

I rejoiced when they said to me,  
“Let us go to the house of the Lord.”  
—Psalm 122:1

It is good that we are here.  
—Matthew 17:4

The Virgin Mary is the living shrine of the Word of God,  
the Ark of the New and Eternal Covenant.  
—Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care  
of Migrants and Itinerant People

## Schoenstatt’s Shrine for the Pilgrim People of God

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*The authors reflect on the anthropological notion of pilgrimage of the People of God and the place of ecclesial movements therein. While many movements are associated with a pilgrimage to a particular shrine, the very birth of the Schoenstatt Movement coincides with,*

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*and depends upon, the Schoenstatt Shrine. Founded in Germany at the outbreak of World War I, on October 18, 1914, by Father Joseph Kentenich (1885–1968), the international Apostolic Movement of Schoenstatt is animated by a threefold spirituality corresponding to the three graces received through pilgrimage to Schoenstatt’s shrine. This essay argues that the structural principles of formation inherent in every pilgrimage have found a unique pedagogical application in the Schoenstatt Shrine, where pilgrims encounter Our Lady—the Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen, and Victress of Schoenstatt—as Educatrix and archetype of each pilgrim. Fittingly, all centennial celebrations in Schoenstatt, Germany, in Rome, and at more than two hundred Schoenstatt shrines throughout the world take on the character of a pilgrimage to thank God for the stream of life and grace that originated from this shrine and that continues to flow as a blessing for the church and world of the third millennium.*

**T**he year 2014 marks both the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Apostolic Movement of Schoenstatt, on October 18, 1914, and the fiftieth anniversary of the promulgation of *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, promulgated by Pope Paul VI on November 21, 1964. Although its founding and initial international expansion predate Vatican II (1962–1965), Schoenstatt is regularly counted among the largest of the modern ecclesial movements and was described by Pope John Paul II as “one of the most significant fruits of that springtime in the Church which was foretold by the Second Vatican Council.”<sup>1</sup> Many of the ecclesial movements

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1. John Paul II, “Message to the World Congress of Ecclesial Movements, 1998,” *Laité Today* (1999): 222.

and new communities have a historical connection to a place of pilgrimage, but Schoenstatt, an outspokenly Marian movement, stands alone in having made the phenomenon of pilgrimage to a shrine central to its self-understanding, spirituality, and effective evangelical activity.<sup>2</sup> It thus anticipates, and answers to, the reiterated description of the church in *Lumen Gentium* as a Pilgrim People. Chapter 7 of *Lumen Gentium*, for example, is entitled “The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union with the Heavenly Church.”<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the fifth section of chapter 8, which concludes the final, Mariological chapter of the document, bears the title “Mary, a Sign of Sure Hope and of Solace for God’s People in Pilgrimage.”<sup>4</sup> As these passages from *Lumen Gentium* suggest, pilgrimage is not foreign to the church itself, which Pope John Paul II names “a movement and . . . a mystery.”<sup>5</sup> Pilgrimage belongs to the biblical spirituality of the Jewish people, to the life of Jesus in the Gospels, to the piety of Christians, past and present, and to the self-understanding of the church as it journeys through time to the eternal *patria*, the heavenly New Jerusalem. This pilgrim journey, according to Pope emeritus Benedict XVI (then Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger), includes an “apostolic succession” of movements of renewal of the *vita apostolica* within the

2. See *Code of Canon Law* (Washington, D.C.: Canon Law Society of America, 1983), can. 1230: “By the term shrine is understood a church or other sacred place to which numerous members of the faithful make pilgrimage for a special reason of piety, with the approval of the local ordinary.”

3. See *The Documents of Vatican II: All Sixteen Official Texts Promulgated by the Ecumenical Council 1963–1965, Translated from the Latin*, ed. Walter M. Abbott, S.J., trans. Joseph Gallagher et al. (s.l.: The America Press, 1966), 78.

4. *The Documents of Vatican II*, 95.

