

Happy Mothers' Day - All five of my sons became Vienna Choir Boys

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I sang through all of my pregnancies. And all five of my sons became Vienna Choir Boys.

Today we attended the 525th Anniversary Concert of the Vienna Boys Choir. I had tears streaming down my face throughout the first half of the concert.

Mother's Day

It is Mother's Day. My youngest son invited me to watch him sing with the men's choir of former Vienna Choir Boys.



525 Years Vienna Boys Choir

When my first son joined the choir, it was the five-hundred-year anniversary. They were short of boys and had a recruiting campaign. We lived in the countryside, a few hours from Vienna. My neighbour used to give me her day-old newspapers. I was busy with my five small kids so a day or two didn't matter to me. I saw an article about the Vienna Boys Choir.

Walt Disney

I remembered growing up in Australia. I watched the Disney movie about the Vienna Boys Choir. It's probably a bit like the Sound of Music. Nobody here in Austria knows anything about it. This movie impressed me. The music moved me. The story moved me. I didn't know I would end up in Austria.

Vienna

When I first travelled the world, I came to Vienna to visit a former colleague who was working at UNIDO. I stayed with her while applying for a visa to visit my relatives in Czechoslovakia.

In 1980 when Reverend Moon gave Josef Gundacker my photograph, I didn't know I would end up living in Vienna.

When I was secretary of Professors World Peace Academy in Canberra, and the international SG came to

visit us in Sydney, he commented: "Vienna is a beautiful city." I didn't think of living in Vienna.

Voluntary work

I went to join my fiancé in America. He had left Austria for volunteer work in the USA, and we did that together for a couple of years. Then we got married. In Jackson. Oregon. We moved to Yakima, Washington State.

It was after a cross-country trip from Seattle to New York in a mobile home, that we did end up in Vienna. Just a few months. Then we were in Seebenstein, south of the city, where our first son was born.

Zwettl

Fast forward ten years. We are living in Zwettl. We have five sons.

Now our oldest son is ten and his music and religion teacher says he should join the boys choir. He has such a good voice. So, I think of the newspaper article and arrange an audition. The music teacher was thinking of the local boys' choir. I have no idea there are any other boys' choirs. I only know of the Vienna Boys Choir. When my husband protests, saying he was traumatized going to boarding school, I say, it's just an audition. We don't have to say yes. I just want to know. He insists, he knew he was good enough. And good enough he was.

As we are shown around the premises of Augarten, where the school is located, our son is met by a friend who is already a student at the school.

Kirchberg am Wagram

The following year the second son commutes with me as I begin working just around the corner from the school. We move to Kirchberg am Wagram to be closer to the city.

Two years later, our third son decides to join and the three of them sing at the Salzburger Festspiele with Ricardo Muti.



tourists!

One Christmas morning I get up to see my five sons ironing their shirts before leaving to go to Vienna together.

As a mother of five sons, I knew I must have done something right.

I sang through all of my pregnancies. And all five of my sons became Vienna Choir Boys.

Today we attended the 525th Anniversary Concert of the Vienna Boys Choir. I had tears streaming down my face throughout the first half of the concert. I was revelling in the music which was mostly new to me. I do not consider myself musically cultivated. In fact, I would say I tend to feel quite inferior, often putting myself down, not feeling good enough.

Proud Mum

Today I appreciated twenty-five years of Gundacker family contribution to the Vienna Boys Choir. As I listened to the music, and saw my youngest son singing, together with the primary school students, the Vienna Choir Boys, the Chorus Juventus singers of the upper grammar school, the Chorus Viennensus: the men's choir of former Vienna Choir boys, I felt the love of a proud mother.

One comes, one goes

Every second year one son leaves the choir, one son joins the choir. The three younger ones sing together in St Stefan's Cathedral. After the fourth son completes his four years in the choir, they set up an upper grammar school. Then the fifth son has the option to continue. He does.

Tourist Guides

Meanwhile, the older ones are still getting up early on Sunday mornings to go to the Imperial Palace Chapel - not to sing, but to guide the

But much more. Here in the pomp and beauty and grandeur of the Golden Hall I felt at home. I also felt the love of God, the feminine, Mother God.



Vienna Golden Hall

I sat, tears streaming down my face, grateful for all the times I have been in that Golden Hall, sometimes for rehearsals when my boys were singing, sometimes for concerts. And once it was even the Chinese New Year Concert. I looked up at the distant stage and marvelled that the boys now had benches to sit on.

For the first time I noticed the golden ladies holding up the building.



I appreciated that now even girls were singing with the boys' choir. I appreciated that my son had been one of the first in the upper grammar school. I appreciated that my first son was asked to sing before he even started at the school because they were short and his voice was so good. I marvelled that my second son decided he wanted to join even before he was old enough to stay in boarding school; and I just "happened to start working around the corner".

I marvelled at God's glory and knew God's feminine heart. And I felt proud and grateful on behalf of God. And I was good enough. I am good enough. And God is great. And God is my mother.



Happy Mothers' Day