

*The following text was written down in 1998 by **Elisabeth Bechler**, nee **Heier** (born in Kleinliebental in 1924) when she was living near the city of Bonn in Germany and interviewed by Peter Mock. She is now deceased. Peter Mock has provided permission to republish this article on the Black Sea German Research website.*

In May 1935 the doors to our church were locked. It was just at the time of May devotions (Maiandacht). After the May devotions, when all people were out of the church, a man came and locked the church -- and it was to be for all time. I can still remember it well. I was eleven years old at the time.

The next morning the priest (**Valentin Bechler**) entreated the authorities to allow him to enter the church one more time, he wanted to remove the Holy of Holies (Allerheiligste, i.e. sacred items). This they allowed him to do. A few days later he was taken into custody. Then the cross was removed from the church and the steeple was torn down. The church building was converted into a club house. Films were shown in the club and it also was used for meetings.

On 20 October 1941, just on the patron festival day, our church again was opened. The Festival of the Holy Wendelinus is our church patron. This was during the war when the German soldiers came to our village. At first after the church became available to have worship services, they were conducted without a priest. Then later the congregation was cared for by priests from Odessa. At the end of March 1944 we had to depart from our church and as well from our dear home, forever.

Now we are in the homeland of our ancestors. Thanks to God and to the German government that they accepted us. So was the beginning and the end of our Church and our home.

### **Succession of Priests in Kleinliebental**

Prior to the assignment of the first priest the congregation was served by various priests from Odessa and from the colony of Josefstal.

1.	Priest in Kleinliebental was <b>Johannes Gratz</b> - 2 July 1840 to 24 June 1841.
2.	<b>Gabriel Gritzenwitsch</b> -- 24 June 1841 to 17 February 1848.
3.	<b>Leopold Franz Roria</b> -- 24 March 1848 to 1 January 1851.
4.	<b>Didak Sambor</b> (from Littau) -- 1 January 1851 to 22

	January 1854.
5.	<b>Michael Stankewitsch</b> -- 22 January 1854 to 24 June 1861.
6.	<b>Zeno Kalinowski</b> -- 4 July 1861 to 12 June 1862.
7.	Alternately served by Prelates <b>Rosutowitsch</b> and <b>Schame</b> , 19 June 1862 to 27 October 1866.
8.	<b>Anton Simnoch</b> -- 7 October 1866 to 3 November 1867.
*	(Translator's note. There is no entry for the dates 1867 to 1875).
9.	<b>Kyrian Gintillo</b> -- 1 August 1875 to December 1882.
10.	<b>Julian Michalsky</b> -- 4 April 1883 to 25 June 1884.
11.	<b>Kasper Jäger</b> - 26 June 1884 to 1913.
12.	Pater (Father) <b>Dezel</b> -- 1913, died the same year. Then the congregation was without a priest.
13.	Pater (Father) <b>Loran</b> -- 1914.
14.	<b>Michael Waliser</b> -- one year.
15.	<b>Johannes Fix</b> -- 1916 to 1925.
16.	<b>Valentin Bechler</b> -- the last priest, served to 1935, then taken into custody.