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Maria M.

No one can replace a mother

*Maria M.'s mother Stefanie S. was murdered in 1940, aged 26, in a Wels hospital. As she suffered from epilepsy, during National Socialism she was deemed "mentally disabled", unworthy of inheriting" and "inferior".*

*Doctors were obliged to immediately register people with epilepsy to official National Socialist departments. These "terminally ill" were the first to be subjected to forced sterilization and later killed in the National Socialist euthanasia operations. In addition to the official euthanasia actions, people were also murdered in the hospital during the course of the so called "wild euthanasia". The falsified cause of death of Maria M.'s mother*



Orphanes on the street, 1945. (c) ÖNB

Sadly, I don't have any of my mother's papers. Her name was Stefanie S. She was very sick and had epilepsy. As Hitler had no use for such people, she was taken from us and gassed. Four children were then left on their own. My father was away at war. I am the oldest, I was seven years old. I was first taken to a children's home in Bad Ischl, and later my brother and I were sent to a children's home in Gmunden, in Bahnhofstraße. My sister was sent to a different home and my youngest brother was sent to live with a family somewhere. Had my father been in agreement, we children would also have been gassed. No one can replace a mother. As I didn't know where my mother had gone, I looked at the door each time it opened and thought, now our mother is coming to pick us up. Sadly, it was in vain.

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