
May 30, 1871

Your Eminence! Most Reverend Cardinal Protector!

. . . There will be a great change in our house in London because the pastor at the German mission⁵¹ was transferred and the mission has been entrusted to the Oblates.⁵² Sister Margaret [of Cortona Wiedemann] is there now to regulate things as well as possible. When it comes to finances, things in England are similar to those in America. . . .⁵³

50. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 7 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

51. Fr. Arthur Dillon-Purcell

52. Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

53. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 15 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

4584: *To Mother M. Caroline Friess*
Milwaukee (Excerpt)

Motherhouse
 July 29, 1871

J!M!

Dear Sister Caroline!

We have been wanting to write for a long time, but we also wanted to wait until Sister Margaret [of Cortona Wiedemann] returned so that we could give you some definite information. Unfortunately, there was a tremendous delay. She was absent from the motherhouse for a full ten weeks and brought us very little good news from our mission in England. It seems we will have to suffer a catastrophe there that is even greater than the one in America.

The two priests⁵⁴ who called us there promised us a most agreeable and beautiful sphere of activity, work in abundance, and as many children as we could want. We were urged to keep sending sisters who could speak English. When Sister Margaret personally examined the situation, she found that we had been completely deceived—there was nothing but empty promises. The plot of land⁵⁵ is already purchased. We thought we would find benefactors for the building, but there were none—and so everything is hanging in the air now.

I also want to say that no difficult beginning ever deterred us. It was merely a guarantee that if God's work is built on firm ground, its progress will be even more greatly blessed as time goes on. Our consolation is that both Sisters Paula [Groft] and Justiniana [Fenne] are good-natured and zealous sisters who take their duties seriously and like being in Southend, as Sister Margaret assures me.

Dear Sister Caroline, you know Sister Willibalda [Deischer], the superior in Southend. If the sisters object to anything, please tell us openly. The sisters may certainly write to you, but please instruct them to turn to us. . . .⁵⁶

54. Fr. Dillon-Purcell and Fr. Moore

55. In Southend

56. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 7 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

4619: *To Archbishop Henry E. Manning*
London

[October 1871]

J!M!

Your Excellency! Most Reverend Archbishop!

A few days ago, we received word from our sisters at Southend that you intend to entrust to the care of our sisters 12 orphan girls, daughters of Catholic police officials from London, who up to now have been cared for in Protestant institutes.

This offers us the desired opportunity to present a statement of our assurance that it was only the good intention of wanting to serve God in the poor orphans that moved us to purchase the land that was for sale in Southend. God knows what a great consolation it would be for us if you would lay the cornerstone of the future orphanage by entrusting these girls to us for their education and character formation. The place to do this would be available, but it is still a rented facility. If God is giving us the living stones, the poor orphan children, then we trust that God's mercy will also help provide the material building so that we can give the orphans a home of our own.

Please do not take it amiss if we request that, through your secretary, you would let us know with a *yes* or a *no* because we have been disappointed so often. At the same time, please accept our sincere promise that we will do everything in our power to meet all the demands placed upon us in order to form the children entrusted to us into worthy, young women, faithful spouses, Christian mothers, diligent housewives, and modest, hardworking servants.

We ask you to impart your episcopal blessing on us for this important work of salvation so that the grace of God may rest on our labors. If the sisters do not give joy to your pastoral heart, at least they will not increase your cares.

Recommending our sisters to your further benevolence, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus

1872—1876

4650: *To Archbishop Henry E. Manning*
London

Munich
 January 22, 1872

J!M!

Your Excellency! Most Reverend Archbishop!

Although I wrote to you last October,¹ I venture to turn to your pastoral heart once again today.

Our sisters were offered such an appropriate field of labor in an elementary school, a secondary school, and a boarding school in Greenwich that I feel compelled to ask that you would allow Sisters Gisela [Burgartz], Justiniana [Fenne], Paula [Groft], and Eleonora [Schels] to move to the house there.

These sisters do not have any work in Whitechapel or in Southend and we hope they will be able to do much good for the glory of God in Greenwich. Therefore, I ask that you would please impart your episcopal blessing on this, our new foundation, and recommend our sisters to the bishop there.²

For seven years the sisters courageously trusted in God and withstood all difficulties, poverty, and suffering for the salvation of the souls of the children in Whitechapel, sacrificing their health and strength. It is foreseeable that we have no future in Whitechapel, but the sisters are not giving it up at this time because of Greenwich. The German bishops would surely be pleased if the work of God would spread more on English soil, but this is impossible in Whitechapel because the young women shun both the climate and that part of the city.

1. See Document 4619, p. 101.

2. James Danell (1821-81), Bishop of Southwark, England (1871-81)

We are also at the point of having to withdraw the sisters from Southend because all our efforts to obtain orphans have been unsuccessful.

Please let us know your intent with a few words to us and grant your episcopal blessing to the undersigned who remains respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

4658: *To Canon G. E. Noon*
Greenwich

Munich
February 3, 1872

J!M!

Very Reverend Canon!

Our sisters were transferred to Greenwich so unexpectedly and so quickly that it was impossible for me to find time to write to you and to the bishop.³

Therefore, I would like to recommend our sisters to you and ask that you would have patience and forbearance with them because every beginning is difficult. I also trust in the goodness of God, who will not refuse this grace, because the sisters have left their native country and all that is dear to them solely for the love of the immortal souls entrusted to them in the English mission.

God has already given them some small compensation because the description I received of Greenwich and its beautiful convent is so delightful. I thank God for having opened such a pleasant home to them and I want to thank you for the beautiful photograph that you sent. It was a great surprise.

Please allow the sisters to send me the contract before it is signed so that I can examine it.⁴

3. Bishop Danell

4. On January 23, 1872, Canon G. E. Noon wrote to Mother Theresa, asking if Archbishop Manning had consulted her regarding the contract between the parish and the sisters. The archbishop would not give his consent until the general superior and the German bishops had been consulted with regard to the contract. (Autograph, Munich) 17822

Recommending our sisters once again to your benevolence and requesting your prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for us at Holy Mass, I sign myself respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior

4659: *To Bishop James Danell*
Southwark

Munich
February 3, 1872

J!M!

Most Reverend Bishop!

God has given us such great success in our negotiations with Greenwich and soon our sisters will be able to take charge of the schools there. I would like to give you the names of the sisters appointed to work at this new mission: Sisters M. Gisela Burgartz, M. Paula Groft, M. Justiniana Fenne, and M. Eleonora Schels.

