



THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2005

## Ratzinger's Spiritual Mentor Dined With, Praised Hitler

by Michael in New York on [4/21/2005 02:54:00 AM](#)

Yes, more information from the well-travelled territory of Pope Benedict XVI/Ratzinger's childhood during the war. This time, the Independent UK goes to his hometown and quotes a number of [people quite hard on the teenage Ratzinger](#).

Yet, in Traunstein, some of the town's older residents feel that questions about the Pope's early years remain unanswered. Herta Kaiser, an 83-year-old pensioner recalled that several people in the town hid Jews from the Nazis and helped them to escape to neutral Switzerland. "Traunstein was not all Nazi, it was also a Catholic stronghold," she said.

There is no evidence that the Ratzinger family felt inclined to help the town's few remaining Jews, or the smattering of anti-Nazi resistance fighters who dared to oppose the regime.

Elizabeth Lohner, 84, whose brother-in-law was sent to Dachau concentration camp for being a conscientious objector, recalled: "It was possible to resist and those people set an example for others." She added: "The Ratzingers were young and made different choices."

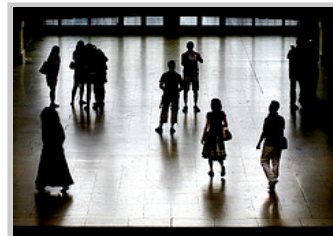
In 1937, another Traunstein family hid a local anti-Nazi resistance fighter, named Hans Braxenthaler. He had been tortured in Dachau for his opposition to the regime. Frieda Meyer, 82, one of the Ratzinger family's neighbours at the time, said: "When Braxenthaler was betrayed and the Nazis came for him, he shot himself rather than give himself up."

And here's info I haven't read before about Ratzinger's mentor:

Ratzinger's election will also raise questions about the dubious role played by the Catholic Church during the Nazi era. The extent to which leading Catholics felt obliged to reach compromises with the regime is outlined by the stance taken by Ratzinger's mentor, Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber, one of the Pope's most important early influences.

Documented evidence shows that the cardinal visited Hitler's mountain retreat during the 1930s and was entertained to lunch by the Führer in person. During their meeting, Von Faulhaber is on record as telling

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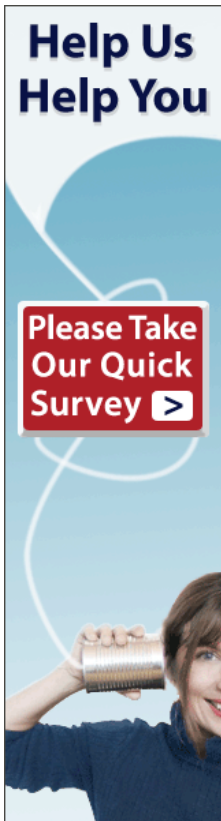
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