5. John Paul II, “Homily at the Mass for Participants at the Congress of ‘Movements in the Church,’” *Insegnamenti* 4, no. 2 (1981): 305–6; quoted in Tony Hanna, *New Ecclesial Movements* (New York: Alba House, 2006), 6–7.

church, from the missionary monasticism of the early Middle Ages to the modern ecclesial movements.<sup>6</sup>

Fittingly, therefore, the Cursillo Movement, now worldwide, began in Mallorca between 1947 and 1949 as a retreat course for young men in preparation for a great pilgrimage to the historic Shrine of Saint James, the Santiago de Compostela in Spain.<sup>7</sup> The founder of the Focolare Movement, Chiara Lubich (1920–2008), testifies that she discovered her vocation in 1939 during a pilgrimage to the Marian Shrine in Loreto, Italy.<sup>8</sup> Communion and Liberation promotes pilgrimages, especially to Loreto. Opus Dei’s founder, St. José Escrivá (1902–1975), entrusted the Shrine of Torreciudad to his spiritual family with a special prayer to Our Lady “that she would work there miracles of conversion and peace and not physical miracles.”<sup>9</sup> The family of Don Bosco finds its spiritual home in the Shrine of Valdocco. Jean Vanier (1928–), founder of L’Arche, made personal pilgrimages to the Marian shrines at

6. Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI), “Ecclesial Movements and Their Place in Theology (1998),” in *New Outpourings of the Spirit: Movements in the Church*, trans. Michael J. Miller and Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), 17–61. Ratzinger argues that the concept of apostolic succession has a “breadth” and a “surplus” that extends beyond the “local Church structure,” because the “practical task” of a universal evangelization, entrusted by Jesus to the apostles and their successors, cannot be accomplished by the bishops alone and depends for its fulfillment upon all the members of the church, especially those who feel called, in age after age, to live the *vita evangelica* (51–52, 37–38).

7. See Marcene Marcoux, *Cursillo, Anatomy of a Movement: The Experience of Spiritual Renewal* (New York: Lambeth, 1982).

8. See Donald W. Mitchell, “A Life between Two Fires: Chiara Lubich and Lay Sanctity,” in *Lay Sanctity, Medieval and Modern: A Search for Models*, ed. Ann W. Astell, 173–89 (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), at 174; Edwin Robertson, *Chiara* (Ireland: Christian Journals, 1978), 10–11.

9. <http://www.josemariaescriva.info/article/video-the-shrine-of-the-blessed-virgin-torreciudad-in-spain>.

La Salette, Lourdes, and Fatima—formative journeys that subsequently inspired him to lead repeated, community-building pilgrimages of mentally handicapped persons, their relatives, and assistants to Lourdes.<sup>10</sup> On such pilgrimages, “journeying together to a holy place,” writes Kathryn Spink, “became a potent symbol of what people in L’Arche were trying to live.”<sup>11</sup>

The same may be said, *mutatis mutandis*, of pilgrimage in Schoenstatt, but to an even greater degree. In Schoenstatt, the very birth of the movement in 1914 coincides with, and depends upon, that of the Schoenstatt Shrine. Inspired by the example of Blessed Bartolo Longo (1841–1926), who in 1875 founded a Marian pilgrimage place in a restored church in Pompei, Italy,<sup>12</sup> Father Joseph Kentenich (1885–1968) saw the establishment of a place of pilgrimage in Schoenstatt as an educational means involving covenant partners: on the one hand, the Mother of God, the great Educatrix of Christians, and, on the other, Mary’s children in Christ, who freely cooperate with her in her apostolic work.<sup>13</sup> In so doing, this essay argues, he recognized and built upon the formative elements of pilgrimage itself, an ancient spiritual practice

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10. Kathryn Spink, *The Miracle, the Message, the Story: Jean Vanier and L’Arche* (Mahwah, N.J.: Hiddenspring, 2006), 27, 92, 123–24, 131, 140, 233, 240.

11. Spink, *The Miracle, the Message, the Story*, 92.

12. Beatified in 1980 by Pope John Paul II, Longo was a lawyer, a former Satanist who became an apostle of the rosary. The picture of grace of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, now venerated in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary of Pompei, was donated in 1875 to Longo, who enthroned it in the once dilapidated church he had worked to restore. The church became the site of miracles, and Pompei is now a major European pilgrimage site.