Please grant them your blessing so that through their labor and endeavors, they may contribute to the greater glory of God and the eternal salvation of the souls of the young people who will be entrusted to them.

At the same time, I would like to present a copy of some chapters from our holy rule that will give you information about the structure of our religious institute that was approved by a decree of the Holy See in 1866 [*sic*].⁵ I think this will satisfy your wishes.

Please accept the expression of our deep respect and willingness to serve. Requesting that you would grant our sisters in Greenwich your pastoral protection, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

5. The Holy See gave its final approbation to the Holy Rule on August 26, 1865.

Sister Agnella [Rauchenegger] will give you a copy of our *Holy Rule* and the chapters, "Purpose and Structure" and "Vows and Profession," which she translated into English. I think this will give you for now the basic knowledge that you desire. When the superior of our motherhouse in Munich⁶ comes to Greenwich, perhaps it will be possible for her to meet with you. That would be the most favorable opportunity for giving you even more information regarding the structure of our religious institute. If the complete translation of our rule into English is finished by then, she will present it to you.

4660: *To Archbishop Henry E. Manning*
London

Munich
February 3, 1872

J!M!

Your Excellency!

We recently received the news from London that it was announced from the pulpit in church that the Germans in Whitechapel have no need of religious and that efforts will be made to hire two teachers to instruct the children. We also learned that the Oblates, who took over the mission at Whitechapel after the departure of Fr. [Arthur Dillon-] Purcell, would have no great regrets if our sisters left Whitechapel because they would like to have sisters of their order.

We do not intend to criticize this desire. On the contrary, we want to turn to you in this matter and ask permission for our sisters to leave Whitechapel at Easter. By then, the priests will have had sufficient time to take necessary measures so that classes will not be interrupted. The new teachers would be very satisfied if they could begin soon in order to have a longer school year, because we know from experience how difficult it is to instruct children without first becoming acquainted with them.

6. Sister M. Margaret of Cortona Wiedemann

When the convent at Whitechapel was built, our sisters contributed a sum of 147 pounds.⁷ I think you would consider it justified if we ask the mission to reimburse this sum, as well as the 120 pounds⁸ assured us by contract for our living expenses, because this will be needed by our sisters to establish themselves at Greenwich.

With regard to Southend, we were promised that 12 young girls would be entrusted to us there. We recommend this new foundation to your pastoral heart once again and request that you would deal with this as a matter of priority. If the sisters do not have a field of activity there, we will not be able to leave them in Southend any longer.

Presenting our interests and requesting that you would grant us your protection and blessing, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

4665: *To the Royal Central Council*
Munich

Munich
February 20, 1872

J!M!

Royal Central Council of the Louis Mission Society!
Mission of the Bavarian Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame
in England

The Poor School Sisters were called to London, England, in 1864 to conduct the German school for girls and the kindergarten at St. Boniface Church in Whitechapel. Although the German mission there promised a great deal, it did very little, and the motherhouse here had to make considerable sacrifices of both money and personnel.

On September 5, 1869, the Oratorians also called the Bavarian School Sisters of Notre Dame to Birmingham and

7. Approximately \$673 in American currency at the time

8. Approximately \$549.60 in American currency at the time

entrusted to them the school for girls, which is progressing well. This year, an elementary school, a secondary school, and a kindergarten in Greenwich in the diocese of Southwark were also entrusted to the sisters.

In the archdiocese of Westminster, plans are being made for the foundation of an orphanage in Southend that would be under the direction of the School Sisters. Property near the mission church has already been acquired for this purpose, living quarters are rented, and two German orphans have been entrusted to the sisters, but everything else is completely lacking. The sisters have neither a house nor land for the orphans and no means of support. Catholic orphans are accommodated in a Protestant institute. Property owners in England do not tolerate orphan children in rented buildings. If this very promising mission is to continue, it must have its own place of residence, but we do not have the means to provide one.

Therefore, the respectfully undersigned submits her request that the Royal Central Council would graciously provide financial support so that the Poor School Sisters can acquire a building for the poor orphans in Southend.

In the consoling hope that you will graciously grant this urgent request for the greater glory of God and the furtherance of mission work on English soil, and recommending our religious institute to your benevolence, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

4666: *To Fr. W. A. Johnson*
London

Munich
February 22, 1872

J!M!

Reverend Secretary!⁹

Please accept our heartfelt gratitude for kindly communicating to us the wishes and opinions of the archbishop. Since he consents to the departure of the sisters from

9. Fr. W. A. Johnson was Archbishop Manning's secretary.

Whitechapel, we will make the necessary arrangements for their accommodation in other houses by Easter.

Although I dare not bother His Excellency again, the kind concern you have always manifested to our sisters gives me courage to approach you with another petition. Would you kindly see to it that the sisters who succeed us at Whitechapel would reimburse us for the 147 pounds that we contributed to the convent?

In addition to this, I venture to make a second request. Would you kindly let me know what His Excellency wants with regard to our house at Southend? Does he still intend to entrust to us the orphan girls as he indicated to Sister Agnella [Rauchenegger]? If so, when will we receive them? The rent expires in April. Therefore, I am asking you for a definite reply so that I can make other arrangements. Everything is ready for us to accept and care for 12 orphans. If, however, we do not receive the children, I will be compelled to remove the sisters from Southend as well, because they would have neither children nor suitable work there.¹⁰

Our father spiritual [Matthias Siegert] had your letter read to the archbishop here,¹¹ who is in total agreement regarding the mission in Whitechapel and has no greater desire than that the house in Southend would soon be filled with orphan children. I take comfort in the consoling hope that I have not made my request in vain.

Recommending our sisters to your benevolence, asking you to convey to His Excellency my best regards, and requesting a memento to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, I remain respectfully yours,

Mary Theresa of Jesus

10. In his letter to Mother Theresa dated March 8, 1872, Fr. Johnson wrote that if the sisters left Whitechapel at Easter, it would endanger both the relationship with the government and the school subsidies and therefore Archbishop Manning asked that the sisters remain in Whitechapel until the end of the school year in June. Fr. Johnson assured Mother Theresa that the 147 pounds would be reimbursed. Due to the uncertainty of the situation at Southend, Archbishop Manning advised the sisters not to renew the rent agreement there. (Autograph, Munich) 17827

11. Archbishop Scherr

4668: *To Bishop Ignatius von Senestréy
Regensburg*

Munich
February 28, 1872

J!M!

