

THE BENEDICTINE ABBEY OF ST. WENZEL AND
THE VICARIATE OF BRAUNAU/SUDETEN (1938—1948)

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This contribution deals with the ecclesiastical structure of the Braunau region and northeastern Bohemia and shows the possibilities of religious life during those years in which pastoral work was most restricted. The author deliberately goes beyond the narrow framework of the geographical area in question to cover the vicariate's relations with neighboring districts, with the general vicariate of Trautenau and with the diocese of Königgrätz — thus permitting the situation of this district to serve as a model of that existing in other regions. On the other hand, however, the relations of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Wenzel with the other abbeys of Bohemia point to the special status enjoyed by Braunau. They also explain, moreover, why town and monastery, despite the limitations imposed by the facts of geography, could become a cultural and religious center of northeastern Bohemia — and remain one in such trying times. Light is thrown on the behavior of the population vis-à-vis the Church and their changing attitude toward Hitler's „Greater Germany“. It was considered desirable to include in this account the personal lists of the monasteries, since the few available sources make a reconstruction extremely difficult.