13. In this essay we use “Father” rather than the abbreviation “Fr.,” which is commonly used for priests, in order to emphasize the fatherly charism of Father Kentenich, who was ordained a priest in 1910, and, through him, the family-like character of Schoenstatt.

with deep anthropological and cultural roots, discovering in its structural principles the outline for an entire pedagogical system suited to modern people living in increasingly uprooted, mobile circumstances. In its 1999 document, *The Shrine: Memorial, Presence and Prophecy of the Living God*, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People called attention to the Virgin Mother of God as both the “living shrine of the Word of God, the Ark of the New and Eternal Covenant” and the “model” for pilgrims—indeed, the archetypal pilgrim for the church as a Pilgrim People, exemplary in its openness to God and in its evangelism.<sup>14</sup> Father Kentenich’s applied Mariology in Schoenstatt realizes the timely, educational potential of pilgrimage to Mary’s shrine under both aspects.

### Schoenstatt’s Shrine: Place of Pilgrimage and Education

Schoenstatt’s Founding Document, a talk given by the young Father Kentenich to the teenaged boys under his spiritual direction, indicates the aim of their striving, the “secret, favorite idea” of the founder: “You gather what I am aiming at: I would like to make this place a place of pilgrimage, a place of grace for our house, for the whole German province, and perhaps even further afield.”<sup>15</sup> In that talk of October 18, 1914, Father Kentenich envisions the transformation of the small chapel in which the boys had gathered for their Marian Sodality meeting into a pilgrimage

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14. The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *The Shrine: Memorial, Presence and Prophecy of the Living God and The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1999), 18, 7.

15. *Schoenstatt: The Founding Documents* (Waukesha, Wisc.: privately published by the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, 1993), 30.

place akin to Mount Tabor, where Jesus was radiantly transfigured. Recalling the tents that Peter wanted to erect there for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah (Mt 17:4), Father Kentenich proposes the spiritual building of a tent, a shrine, for Mary: “Would it then not be possible for our little sodality chapel likewise to become the Tabor on which the glory of Mary would be revealed? Undoubtedly, we could not accomplish a greater apostolic deed . . . than to urge our Lady and Queen to erect her throne here . . . and to work miracles of grace.”<sup>16</sup>

Father Kentenich later reflected upon Schoenstatt’s founding hour as a daring wager with educational consequences: “If the Blessed Mother allowed herself to be drawn down to us here to take the education of the young men in hand, we would have three things: a place of grace, a place where the Blessed Mother is uniquely at work as educator, and a place of pilgrimage where self-education would have an essential part to play.”<sup>17</sup> To link the consecration to Mary to a particular place, as Father Kentenich did in 1914, is unique in the history of the church. Viewed from an educational perspective, his linking of the two effectively changes the traditional understanding of Marian consecration, well developed within the tradition of St. Louis De Montfort (1673–1716) and in the Marian sodalities,<sup>18</sup> transforming the consecration into a covenant of love between Mary and her covenant partners, whose striving for sanctity stands as a precondition for Mary’s educational activity from the shrine. The covenantal attachment

16. Ibid.

17. “Conference for Leaders, 1950,” in *The Shrine, Source of Life: Selected Texts from Joseph Kentenich*, ed. Peter Wolf, trans. Mary Cole, 27 (Waukesha, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, 2011).

18. The first such Marian sodality was founded by a Belgian Jesuit in 1563.

of the members to the Mother Thrice Admirable (MTA) and to her shrine gives, moreover, an answer to the modern problem of uprootedness from one’s home, native soil, cultural inheritance, and ancestral traditions—an uprootedness that Father Kentenich characterized as “a whirlpool of inner and outer nomadism”<sup>19</sup> and the greatest disease of our time.<sup>20</sup> Thus the Schoenstatt Shrine serves as the “earthly home” of the Schoenstatt Family and as their school of holiness where “miracles of grace” take place through Our Lady’s education.<sup>21</sup>