Most Reverend Bishop! Your Excellency!¹²

In response to your kind letter of yesterday,¹³ please allow me to present in writing what I would have preferred to discuss with you in person.

Our mission in England has given us much concern since the first of the year. We will not remain in Whitechapel in London any longer. Since the German people there want a native German priest and the Oblates, to whom St. Boniface Church was entrusted, have no such priest,¹⁴ the people are not at peace. One priest announced publicly from the pulpit, “The German sisters will leave.” Another stated that they would like sisters of *their own* order. A high-ranking prelate informed our sisters in confidence that, under these circumstances, it would please the archbishop¹⁵ if the School Sisters would leave of their own accord, although earlier he would not let us go.

12. Ignatius von Senestréy (1818-1906), Bishop of Regensburg (1858-1906)

13. On February 26, 1872, Bishop Senestréy wrote to Mother Theresa and quoted from a letter that he received from Archbishop Manning: “The state of affairs at St. Boniface Church for the Germans hurts me very much. I have done everything I could to satisfy them, but they quarrel with the Irish and they quarrel among themselves. Some of the German priests have contributed to the bad situation. The German sisters complain about the German people. A month ago, the German priest announced in church that he intended to send away the German sisters. That is why I forbade any change of sisters without the consent of the Mother Superior in Munich, as shown by the letter that I had my secretary write to the Reverend Mother. I implore you to come and organize the church for the Germans who are dying without religion. I will follow your advice and do everything I can.” Bishop Senestréy continued, “The archbishop repeatedly asked that I come to London soon after Easter, but it is out of the question.” (Autograph, Munich) 17825

14. According to records in the OMI Archives in Rome, a German Oblate came to London in 1871, but he left the order in 1872.

15. Archbishop Manning

Therefore, I approached the archbishop directly and asked that he give the sisters permission to withdraw from Whitechapel by Easter.¹⁶ His secretary—in the name of the archbishop who granted this permission—replied with the enclosed letter, which I ask to have returned. (I do not know how this letter tallies with the above statement.)¹⁷

Shortly before this, the elementary schools in Greenwich, Peckham, and Deptford were offered to us. After the bishop of Southwark¹⁸ gave his consent, four of our sisters went to Greenwich for the time being. If God grants further grace, it seems everything will progress well. After Easter, two more sisters from Whitechapel will go to Greenwich. As the enclosed letter states, the religious who will follow us in Whitechapel are to reimburse us for the 147 pounds that we contributed to the convent there.

Now our greatest concern is our house in Southend, which is also in the diocese of Westminster. We have already purchased property next to the church with the intent of establishing an orphanage there. Initially, orphans in great numbers were promised—the orphaned daughters of the British garrison and the police. The archbishop had promised that he would give the sisters twelve orphan girls whom the government had placed in Protestant institutes. This, however, has been no more than a promise up to now and we still have not received a response to our question about it, even though we have already inquired three times.¹⁹

The rent for the sisters' current living quarters expires in April. If the orphans come, we will have to look for another building. If not, we need to make other arrangements for the sisters who are there now because they could not remain.

How happy and grateful I would be if you could obtain a statement as to whether or not the archbishop of Westminster plans to send orphan girls to the sisters as promised. Time is pressing!

16. See Document 4660, pp. 106-107.

17. A copy of the enclosed letter has not been found.

18. Bishop Danell

19. See Documents 4619, p. 101; 4660, pp. 106-107; and 4666, pp. 108-109.

All seems to proceed with blessing in Birmingham where the Oratorians are a strong support for the sisters. The bishop of Birmingham²⁰ also provides them with pastoral protection, visited with them recently, and on occasion, has defended their cause.

On a separate sheet, I listed the houses in England where our sisters are living now. The enclosed directory does not include Greenwich because it was formally opened only on February 6 under the title “Our Lady, Star of the Sea.” At one time, Archbishop Manning and the Puseyite nuns inhabited the building.²¹ It was designated in the will made by the brother of Canon [G. E.] Noon,²² the founder of this mission, that the building should be used again as a convent.

Expressing our deep gratitude for all your many endeavors and sincere interest in our suffering and worry, and requesting your episcopal blessing, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

20. William Bernard Ullathorne, OSB (1806-89), Bishop of Birmingham, 1850-88

21. Puseyism and Tractarianism are names used in connection with the Oxford Movement, a 19th-century Catholic revival movement within the Church of England. Prior to his conversion to Catholicism in 1851, Archbishop Manning was a prominent member of the Oxford Movement.

22. Although the name *North* appears in the copy prepared for the beatification process, the letter to Mother Theresa from Greenwich was signed by Canon G. E. Noon. (Autograph, Munich) 17822

4669 a: *To Mother M. Caroline Friess*
Milwaukee

Greenwich-London, S.E.
 [After March 3, 1872]²³

J!M!

Dear Venerable Sister M. Caroline,

Before I leave English soil again, I would like to send another call for help across the ocean, a call that might be somewhat more successful than my four-week stay here.

Since you helped the poor sisters in need several times, you have heard already how painful conditions in Southend are for us—in addition to M. Xaveria [Blomeier]. The priest²⁴ at the mission in Southend deceived us. He misused our willingness to oblige; we trusted his promises too much; and now we see ourselves bitterly disappointed. He advised us to purchase a very expensive piece of property in order, as he said, to build an orphanage that he would pay for with donations. We heard later, however, that he really wanted us to pay off his debts. He obtained his temporal gain and now he disavows all his promises even though we have them in writing. He even denies his contract. If one can no longer put any faith in the words of a priest, everything will certainly come to an end there.

Since we have already sacrificed 20,000 florin,²⁵ we do not want to drop the cause so quickly. We could buy a hotel that is adjacent to our property if we had an interest-free loan for only *a few years*. Can you help us, dear Venerable Sister? Surely you have credit in America; we are foreigners here and do not know anyone who would help us. The generalate cannot do anything more at this time—a terrible storm is imminent. Faith and religion seem to be disappearing in Germany. Perhaps a place of refuge will be needed soon and we have Southend in mind for this. Please help us obtain it! God will reward you!

23. According to Document 4659, pp. 105-106, Sister Margaret of Cortona Wiedemann was scheduled to visit England during the following weeks, which helped to determine a date for this letter.

24. Fr. John Moore

25. Approximately \$8,000 in American currency at the time

Please send your response to *Munich* because I am leaving here this evening.

