

The PARISH CHURCH of Saint Luzia

Told by Isonta, guardian of the treasures

If you walk through the heart of Niedernsill, you can feel it - the whisper of centuries echoing through the walls of the Church of Saint Luzia. Come with me, and I will tell you its story, woven deep into the fabric of time.

The earliest known mention of the **Gothic Church of Saint Luzia** appears in a document dated **2nd December 1409**. In it, the Patriarch of Antioch granted an **indulgence** to all who visited the chapel of Saint Luzia on its feast day and contributed to its construction and adornment. This document is the oldest written proof of the church's existence. But who knows? Perhaps a sacred place stood here long before.

As the centuries passed, Niedernsill grew, and so did its church. But fate was not always kind to this holy place. In **1798**, a devastating mudslide buried the churchyard beneath meters of debris. The floor inside the church became damp, and its structure weakened. A decision was made: a new church had to be built.

Between **1865 and 1866**, the people of Niedernsill constructed a new church in the **Neo-Romanesque style**. Yet no sooner had they completed their work than tragedy struck once more. On **7th October 1877**, the feast of the Rosary, a great fire broke out. Flames devoured the wooden structure of the tower, the roof, the pulpit, the windows, the organ - even the church bells melted in the heat. Almost everything was lost.

But Niedernsill did not surrender. By **1882**, the church had risen again, rebuilt through the unwavering devotion and generosity of the people. New statues were carved, a grand high altar was installed, and new bells rang once more, calling the faithful to prayer.

Time flowed onward and the church continued to evolve with the needs of its people. In the **1950s and 1960s**, it was carefully restored, preserving its remarkable artworks - including the magnificent high altar painting of Saint Luzia. A great **Christmas nativity scene** was added, bringing to life the story of Christ's birth each year.

Yet history is never truly finished. In the **1990s**, an extensive renovation began, lasting until **2000**. The tower was reinforced, the walls dried and strengthened, and the interior reimagined, ensuring that the church could stand proudly for generations to come.

Stand before this church, and listen. Feel the breath of time around you. Perhaps, if you close your eyes, you will hear the echoes of bells that once melted in fire and were cast anew. Perhaps Saint Luzia herself will whisper to you the tale of this sacred place - a story of destruction, resilience and unwavering faith.

For this is more than just a building of stone. It is a place of hope, of community, of memory - a true treasure of Niedernsill.