Founded in Germany at the outbreak of World War I by a charismatically gifted spiritual director, fatherly educator, and metaphysical thinker, the international Schoenstatt Work today comprises a vast network of persons and communities from all walks of life. Present and active on six continents, it is animated by a threefold spirituality best understood in anthropological terms in relation to the graces received through pilgrimage to Schoenstatt’s shrine. The Original Shrine (*Urheiligtum*), a small chapel and place of grace located in Schoenstatt, Germany, near Koblenz in the Rhine Valley, has been replicated since World War II in over two hundred “daughter” shrines around the globe, each built in connection with a retreat center of some kind for education, spiritual formation, and hospitality.<sup>22</sup> These shrines, in turn, have

19. Joseph Kentenich, *Mary, Our Mother and Educator*. An Applied Mariology. Lenten Sermons 1954 (Waukesha, Wisc.: Lithoprint, 1987), 406.

20. Jonathan Niehaus, *Brushstrokes of a Father*, vol. IV: “1945-1952-Prophet in Tumultuous Times,” (Bangalore, India: Brilliant Printers, 2013), 246–47.

21. See Schoenstatt Hymn “*Nil sine nobis – nil sine te!*” by William Brell SAC. *Schoenstatt: The Founding Documents*, 7.

22. The first daughter shrine was dedicated on October 18, 1943, in Uruguay, during the time of Father Kentenich’s imprisonment as a political prisoner in the concentration camp in Dachau. For a list of the individual shrines and their locations, see [http://santuarios.schoenstatt.de/db\\_user/cms\\_db\\_santuarios\\_map1.php](http://santuarios.schoenstatt.de/db_user/cms_db_santuarios_map1.php)



inspired the erection of countless “home shrines,” the dedication of “heart-shrines,” and the circulation of thousands of “pilgrim shrines,”<sup>23</sup> all bearing the image of the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt, carrying the child Jesus in her arms.<sup>24</sup>

The historical expansion of the network of Schoenstatt shrines and the constant flow of graces from the physical places of pilgrimage—the dedicated shrines, homes, and work-places—to the spiritual “places” of the heart and of the community, and vice versa, points to a creative polarity in Schoenstatt’s idea of pilgrimage. On the one hand, the Schoenstatt Shrine as the special dwelling place of the Mother Thrice Admirable is the object, the wonderful (*wunderbare*) and longed-for goal, of one’s journey. In Schoenstatt this is manifested in Mary’s intercessory efficacy as Educatrix from the Schoenstatt Shrine in its many replicas. On the other hand, the shrine is also a holy living space (*Lebensraum*), the symbol of the spiritual home and constantly nourishing community, united by

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23. The first home shrines (understood as such) were dedicated between 1962 and 1963 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA, by Father Joseph Kentenich. See Jonathan Niehaus, *The Birth of the Home Shrine* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Fathers, 1996, 2nd ed.). The beginning of the Pilgrim Shrine dates to 1950 in Brazil, when John Louis Pozzobon (1904–1985), at the request of a Schoenstatt Sister of Mary, became the apostle of what is now called the Schoenstatt Rosary Campaign. For the best English-language biography, see Esteban Uruburu, *A Hero Today Not Tomorrow: The Life of John Louis Pozzobon, A Poor Pilgrim and Deacon* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Publications, 1991).

24. A print of a painting by Luigi Crosio, originally entitled “Refuge of Sinners,” was donated to the members of the Marian sodality at Schoenstatt in 1915. The sodalists retitled the picture “Mother Thrice Admirable” in keeping with their goal for Schoenstatt to become a center for Catholic renewal in the twentieth century, as Ingolstadt in Bavaria had been during the sixteenth century. In Ingolstadt, Mary was venerated as the “Mother Thrice Admirable” by Jakob Rem, S.J. (1546–1618), a leader in the Catholic Counter-Reformation, and his followers. That title derives, in turn, from the Litany of Loreto, where Mary is invoked as “Mother most admirable.”

the covenant of love (*Liebesbündnis*) and by the common striving for high ideals, within which the Schoenstatt family makes the entire life’s journey.