The hotel supposedly costs 1,200 pounds.²⁶

Thanks be to God, things are going well here in Greenwich! It seems that your two young sisters²⁷ are satisfied and happy here. Sometimes the longing for dear America takes hold of them, especially Sister Paula, but we cannot hold that against them. Day after day, they have many privations and sufficient opportunity to make new sacrifices for God who will certainly reward them with spiritual goods and graces. The coming examinations are putting them under pressure.

A visitor came and I must close now. Please greet all the sisters, especially the older ones whom I know.

In the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary,

Your poor companion sister,
Mar. Margaret Cort. [Wiedemann]

(Autograph, Milwaukee)

4679: *To Mother M. Caroline Friess*
Milwaukee (Excerpt)

Motherhouse
April 29, 1872

J!M!

Dear Sister Caroline!

. . . You often sent to England 20 pounds²⁸ that you begged from priests who are your friends. Thank you very much! Things continue to be very difficult in England. The priests made great promises when they called us there—but have kept none of them. The Oblates took over the mission in honor of St. Walburga in Whitechapel (London) and now they are demanding sisters of *their own* order. When we heard this, we offered to withdraw completely because our work would come to nothing there. The sisters will leave after the examinations.²⁹

26. Approximately \$5,496 in American currency at the time

27. Sisters M. Paula de Cruce Groft and M. Justiniana Fenne

28. Approximately \$91.60 in American currency at the time

29. The sisters left Whitechapel on June 5, 1872.

In place of Whitechapel, God opened a new field of work with an elementary school and a private secondary school in Greenwich. We sent Sisters Paula [Groft] and Justini-ana [Fenne] there so that they would have work while the prolonged negotiations regarding an orphanage in Southend continue.

Our acquaintance with the English character has not been very pleasant. We are currently involved in purchasing a building in Southend where the sisters are still paying rent. A suitable building adjacent to our property would be available. It was built as a hotel (!) but was not profitable because of its remote location. The purchase price is 1,300 pounds,³⁰ but where would we find the money during these critical times in Europe? Of course, its purchase would remedy many things. . . .³¹

4704: *To Bishop Ignatius von Senestréy
Regensburg (Excerpts)*

Aschaffenburg
September 1, 1872

J!M!

Most Reverend Bishop! Your Excellency!

Your two handwritten communications of August 18 and August 23³² were forwarded to me here in Aschaffenburg. . . .

We have been promised orphans in England—in Southend. Your intercession has had an effect. Thank you very much!

30. Approximately \$5,945 in American currency at the time

31. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 7 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

32. In his letter of August 23, 1872, to Mother Theresa, Bishop Senestréy quoted from Archbishop Manning's letter of August 18 in which he stated that if it were entirely up to him, he "would have gladly fulfilled the wishes of the School Sisters long ago." Everything was entirely dependent on the administration and on people who were not Catholic. Even though he had no influence in the matter, he tried to obtain help for the sisters on the previous day, but he did not know how successful he was and would continue his efforts. (Autograph, Munich) 17829

Now the building we applied for gives us another cause for worry because there is danger that the purchase already initiated will be canceled. . . .³³

4803: *To Archbishop Henry E. Manning*
London

Munich
April 12, 1873

J!M!

Your Excellency!

Last fall the bishop of Regensburg assured us both verbally and in writing that you would be willing to help the Poor School Sisters as much as possible. This assurance encourages us in our distress to seek refuge in your pastoral heart.

When the sisters had to leave St. Boniface Parish in Whitechapel, we asked for permission to establish missions in other places where we had been recommended. Since you feared that this would be a disadvantage to the sisters of other orders in the nearby area, we refused four places, chose Southend, and purchased land for our mission. Fr. [John] Moore, the pastor of the Catholic parish in Southend, gave us great hopes for extensive work and we took steps to acquire the building next to our property. The owner was completely opposed to selling the building to Catholics however, so the pastor himself advised us to withdraw from Southend for reasons of prudence and to apply for the hotel through the mediation of a third party.³⁴

Now we hear that eight sisters of another order have established themselves in Southend. We find it impossible to believe that, deviating from the principles you expressed to us, you granted them permission *without* which they could never be firmly established in Southend, but *with* which we can never develop there.

33. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 15 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

34. According to the Chronological Sketches, the sisters from Southend left for Greenwich in 1872.

We ask that you would please let us know the true state of affairs and continue to safeguard us.

Mindful of the assurance given us through the bishop of Regensburg, recommending this concern again to your pastoral heart, and requesting your blessing, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus

4804: *To Canon G. E. Noon
Greenwich*

Munich
April 12, 1873

J!M!

Very Reverend Canon!

Our sisters moved to Greenwich one year ago on January 29. It was a year of great sorrow and worry for us since it became very difficult for the sisters to pay the rent in addition to covering their living expenses.

In response to what the sisters told you about their circumstances, you stated on February 13 that you would accept the responsibility of sharing the burden and, as far as possible, make it easier for the sisters. Although I do not know to what extent your wishes have been fulfilled, this promise encourages me to turn to you with complete confidence today.

I recognize it as my most sacred duty to care for both the physical and spiritual needs of the sisters. The latter are attended to by your priestly zeal in the best possible manner, but the former gives me cause for great concern. It is extremely difficult, if not absolutely impossible, for the sisters to pay rent in addition to covering household expenses. Therefore, I venture to request that you would release them from paying at least some of the rent.

I know well that I am risking much but there is no other solution. We place all our trust in your kindness. Our Lord, who sacrificed much for us in these days,³⁵ will surely reward

35. This letter was written on Holy Saturday.

you a hundredfold. We will pray for this.

Requesting your kind response and wishing you a joyous Alleluia, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus

4892: *To Bishop James Danell*
Southwark

Munich
January 26, 1874

J!M!

Most Reverend Bishop!

Sister Agnella [Rauchenegger] informed us of the scandal that our convent at Greenwich suffered because of Sister Justiniana's [Fenne] desertion. We can only express how sorry we feel for the poor blind sister and for the other sisters who keenly feel the hurt that this incident caused. If only I could console them by sending someone to fill the vacancy left by the runaway sister! Since it is impossible for me to take a music teacher from our motherhouse in Munich, I requested the superiors of our motherhouses in Breslau³⁶ and the Brede Convent, as well as of our mission in Miltenberg, to do their best to meet Sister Agnella's needs.

