

31 May 1949

Extract from a study

The 31st of May 1949 -- a special mission within the mission of the Schoenstatt family as a whole [German source: Texte zum 31. Mai 1949" pages 89-92.]

(In a study written in 1955, Father Kentenich discussed the special mission of the shrine in Bellavista, Chile, in relation to the mission of the daughter shrines.)

Mother shrine -- daughter shrine

At this point I am concerned with emphasizing the relationship of the mother shrine and the daughter shrines, and pointing out clearly their fundamental connection as shortly as possible. (...)

I should like to confine myself to summarizing their connection with one another in a clear thesis, and then showing the consequences for everyday life. (...)

The thesis is very simple. It follows without many learned philosophical arguments from the objective position of both shrines. We cannot do anything else than take our bearings again and again from the principle *ordo essendi est ordo agendi* (the order of creation is the order of action). The title "daughter shrine" expresses what is meant in a way that everyone can understand. At any rate, it clearly indicates the direction in which one must go to get more clarity on the subject.

I should like to put it in these words: The character of the daughter shrines as shrines is determined by the character of the mother shrine as a shrine. That is to say, the daughter shrines have no right to a new and independent title. Their right to exist as shrines stands or falls with the right of the mother shrine to exist.

One could express the whole life-process of the shrines in a picture. It can be compared with a spring which gives rise to a river. This flows all over the world bringing blessing everywhere, but also taking up new streams and rivers, bearing their waters along with it until it finally returns to its source. The source is the mother shrine. The river of grace and life that breaks through there, flows underground, as it were, flowing through the world and around the world. Wherever a daughter shrine is built, this river breaks through with elemental force in order to pour out its health-giving and grace-bearing waters to the widest possible circles from there. ... But also in order to take in the new streams and rivers which flow towards it when the covenant of love is entered into. It then bears these new waters along with it until it has directed them finally to the mother shrine. The image is imperfect, without doubt, but it explains to some extent what is meant.

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the life-process just described. We shall enlarge on only two. (...)

First conclusion: What God has joined with unmistakable clarity and has united so closely, one may not tear asunder. Hence, the inner connection between the. mother shrine and. daughter shrines, which we have depicted above, must be upheld, on principle, and must be lived in an orthodox way.

The second conclusion follows from the first and supplements it. The perfect unity and unalterable connection with the mother shrine we have described may not prevent the original circumstance of the time and land from being considered. From this it is understandable that it has not hindered us from speaking until now of the Founding Document or of the special mission of a daughter shrine.

It has almost become an accepted custom that the talk given at the blessing of a new national shrine is called its Founding Document, if it is to the point. This implies nothing else, however, than that the Founding Document of the mother shrine is transferred expressly and formally, even if only analogously, to the daughter shrine. In practice, therefore, we are always concerned with taking the idea of the daughter shrines seriously in life. That is to say, we are mainly concerned with fully acknowledging its essential dependence on the mother shrine whether this concerns its supernatural character or its original and universal mission. If in the process other words or new principles are brought forward, it does not matter. That is an automatic acknowledgement of the originality of the individual countries and peoples, as well as of the instruments Our Lady is using at that moment for her work. The main thing is that the most important life processes are seen correctly, are passed on in a way that can be understood, and are repeated with reverence and faith.

In addition, there can be no objection -- on the contrary, it may even be considered extremely advisable -- if a special task is connected with a national shrine if this is clearly indicated according to the law of the open door. Care should be taken, however, to see to it that this does not bring about a separation from the mission of the family as a whole, or even a contradiction to it. It is meant to be a participation in the tasks entrusted to the whole movement by virtue of the Founding Documents, but which now, according to the law of the division of labor, are apportioned out to the individual countries in order that they may be more fully realized.

From this it follows that such a special mission may not be regarded as exclusive. That is to say, the country in question is not dispensed from taking over and carrying out the other tasks of the family as a whole because of its special task, on condition, of course, that there is sufficient strength to do so and the circumstances allow it. Nevertheless, the main attention should be given to the special mission. This does not

mean that other countries may not work for the same intention in their own way if the opportunity arises.

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Chile may serve, as an example, There, more than in other countries, they talk very emphatically about their own Founding Document and a special mission in connection with the 31st of May 1949.