Father Kentenich envisioned both dimensions of pilgrimage.<sup>25</sup> Illustrating the first, Schoenstatt’s shrines are visited by individuals and groups who come perhaps once in their lifetime or once a year for a time of spiritual rest and refueling. These pilgrimages often give expression to religious traditions, ethnic customs, or popular forms of piety. Concretely, in Schoenstatt pilgrims are invited to present their needs and worries to Our Lady, who waits for them in the shrine; they are also encouraged to ask for the three pilgrimage graces and to make a covenant of love with her, thereby placing their gifts and sacrifices at her disposal for the capital of grace.<sup>26</sup> In addition, each pilgrim often receives an image of the Mother Thrice Admirable. Far more than a simple souvenir, it is meant to receive a place of honor in the home of the pilgrim. People who participate in such pilgrimages to the Schoenstatt Shrine form the people’s and pilgrim movement.

Illustrating the second dimension of pilgrimage are those pilgrims who make frequent, perhaps daily, visits to the shrine, serving and protecting it as a holy place. These pilgrims belong to one of the League branches, the Federation or Secular Institutes. They have made the covenant of love with the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt and expect formation in the spirit of Schoenstatt’s threefold spirituality. Father Kentenich likened the Schoenstatt shrines to formation centers and workshops of the new person and

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25. Hubertus Brantzen et al., *Schoenstatt Lexikon: Fakten, Ideen, Leben* (Vallendar-Schoenstatt: Patris Verlag, 1996), 416–18.

26. The expression “capital of grace” names the spiritual treasury of graces placed at Mary’s free disposal from the shrine through the striving of her children for sanctity.

the new social order in the way that God desires for the church to be supported in its mission for our times.<sup>27</sup>

The three graces received by all pilgrims to the Schoenstatt shrines are the graces of feeling “at home,” of being spiritually transformed, and of apostolic zeal. They coincide in the most general terms with those graces traditionally experienced by pilgrims to holy places, as a side glance at anthropologist Victor Turner’s influential study of pilgrimage in Christian culture confirms: “All sites of pilgrimage have this in common: they are believed to be places where miracles once happened, still happen, and may happen again.” Importantly, these miracles include the moral miracles of infused virtues: “Believers firmly hold that faith is strengthened and salvation better secured by personal exposure to the beneficent unseen presence of the Blessed Virgin or local saint, mediated through a cherished image or painting,” a “picture of grace.”<sup>28</sup> Schoenstatt’s shrine, as noted above, was established in the explicit hope that the Mother of God would “work miracles of grace” and “disperse gifts and graces in abundance.”<sup>29</sup> The systematic incorporation of pilgrimage practice within Schoenstatt’s whole educational system, however, results in a striking correspondence between the three pilgrimage graces and the three dimensions of Schoenstatt’s spirituality, as it has unfolded in time: namely, covenant spirituality, everyday sanctity, and instrument piety.

## Covenant Spirituality and the Pilgrimage Grace of Being “At Home”

As Turner points out, going on pilgrimage means freely leaving one’s ordinary place of habitation in order to seek out a holy site that symbolizes one’s true and lasting home, the religious tradition to which one belongs, its foundational experiences, and its eternal goal. There the pilgrim can “confront, in a special ‘far’ milieu, the basic elements and structures of his faith in their unshielded, virgin radiance.”<sup>30</sup> For Christians, the biblical places of Jesus’s earthly life are therefore preeminent sites of pilgrimage, for which closer shrines can serve as substitutes. Schoenstatt’s Founding Document explicitly associates the shrine with Mount Tabor in the Holy Land and with the exclamation of Saint Peter, “It is good for us to be here!” (Mt 17:4). In his writings from the concentration camp at Dachau, where he was a prisoner from 1942 until 1945, Father Kentenich identifies the shrine with other biblical places: Nazareth, Bethlehem, Bethany, Calvary, the Cenacle, and Sion in Jerusalem.<sup>31</sup> The physical smallness of the shrine as a space encourages the sense of homey intimacy, as do the tender features of the Madonna and Child in the picture of the Mother Thrice Admirable above the altar. Kneeling before the picture, invoking Our Lady of Schoenstatt as “Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen, and Victress,”<sup>32</sup> the pilgrim is drawn into the original founding act: the covenant of love!

30. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 15.

31. *Heavenwards: Prayers for the Use of the Schoenstatt Family* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Fathers, 1992), 45–55.