As to Frances Fenne and her dismissal, our *Holy Rule* says in Part IV, Chapter I, Paragraph 2, that "She [the General Superior] dismisses novices who do not appear qualified for the Congregation—all in the manner prescribed by the Constitutions; she dismisses in like manner,—for weighty reasons, and with the consent of the respective bishops,—sisters under the first vows, during the seven years or period preceding the perpetual vows."³⁷

I, on my part, consent to her dismissal. If you do not refuse your consent in consideration of the present circumstances, Frances is canonically dismissed.

36. Now Wrocław in Poland

37. Quoted from *Rule and Constitutions of the Religious Institute of the Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame. Approved and Confirmed by His Holiness, Pope Pius IX. August 26, A. D. 1865* (Milwaukee, 1888) 102

It is true that it would have been less disturbing if she would have waited until she completed the seven years after her first vows (and if she had finished the school year she had begun), or if she would have taken the proper route. Then she would have nothing to regret. What I grieve most of all is that she is now in a Protestant house. If only she does not lose her faith in addition to her vocation!

Please accept my gratitude for the consoling encouragement you gave Sister Agnella who was greatly dismayed by this event.

You also expressed the desire that our sisters take care of the poor girls in the Eltham orphanage. I would be very willing to accept this offer but it is impossible for me to examine the place in person. Therefore, I ask that you would please give Sister Agnella more precise information about the orphanage—its structure, financial conditions, statutes, and any government contributions. She will see to it that we receive this information so that you will not be burdened with sending it to us.

In the future, I also ask that you would keep the same pastoral sentiments toward our sisters that they had such evident proof of in the past, and I ask forgiveness that we are increasing rather than decreasing your episcopal cares.

Please accept the assurance of our deep respect,

M. Th. of J.

General Superior

Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

4902: *To Fr. John McCay*
Wishaw, Scotland

February 7, 1874

J!M!

Very Reverend Pastor!

In your kind letter of January 17, you expressed your heart's desire with such openness and sincerity that in response I can honestly assure you that, because of my special fondness for Scotland, I would send sisters there immediately in order to provide the services you described if it were at all possible. Unfortunately, no teachers certified

in English are available at this time.

Would it be possible for you to continue the school with lay teachers for the time being? Would you know any certified teachers with a religious vocation that you could direct to us as candidates? We would be very much obliged! Later we would not hesitate to send our dear Sister Magdalena Forbes herself as a teacher to fill her sister's vacancy there.³⁸

In the event that God grants blessing and success to the proposed work and allows its realization, I venture to answer the questions in your kind letter as follows:

1) We would ask 50 to 60 pounds³⁹ for each teacher, free living quarters with four to five small rooms, a kitchen, and a little garden next to the house where the sisters can walk during recreation.

2) We ask for only the most necessary furnishings—and request that these would be very simple. Usually our furniture is made of soft wood with an oak finish.

3) The priest would only be obliged to hear the sisters' weekly confession, give them Holy Communion, and if possible, occasionally give them a short conference. He would also take care of their retreat and of religious instruction in the school.

4) The Mass schedule depends on local circumstances and the priest's other obligations.

5) We do not ask for special privileges. We would be very grateful if you could send us a sketch of the house, lightly drawn in pencil, which would show the location of the school and convent in relation to the church.

Be assured that the plan close to your heart has also become mine. United with you in prayer, I ask God to bless its fulfillment.

Respectfully yours,

Mary Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

38. According to Fr. McCay's letter to Mother Theresa on January 17, 1874, Sister Magdalena's sister was leaving her position as a lay teacher in the school in Wishaw and he saw this as an opportunity to call the Poor School Sisters there. (Autograph, Munich) 17833

39. Approximately \$229 to \$275 in American currency at the time

4906: *To Mother M. Caroline Friess*
Milwaukee (Excerpt)

Motherhouse
 February 23, 1874

J!M!

Dear Venerable Sister M. Caroline!

. . . My God, if only you could have given us a sister for Scotland and one for Schillingsfürst [Bavaria]! The conditions offered in Scotland were acceptable and the parish priest seemed to have an understanding of religious life. . .

⁴⁰

Sister Agnella [Rauchenegger] has probably written to you about the suffering that Sister Justiniana Fenne caused us in Greenwich.⁴¹ If only she does not lose her faith! We heard that she went to a Protestant captain. . .⁴²

4980: *To Mother M. Caroline Friess*
Milwaukee (Excerpt)

Motherhouse
 September 26, 1874

J!M!

Dear Venerable Sister Caroline!

. . . England would certainly be very grateful to you—and so would we—if you could offer them a music teacher because the poor sisters there are in such a difficult situation. There is no prospect of any help since M. Justiniana [Fenne] deceived them. We never considered secondary education in England and, from the very beginning, we never proposed an institute but an orphanage. There are day students everywhere who ask for music lessons and pay well for them. Sister Justiniana would have been very suitable, but it turned out differently. She is now in Scotland and has

40. A mission was never opened in Scotland.

41. See Document 4892, pp. 118-119.

42. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 7 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

asked to be readmitted. We will think this over.

If we had certified teachers, we could already have had government schools in England! . . . ⁴³

5062: *To Bishop James Danell*
Southwark

Munich
May 4, 1875

J!M!

Most Reverend Bishop! Your Excellency!

Please accept the expression of my deep gratitude for your gracious letter of April 21, which assured us of episcopal acceptance into your diocese and gave us the consoling news about the prospects offered by the new mission in Woolwich.⁴⁴ May God grant it the grace of further growth and may you not withdraw your helpful, pastoral hand from us!

With great trust in God, good Sister Agnella has indeed gone through many bitter experiences and overcome many obstacles in England.⁴⁵ The future should be better. Above all, God must lead native-born candidates to us. We indicated to Sister Agnella repeatedly that it is simply impossible to train sufficient teachers in Bavaria for the English schools. Even if she would only need additional personnel for needlework or music, little would be accomplished with the English children if their teachers cannot make themselves understood in the children's own native language.

43. This document can be found in its entirety in Volume 7 of *Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger*.

44. After the school district in Greenwich was divided between various parts of the city, the sisters lost many of the children in their schools. When there was a request for sisters to staff the school in Woolwich, the sisters from Greenwich moved there. On June 1, 1875, they began teaching 540 children.

45. Sister M. Agnella Rauchenegger was superior at the mission in Whitechapel when the sisters left in 1872. She was then appointed superior of the new mission in Greenwich, which was open for only three years. From Greenwich, Sister M. Agnella went to Woolwich where she opened the new mission on January 23, 1875.

