

Extracts from a Talk given to Couples in Milwaukee  
by Father Joseph Kentenich  
24 April 1961

What is the world today like? Let us recall very briefly how attractive the world today is, and then think of how much homelessness there is in the world today. Finally we need to think of all the things we cannot understand. They make no sense.

We should think of all we are hearing about what is happening in Israel at present<sup>1</sup>, what is going on in Cuba<sup>2</sup>, or in Algeria<sup>3</sup>. How much confusion, how much revolution! Who will overcome such a world? The people who have a deep and living faith in Christ and his teaching.

We could apply these thoughts to ourselves and ask: What sort of difficulties do we face in our families, in our marriages? We can find almost the same needs as we have seen in the rest of the world. Must we not admit: How much homelessness there is despite marriage? How many dangers there are threatening our inner, moral and religious life also in the family! How many disappointments we have experienced in each other! Now, please try to recall the very specific needs and difficulties in your family, in your marriage.

What is the remedy offered us by St John? Whoever has a living faith in Christ and in his teaching will overcome all these difficulties. Let me repeat: A living faith helps us to overcome them. (...)

What we have said gives rise to the question: What is God's intention with the whole history of the world?

You need to distinguish between two things: The meaning of world events from God's point of view; and the meaning of world events from our point of view. From God's point of view: What does God want, what is he trying to achieve, through the chaos of our present times? Then from our point of view: What is my answer to all the turmoil of life today? From God's point of view, the meaning of world events is to bring the Father's children victoriously home to the Father in Christ through our

---

<sup>1</sup> The trial of Eichmann

<sup>2</sup> Castro defeated the anti-communist invasion in the Bay of Pigs and consolidated his power.

<sup>3</sup> Algerian generals attempted a coup-d'etat against the French colonial government. It was put down.

Blessed Lady. We need to repeat that, please take note of it: Bringing us victoriously home in Christ through our Lady to the Father. So what does the Father want to do with his children? To fetch them home into his heart.

It should be a victorious event. Why? Where are the opponents that want to prevent the Father from fetching us home? Or, who is reaching out to take possession of the heart of the Father's child?

First of all, the devil. He wants to possess us. What does the Father want when he fetches us home to his heart? He wants to overcome the devil. The devil reaches out, he also reaches out towards us.

Again: Who wants to possess us? People say it is the world. There are countless numbers of people who want to possess us.

And finally, we ourselves want to hold ourselves back. So if the Father really manages to fetch us home into his heart, it is a great victory he has won in us and through us.

If we now think of the extraordinary difficulties we encounter today, or of our family life, the great, Catholic thought is: It is in such times that the process of fetching us home is speeded up.

We need to think very carefully about what that means. How often we say: He or she is really lucky! Look at them and look at us! You could express it in a picture. If my bread and butter falls onto the ground, it always falls on the right, with the others it always falls on the left. I am always unlucky, this or that has gone wrong. Do you understand what that means? The bigger the cross, the more God wants to fetch me home into his heart, he wants to speed me on my way into his fatherly heart.

For example, my wife is ill. It would be alright if it were merely physical. But there are times when she is really confused. What does that mean? What must I learn to think in the light of faith? I am being fetched home more speedily to the Father. Can you see how difficult it is to say this in practice? It is a step in the right direction if we can understand that this is how we should see things in the light of faith. (...)

If we want to go into details again and consider the thought from God's point of view, we would have to say: Through all that happens in the world, whether he sends me joy or suffering, whether he sends me the cross, success or failure, the heavenly Father has only one goal: My return home to the Father in Christ and through our Lady should be speeded up to a remarkable degree.

Please take up each word and look at it. To return home to the Father's heart. Thanks be to God, those of us who have been coming together for some years have gradually caught a glimpse of the truth that God is our Father. However, there are millions of Christians who are quite unaware of it. Either God is an abstract idea for them, or the God they adore is a dictator. Because they are afraid of this God, they run to our Lord. What does that mean? Such people cannot understand why the heavenly Father maltreated Christ in such a way. So, I imagine it to myself in this way, in a certain sense they share with our Lord a feeling of antipathy towards the heavenly Father, and at the same time they feel sympathy for our Lord. We two, we are badly treated from above. You need to take this very seriously, that is often the case in life. How many people have a devotion to our Lord, but absolutely no time for the heavenly Father. It is a really essential task to draw the picture of God as our Father for the people of today. (...)

We now know what it is from God's point of view: Fetching home. He wants to fetch me home through all that happens into his heart. What do I have to do? Being fetched home is met with returning home, seen from my point of view. Where must I go? If I am in difficulties, where should I ultimately go? I can go to people, that is alright, but ultimately they should all lead me to the Father.

What does that mean: To go to the Father? To offer him my heart again, to know that I am completely dependent on him, or, after our Lord's example, to live according to the thought: I always do what pleases the heavenly Father<sup>4</sup>. The Father speaks to me not just in words, but also through the blows of life.

So, if I suddenly become ill, or something at work goes wrong; or my wife becomes ill, or the children are in chaos - you see, what should the underlying attitude of a genuine child of the Father be? What should be the first question? Not first of all: Lord God, what have I done wrong this time so that this has to happen to me?

Or, suppose my husband has now got competition from a new business that has opened in the neighbourhood. What is my reaction? What have I done wrong? Lord, think of how faithful I have always been to you!

That is always the terrible question: What have I done wrong? There is always the thought: If God sends something, it is a punishment. No, it is an act of love. That is why he sends it.

---

<sup>4</sup>

cf. John 8,29

In Southern Germany, in Freiburg, there is a gravestone with the beautiful words: The road leads homewards to the Father.

That should really be my personal answer to the blows I encounter in life. Not away from God, but home to God the Father, now on earth and ultimately in eternity. And since we have promised each other as husband and wife that we would lead one another to heaven, we should hold hands, as it were, that is to say, we should go together in our Lord through our Lady to the Father.

In conclusion, I think I should remind you what we Schoenstatt members expect in a special way of our shrine. We not only expect our Lady to unite us more deeply to our Lord, by also to lead us in our Lord to the Father<sup>5</sup>. When our Lord spoke those words from the cross: This is your Mother! he meant in practice: This is your Mother who is responsible for your finding your way in our Lord until you are finally at home in the Father's heart.

---

5

cf. John 19,27