32. The title “Queen” was officially added to “Mother Thrice Admirable” in 1939, twenty-five years after Schoenstatt’s foundation, during a coronation ceremony in the Original Shrine, as an act of thanksgiving and self-surrender and in petition for Mary’s protection against the dangers of National Socialism. The title “Victress” was

27. Joseph Kentenich, *Mary, Our Mother and Educator*, 137–38. Cf. *Schoenstatt: The Founding Documents*, First Founding Document 11c.

28. Victor Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 6.

29. *Schoenstatt: The Founding Documents*, 30, 34.

Father Kentenich's understanding of the Marian consecration as a covenant of love actualizes the mutual giving of self to the covenant partner and thus Mary's educational task. In 1954 Schoenstatt's founder explained: "Just as the way to Christ is through Mary, so, too, the covenant of love with her must be considered and valued as simply the classical means of securing and making fruitful the covenant with God."<sup>33</sup> During an audience with the international Schoenstatt Family, John Paul II verified that "within this spirit inspired experience out of which your movement came into existence, the covenant of love . . . occupies a central position. If you live this covenant loyally and generously, you will be brought to the fullness of your Christian vocation."<sup>34</sup>

While knowledge of Schoenstatt's history, instruction in Schoenstatt's spirituality, and the individual's explicit, personal participation in the original covenant of love sealed between Mary and the cofounders on October 18, 1914, heighten a pilgrim's conscious awareness of, and assent to, this reality, every pilgrim to the Schoenstatt Shrine grasps the dynamism of the covenant relationship to some degree. This is so because of the very meaning of a pilgrimage. As Turner emphasizes, a living faith, expectant of miracles, motivates the pilgrim, who makes a free, personal decision to go on a journey expressive of that faith, seeking "a deeper level of spiritual participation" in the holy realities in which he or she believes.<sup>35</sup>

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officially added by Father Kentenich during a coronation on May 31, 1966, in acknowledgement of Mary's triumph in ending the fourteen-year exile (1951–1965) of the founder and allowing him, with the blessing of Pope Paul VI, to resume the task of Schoenstatt's leadership.

33. *Mary, Our Mother and Educator*, 183.

34. Gertrud Pollack, Joaquin Alliende Luco, *Welch ein September, qué septiembre . . . What a September, que setembro . . .* (Vallendar: Schoenstatt Verlag, 1986), 211.

35. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 15.

The choice to go on pilgrimage entails, moreover, the acceptance and patient endurance of whatever sacrifices, both those foreseen and unexpected, the journey demands. "Behind such journeys in Christendom lies the paradigm of the *via crucis* with the added purgatorial element appropriate to fallen man."<sup>36</sup> As Turner reminds his readers, "Pilgrimage itself is regarded as a 'good work' . . . [that] ensures many occasions of grace as rewards for a good work done freely and out of a desire for salvation and for the benefit of others."<sup>37</sup>

Pilgrims, in short, bring something, an offering, to our Lady of Schoenstatt when they kneel in her shrine. Concretely, when Schoenstatters gather in the shrine on the eighteenth of every month to renew their covenant of love, they come "not only with open hands," ready to receive, "but also with filled hands," bringing their sacrifices, especially those "connected with training and forming themselves under the protection of the Blessed Mother."<sup>38</sup>

The giving of some sacrifice, expressive of faith, hope, and love, and the grateful receiving of grace in return—this exchange of gifts, which is typical of the most basic experience of pilgrimage, is fundamentally covenantal. As Turner points out, "Pilgrimages must be seen as essentially antimagical, since they are thought to depend upon the exercise of free will on both the human and the superhuman side of the encounter."<sup>39</sup> Schoenstatt's spirituality develops the formative power of this relationship into an entire way of life, characterized by a constant and total exchange of hearts, goods, and interests between the Mother Thrice Admirable and the

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36. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 6.

37. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 17. See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994), 1249–53. (Hereafter, CCC).

38. *The Shrine, Source of Life*, 49.

39. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 14.

childlike pilgrims who have freely dedicated themselves to her and to her educational mission from the shrine. Schoenstatt's Founding Document expresses this in the form of requests and promises placed imaginatively upon the lips of the Blessed Mother, who instructs the young sodalists, "Diligently bring me contributions to the capital of grace. By fulfilling your duties faithfully and conscientiously and through an ardent life of prayer, earn many merits and place them at my disposal. . . . Then it will please me to dwell in your midst and dispense gifts and graces in abundance. Then from here I will draw youthful hearts to myself and educate them to become useful instruments in my hand."<sup>40</sup>

Schoenstatt's covenant spirituality has, moreover, a horizontal dimension, in addition to the vertical one that obtains between Mary and her spiritual children. The members of Schoenstatt live in a covenant relationship with each other, with the father and founder, and with the cofounders. This contributes to the attainment of Schoenstatt's educational goals, among them, the formation of the "new person in the new community."<sup>41</sup> It correlates, too, with the anthropology of pilgrimage as Turner describes it. As he emphasizes, a "peculiar union of individualism and corporateness" manifests itself in Christian pilgrimage.<sup>42</sup> While "the decision to go on pilgrimage takes place within the individual," it "brings him into fellowship with like-minded souls, both on the way and at the shrine."<sup>43</sup> The "social dimension . . . generated

by the individual's choice" is thus "multiplied many times"<sup>44</sup> and within an entire organism of attachments that extends heavenward, especially through those beloved persons whose life's journey of pilgrimage has ended in the company of the angels and the saints. "The doctrine of the communion of saints," Turner observes, "presupposes that souls may help one another."<sup>45</sup>

An essential goal of Schoenstatt's educational mission and the envisioned fruit of its life out of the covenant of love is precisely the formation of the "new person in the new community." In a study written in 1964, Father Kentenich states: "From childhood I kept the ideal of the new person in the new community in view";<sup>46</sup> similarly, in chronicle notes from 1957, he calls this same ideal one of his "innate ideas," "innate . . . in a pedagogical sense" that "matured in [him] through observing [himself] and others."<sup>47</sup> Steering a course between isolated individualism, on the one hand, and the mass-mindedness of the collective, on the other, Father Kentenich aimed at forming "the most perfect possible community based on the most perfect possible personalities, both based on the fundamental principle of love."<sup>48</sup>

Such a family-like community finds its home in Schoenstatt in the shrine, the goal and the symbol of its pilgrimage through life. During Father Kentenich's lifetime, some of the families in Milwaukee who had entrusted themselves to his pastoral care dedicated themselves to the Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen

40. *Schoenstatt: The Founding Documents*, 34.

41. Joseph Kentenich, *What is my philosophy of education? Study with an English title and German text*, trans. M. Cole (Cape Town, South Africa: Schoenstatt Publications, 1990), 7.

42. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 16.

43. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 31.

44. *Ibid.*

45. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 16. CCC, 946–62.

46. Joseph Kentenich, *Free and Wholly Human: Collected Texts*, ed. Herbert King, trans. Mary Cole (s.l.: Schoenstatt Publications, 2004), 44.

47. Kentenich, *Free and Wholly Human*, 45.

48. Kentenich, *Free and Wholly Human*, 46.



of Schoenstatt as her living shrines.<sup>49</sup> In keeping with each one's personal interests and ideals, the individual members of the family—mother, father, brothers, sisters—chose different symbols visible within a Schoenstatt shrine: a chalice; a candle; a bouquet of flowers; the statue of Saint Joseph, Saint Michael, Saint Peter, or Saint Paul; the Father-Eye; the dove representing the Holy Spirit; the crucifix; the MTA picture, and so on. In personally composed prayers, they explained their choices and outlined a matching program of striving. The father who chose to be “Saint Joseph” in the living shrine, for example, wanted to exemplify that saint's strong protection of the Holy Family, his hard work, his gentleness, and his integrity. Taken together, the shrine symbols as personal symbols of family members gave vivid expression to the family as a “domestic church” and a sacramental sphere.<sup>50</sup>

Since the 1960s, when the first such dedications took place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the practice has been taken up by a growing number of Schoenstatt families worldwide. As testimonies given during the International Home Shrine Congress (held June 27–30, 2013, in Waukesha, Wisconsin) amply demonstrate, the use of shrine symbols by family members has proven to be an effective means of, and a safeguard for, the individual's growth in holiness within a communal framework, affecting the atmosphere

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49. See Jonathan Niehaus, *The Birth of the Home Shrine* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Fathers, 1994, 1989).