We agreed to accept Woolwich only on condition that Sister Agnella would be able to fill the teaching positions with personnel already available. We are simply unable to send any more personnel. To our great regret, we must also tell you the same thing again today. How grateful we would be to God and to you if you could send us certified teachers with a religious vocation or even talented young women who could be trained. Then we could look forward to our future in England with greater confidence and continue to hope that God would help us find a home—however poor it might be—and our own priest. Otherwise, our continued presence in England would be very uncertain. Many priests in Prussia are searching for positions in other dioceses now and perhaps one would be available for England.

Recommending this intention to your pastoral heart and requesting your blessing and continued benevolence, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

5088: *To Canon Bernard Ivers*
Birmingham

Munich
August 19, 1875

J!M!

Reverend Father!⁴⁶

I deeply regret the decision made by Sister Magdalena [Forbes], for we are losing a good teacher. On the other hand, only the great forbearance and heroic patience that the other sisters had with her character faults made it possible for her to remain in the convent as long as she did. She was not a very good influence on the children or the teaching candidates who were entrusted to her, and often one had reason to fear that the parents were justified in their complaints.

46. Canon Bernard Ivers was the pastor at St. Peter Parish in Birmingham. The first sisters were sent to St. Peter's, the second mission in Birmingham, on November 10, 1872.

What I regret most of all is that we do not have another qualified teacher for the kindergarten. If you do not wish to employ a lay teacher, we have only Amalia Frör.⁴⁷ Sister Gisela [Burgartz] wrote that she discussed this possibility with Inspector Scoltock and he was not opposed to it.

You have always shown so much kindness to our sisters that I believe you will also accept this new teacher until God gives us postulants who have passed their teaching examination. Until then, Sister Gisela will take it upon herself to introduce the new teacher to her responsibilities and acquaint her with all the advantages of good methodology.

We recommend these intentions to your prayers and your good advice and remain respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

5098: *To Archbishop Gregory von Scherr*
Munich

Munich
October 11, 1875

Your Excellency! Most Reverend Archbishop!

Reception of Three Postulants

It was impossible for the respectfully undersigned to release the candidates assigned to England from their field of labor soon enough to participate in the reception ceremony that took place on September 8. Therefore, in compliance with their urgent request, she respectfully submits her petition that you would approve their reception of the holy habit at a later date.

The names of these three postulants are (1) Maria Böhm, dairyman's daughter from Munich, born July 11, 1853, (2) Amalia Frör, inspector's daughter from Dinkelsbühl, born November 17, 1851, and (3) Sadie Hoban, inspector's daughter from Wakefield, Scotland, born December 2, 1851.⁴⁸

47. Amalia Frör was a candidate at the time.

48. The three postulants were received in Munich on October 24, 1875, and given the religious names, M. Raphaela Böhm, M. Philippa Frör, and M. Stanislaus Hoban.

Recommending them to your pastoral care and requesting your episcopal blessing, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

5103: *To Cardinal Henry E. Manning*
London

Munich
October 28, 1875

Your Eminence!⁴⁹

The superior of our motherhouse in Munich⁵⁰ recently had the honor of meeting with you and received so much kindness and understanding that I am obliged to express my heartfelt gratitude. She also told me about your pastoral care in providing for the needs of our sisters and your intention of giving them a priest. This priest, however, carried out his plan of emigrating to America instead.

We now wish to inform you that Fr. John Ernst, a priest who was an assistant at St. Felice in South Tyrol and then an assistant in Rosenheim, told us recently of his intention to go to England. He heard that the School Sisters there did not have a priest and he is willing to give them all possible assistance. He does not know English well enough yet to share in the public ministry of the other priests of the country. If you would give him a stipend for saying Mass, he would be content with free room and board from us. Nevertheless, we will leave it up to your wise discretion and we trust that your decision will redound to the genuine well-being of our sisters.

Recommending our foundation in the diocese of Westminster to your great kindness, I remain respectfully yours,

Mary Theresa of Jesus
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

49. Archbishop Manning was made a cardinal on March 15, 1875.

50. Sister M. Margaret of Cortona Wiedemann

5113: *To Cardinal Henry E. Manning*
London

Munich
November 24, 1875

J!M!

Your Eminence!

Most Reverend Cardinal and Archbishop!

Please do not take it amiss if I admit that the reply you sent through your secretary, Fr. [W. A.] Johnson, filled me with deep sadness. On the Feast of All Saints we completed eleven years of service in the archdiocese of Westminster and now we should leave!⁵¹ Only the thought that you were either uninformed or misinformed with regard to the entire sequence of events gives me consolation in my pain. The remembrance of the kindness that we experienced on several occasions also gives me courage to request a favorable hearing if I make a succinct presentation of everything that surfaced in conversation during annual visitations or in written correspondence, and was then placed in our files.

By virtue of a decree of October 13, 1864, His Eminence Cardinal [Nicholas] Wiseman approved our sisters conducting the school for girls at St. Boniface Parish in Whitechapel. At the expense of the motherhouse in Munich, they lived for five years in a rented building where they were without garden, fresh air, or exercise. Soon the sad consequences of these privations became evident—several sisters became ill and one sister died.⁵²

These circumstances prompted us to look for a house in a more healthful environment where the sisters who became ill in their difficult vocation could regain their health. We believed it was a sign from God when the missionary priest at the Catholic parish in Southend,⁵³ who had heard of our project, promised us a section of the church grounds for the

51. A copy of Fr. Johnson's reply to Mother Theresa's letter of October 28, 1875, has not been found.

52. Sister M. Gerhardine Westermeier died in Whitechapel on August 2, 1868.

53. Fr. John Moore

sum of 250 pounds. (Eventually it came to 271 pounds.)⁵⁴ He accepted our assurance that we would establish an orphanage there as soon as the necessary funds could be found.

On July 5, 1870, an agreement was made between the general assistant and representative of the order M. Margaret [of Cortona] Wiedemann and the pastor Fr. [John] Moore. Individual points were discussed in a conference with Dr. Kahil, whom you sent there, and after the questions that had been raised were answered, the contract was concluded on July 7, 1870.⁵⁵ On the following day, July 8, we received the letter from Dr. [Daniel] Gilbert, Vicar-General, which gave us permission to build a convent in Southend.

Based on this approval we acquired another plot of land next to the church property. The cost of this plot of land, plus the church property mentioned above, came to 1,486 pounds.⁵⁶ We also rented a building for the time being where the sisters could regain their health, and we opened a small boarding school so that they would not be idle.

