

Maria Feheri With Her Family



This is a picture of my mother, Erzsebet Antal, nee Rasko (on the left), my two sons, Gyuri and Gabor Antal, and me on the Fishermen's Bastion in Budapest. The photo was taken in 1968. In 1952 I had a premature delivery, Andras: he died quite soon after. Then came Gyuri in 1953, and in 1965 there was Gabor, who later died at the age of 19. He had just started university. He was a Hungarian-English major. It came suddenly, it's called sarcoma. If it caught a young man, it killed him within months. Gyuri graduated from Eotvos Lorand University, majoring in Hungarian and Aesthetics. When it turned out that kidney disease is treated better elsewhere than here, he left. First he went with a scholarship, then in Berlin he made contacts in the Hungarian House [Hungarian cultural institution in Berlin], and he has worked there since. He's a program manager there. The children knew that they were Jews, we didn't hide that, but we didn't raise them to be religious because we already didn't believe, either. When, in 1956 my son asked about little Jesus [traditionally, Christmas presents are said to be brought by little Jesus, rather than Santa Claus], when he was three years old, my husband said to him, 'Gyuri, there is no little Jesus, but you don't have to tell that to others because it hurts people'. It happened once, in a shop, that somebody asked, 'Son, what has little Jesus brought you?' He said to the man that there was no little Jesus and that, '[his] father told me that one doesn't have to talk about this'. So Gyuri knew, and Gabor knew as well. And our close friends knew. Somehow our circle of friends formed in a way that they were all Jews, with one exception.