Even though the beginning was very poor, the sisters did not waver in their trust in God's help. We believed we had reached our goal when Fr. Moore wrote in January 1871 that his soldiers, 30,000 men, both Catholic and Protestant, had decided that from then on they would give their Christmas and Easter bonuses for the establishment of an orphanage intended for children of the British garrison, whereby, they wanted to encourage us to build. This moved the sisters to apply for your permission to raise money on our property. On May 4, 1871, you gave your written approval through Dr. Gilbert.

The project failed, but in October 1871, a new ray of hope encouraged the sisters when the joyful news came through your secretary Fr. Johnson that you would transfer 12 orphan girls to them for education and character formation. In a few days, beds, tables, chairs, linens, and so forth, were

54. Approximately \$1,135 to \$1,240 in American currency at the time

55. See Document 4641, pp. 89-91.

56. Approximately \$6,805 in American currency at the time

obtained—not without significant expenditure—to accommodate the expected arrivals. The children, however, never came—another difficult trial!

Until 1872, the sisters sacrificed themselves for the few children God sent to them and hoped to acquire a building (the so-called hotel) next to our property. The owner would not sell it to Catholics at any price. Then Fr. Moore (together with several good friends) advised us to obtain the hotel through a third party and to withdraw from Southend for the time being for reasons of prudence.

With the approval of the bishop of Southwark,⁵⁷ the sisters, therefore, went to Greenwich where they took over the school for girls that Canon (G. E.) Noon had offered them. This was after they found it necessary to leave Whitechapel with your permission and under the difficult circumstances, sufficiently well known to you. Nevertheless, if called again, they would be willing to return to Whitechapel.

In the meantime, the little house next to the Catholic church in Southend was for sale and, because Fr. Moore urgently desired the sisters to return, they applied for it on his advice. You gave written permission through Dr. Gilbert, and Countess [Helen] Tasker contributed 100 pounds.⁵⁸ It was appropriately furnished and the sisters moved in with five boarders, while the poor children of the area were given the opportunity to attend classes.

In their poor and isolated life, the sisters found their greatest consolation in the presence of the Most Blessed Sacrament. It also gave them joy to care for the neglected church. Unpleasant scenes that occurred between Fr. Moore and the sisters robbed them of this consolation. Fr. Moore declared that the contract made with us was terminated and that he had no further obligations toward the sisters.

The question spontaneously arises—was Fr. Moore justified in declaring null and void a contract that was closed

57. Bishop Danell

58. In addition to the 100 pounds (approximately \$458 in American currency at the time), Countess Tasker also provided Southend with a small church and parish house.

with your representative on July 7, 1870? Which of the two contracting parties was unfaithful to the promise made—we, who obtained the house and grounds at such great sacrifice in order to attain our purpose, or Fr. Moore, who made only brilliant promises? It will not be too difficult for you to decide, but enough of this. We do not want to complain.

The auctioning of the hotel under discussion was finally advertised in June of this year and, together with the equipment on hand, it was awarded to us for 996 pounds⁵⁹ plus court costs. We sent additional sisters and candidates there.

When M. Margaret, the general assistant, visited with you, you offered to appoint a German priest to serve the sisters in Southend, a fact that she immediately reported to me with great joy. Unfortunately, this priest did not know the language, changed his mind, and went instead to North America where he could find a greater field of activity. He assured us, however, that you promised to appoint another German priest for us.

After all that happened, we did not doubt for a moment that you would agree to have Fr. [John] Ernst serve our little mission in Southend.⁶⁰ The contents of the latest letter from Secretary Johnson, therefore, struck us like a bolt of lightning. With great charity, Fr. Ernst had volunteered to help the sisters after the mission priest⁶¹ had failed them in every way. What an impression this must have made on Fr. Ernst!

Is it really your intention to refuse us permission to continue working in the archdiocese of Westminster now that we own land and a suitable building obtained by so many efforts, by such great sacrifice, and burdened with a debt of almost 3,000 pounds?⁶² God seems to have blessed the sacrifices made by the sisters because the former hotel is already filled with children!⁶³

59. Approximately \$4,562 in American currency at the time

60. See Document 5103, p. 125.

61. Fr. John Moore

62. Approximately \$13,660 in American currency at the time

63. According to the Chronological Sketches, the building was dedicated on December 8, 1875, and 14 children were already being cared for there.

When our general assistant was there about five years ago, you consoled her by telling her that in England, every religious foundation needs ten years before it is firmly established and able to prosper. We thought that after eleven years, we had fulfilled the purpose of our going to England. Now our hopes are shattered!

Your Eminence, please rescind your verdict of November 2!⁶⁴ Doing this would surely award you a new pearl for your crown of glory in the next world.

Please make a decision in the controversy regarding the pathway.⁶⁵ It legally belongs to our property, as Fr. Moore and Mr. Goodman both well know, because the latter personally showed us the boundary line. According to his plan, this pathway would be the main entrance to the future convent and a public pathway to the church would be opened up nearby. The fact that Goodman had recourse to the lawyer Mr. New may prove that he would like to persuade us to return this piece of land, the pathway, to the church for 25 pounds.⁶⁶ We could not agree to this unreasonable request, however, because two years previously, Mr. Goodman forced us to purchase the lower piece of land at 20 pounds⁶⁷ so that a boundary would be formed by the pathway. As proof of my position, I am enclosing a sketch of our property drawn by Goodman himself.

Now I must ask that you would forgive me for having tried your patience with my letter, but I considered it necessary to write at length so that you could examine everything properly. Our life or death depends on your pronouncement. I now entrust everything to Divine Providence and to your

64. A copy of this communication has not been found.

65. On the property in Southend

66. Approximately \$114.50 in American currency at the time

67. Approximately \$91.60 in American currency at the time

wise discretion and pastoral care. With an anxious heart, I look forward to your speedy and gracious reply.⁶⁸

If you were led to make your statement for reasons unknown to us, we ask that you would please let us know. We assure you of our willingness, if at all possible, to remove whatever could displease you.

Respectfully yours,

M. Theresa of Jesus
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

P.S. We consulted with the bishop of Regensburg and he wrote the following.⁶⁹

5115: *To Bishop William Bernard Ullathorne*
Birmingham

Munich
November 26, 1875

J!M!

Most Reverend Bishop! Your Excellency!

After Venerable Sister M. Margaret [of Cortona Wiedemann] returned from England, my time was taken up with the forthcoming ceremonies of reception and profession, the assignment of personnel, and then a visitation trip. For these reasons, it was impossible for me to carry out my intention of writing to you immediately.

Today I would like to express my deep gratitude for the favor you granted the good Sisters M. Gisela [Burgartz] and

68. A written reply to this letter has not been found. The sisters remained at Southend. An addition was made to the orphanage in 1880 and an elementary school was added later. Several reception and profession ceremonies were held there. The 1909 General Chapter decided to close the mission, however, and the sisters left the next year. See Mother Mary Loretto Gies and Sister M. Lidoria Balk, SSND, *Foundations of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in England, 1864-1981* (Cambridge, Ontario: Good Books, 1983) 28-37.

69. The copy of this letter prepared for the beatification process ends here. Bishop Senestréy's letter has not been located.

M. Walburga [Behringer] by allowing them the privilege of making their profession in your chapel and having breakfast at your table. Venerable Sister Margaret brought a written copy of your pastoral address to the two sisters. It was a great consolation to hear of your loving concern for the spiritual and physical well-being of the sisters. Despite the storm and rain, you came to hear their confessions the evening before their profession.

Admittedly, the little community of sisters offered a sorry contrast—two sisters were preparing for their nuptial celebration with Jesus, while the third sister, Sister Magdalena [Forbes],⁷⁰ was excluded because she herself wished it so. May God be with these two sisters as well as the other sisters and grant them success in their efforts to lead the children entrusted to their care to Jesus, the Friend of Children! May God also awaken in many talented young women a vocation to the religious life in our order!

Please accept this poor expression of my gratitude and my request that the sisters in your diocese would continue to enjoy your pastoral care in the future!

Respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

5126: *To Dr. Daniel Gilbert*
London

January 5, 1876

J!M!

Very Reverend Vicar-General!⁷¹

Yesterday we received a letter from Sister Agnella [Rauchenegger] saying that the cardinal⁷² was awaiting an answer from me regarding the pathway to the church in Southend.

70. See Document 5088, pp. 123-124.

71. Dr. Daniel Gilbert was the vicar-general of the archdiocese of Westminster.

72. Cardinal Manning

We gave our reply about this to the cardinal on November 24⁷³ in a document that you have probably already seen. Therefore, I confidently submit my petition that you intercede for us with the cardinal and aid us in our great predicament so that we will also experience some saving help during these days when the Savior of the World was born. Our greatest intention in prayer before the crib of the Lord of Heaven is that God will bless you most abundantly.

As we already mentioned in a previous letter,⁷⁴ we are willing to allow the use of the pathway to the church if a nominal rent is offered (even if it is only one pound annually).⁷⁵

Offering our sincerest best wishes for the great feast of Christmas and the New Year, I remain respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus
General Superior
Poor School Sisters of Notre Dame

5144: *To Cardinal Henry E. Manning*
London

Munich
March 25, 1876

J!M!

Most Reverend Cardinal! Your Excellency!

Today, the beautiful feast of the Annunciation, I venture once again to submit the petition we made on November 24, that is, that you would kindly let us know your wishes. We are willing to fulfill them and we repeat here our offer to relinquish the plot of land for use by the public as a pathway to the church.

Please send your gracious reply to the one who remains respectfully yours,

[No Signature]
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

73. See Document 5113, p. 130

74. This letter is not included in the beatification collection and may have been written by someone other than Mother Theresa.

75. Approximately \$4.58 in American currency at the time

5145: *To Bishop James Danell*
Southwark

Munich
March 28, 1876

J!M!

Most Reverend Bishop! Your Excellency!

In your kind letter of March 23, you offered us the building that is for sale in Woolwich.

We are greatly obliged to you for this proof of your benevolence toward our sisters, but unfortunately, we must reply that we are unable to give the support that Sister Agnella [Rauchenegger] requested because the purchase in Southend made such great demands on our finances. We recognize the indispensable necessity of owning a haven in England where our candidates can be trained for their future profession. Therefore, we do not believe that we are acting against God's will if we try to secure Southend with the means available. Both the location with its healthful climate and seclusion and the connection with the church appear to be so suitable for this purpose.

We thank God for the field of activity that God has already given us in Woolwich, but we lack the necessary personnel to expand. Moreover, the building for sale is on the top of a hill while the school and church are at the bottom. The sisters would have to walk almost a half hour each day in the heat of summer and the cold of winter, conditions which their health could not endure for long. For these reasons, there is nothing else to do but wait until God sends a better solution.

Please do not take it amiss that I have discussed this situation so openly, but do continue to grant our sisters your blessing and the gracious benevolence you have shown us up to now.

Respectfully yours,

Mary Theresa of Jesus
General Superior of the Poor School Sisters

5161: *To Fr. Henry Volk*
London

July 14, 1876

J!M!

Very Reverend Confessor!

Although you are personally unknown to me, I venture to turn to you with full confidence. This trust rests on the fact that the cardinal⁷⁶ has appointed you as confessor for our sisters in Southend.

If this duty always demands great patience, it is particularly so in Southend since this is a new mission where things are not as regulated as they should be or as we would like them to be. The enemy seems to have sown weeds among the wheat, scattering seeds of discord and division, and intrigue is not altogether out of the question either.

I am sorry to have to speak in this manner, but I am convinced that you have a sincere interest in the sisters and are working to establish a good community and maintain a good religious spirit there. Therefore, I find it necessary to draw your attention to the spirit of pride and deceit that has captivated some characters among them. At the expense of the good name of the order and its members, they do not hesitate to enforce their own frequently erroneous views. As a result, others, who pursue what is truly good with all their heart but have less finesse and do not feel justified in using every means, must suffer and are often misjudged.

Sister Agnella [Rauchenegger] will come to Southend at the beginning of August and a young sister who has been working in England for four years will come at the end of October.⁷⁷ With their coming, perhaps a more favorable situation will prevail. I can assure you that there is no doubt about the fidelity and genuine good will of the superior.⁷⁸ She is very reliable and she will gradually become accustomed to the circumstances and special characteristics of England.

76. Cardinal Manning

77. Sister M. Raphaela Böhm

78. Sister M. Pachomia von Pulciani was sent to Southend shortly before this letter was written.

Finally, I recommend our sisters and the entire institute in Southend to your special benevolence and prayer and remain respectfully yours,

M. Ther. of Jesus

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