50. On the general theme of the domestic church, see Mitch and Kathy Finley, *Christian Families in the Real World: Reflections on a Spirituality for the Domestic Church* (Chicago: Thomas More Press, 1984); Carl Anderson, *A Civilization of Love: What Every Catholic Can Do to Transform the World* (New York: HarperOne, 2008); Edward Hays, *Prayers for the Domestic Church: A Handbook for Worship in the Home*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 2007).

within the environment of the home itself as a place of education, a “home shrine,” and a source of grace for “everyday sanctity.”

### Everyday Sanctity and the Pilgrimage Grace of “Inner Transformation”

While the decision to embark on a pilgrimage is an entirely personal one, at the end of the journey, each pilgrim longs to be welcomed. Moreover, he or she hopes to receive assistance in understanding and answering fundamental human needs and experiences. In his annual addresses to the rectors of shrines, Paul VI likened shrines to “spiritual clinics” (1965), “luminous stars in the Church's heaven” (1970), “places which recall the presence of the invisible” (1971), and “gems and precious stones of spirituality in the Church” (1974). John Paul II, who made it his custom to connect his apostolic visits with a pilgrimage to the local national Marian shrine, highlighted the importance of and charism inherent in Marian places of grace. He associated Marian shrines with “the house of the Mother, pause-and-rest points on the long road leading us to Christ.”<sup>51</sup> Elsewhere he emphasized, “in a shrine a person can discover that he or she is equally loved and equally awaited, starting with the person whom life has treated harshly, the poor, the people who are distant from the church. Everyone can rediscover his or her eminent dignity as a son or daughter, even if they had forgotten it.”<sup>52</sup>

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51. Angelus Address of June 21, 1987.

52. John Paul II, “Address to the participants in the First World Conference for the Pastoral Care of Shrines and Pilgrimages on February 28, 1992,” *L'Osservatore Romano* English edition (March 29, 1992). Cf. Synod of Bishops, “The New Evangelization or the Transmission of the Christian Faith,” *Instrumentum Laboris* of the XIII Ordinary General Assembly (Vatican City, May 27, 2012), 62.

The prayerful atmosphere at a shrine is conducive to the pilgrim's inner disposition. Being surrounded by symbols, mystery, and sensory appeal, pilgrims intuit a sense of belonging, authenticity, and consistency.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, the experience of the supernatural may awaken a hitherto somewhat suppressed homesickness for God and a genuine longing to begin anew.<sup>54</sup> Turner notes, "pilgrims have often written of the 'transformative' effect on them of approaching the final altar or the holy grotto at the end of the way."<sup>55</sup> Shrines "as the Temple of the living God, the place of the living covenant with Him," provide pilgrims with an encounter with the Lord who gives Himself through His word and the sacraments.<sup>56</sup> "This is especially true for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist" wherein the encounter with grace will give rise to a truly new life brought about by a spiritual transformation.<sup>57</sup> Shrines are thus "places where people go to obtain Grace, even before they obtain graces."<sup>58</sup> Many pilgrimage places reserve designated areas where ex-votos tell of countless physical and spiritual transformations.<sup>59</sup> Arguably, the greatest fruit of a pilgrimage is yielded when a pilgrim, having cleansed "the doors of perception" through the sacrament of reconciliation and partaken in the Eucharist, firmly resolves to leave his or her old self behind by putting on Christ Jesus (cf. Rom 13:14).<sup>60</sup>

53. See Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 32. Zygmunt Bauman, *Life in Fragments: Essays in Postmodern Morality* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), passim.

54. See *The Shrine: Memorial, Presence and Prophecy*, 14.

55. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 11.

56. *The Shrine: Memorial, Presence and Prophecy*, 11.

57. Ibid.

58. John Paul II, *Letter to Archbishop Pasquale Macchi on the Seventh Centenary of the Shrine of the Holy House of Loreto* (August 15, 1993), 7.

59. Short for *ex voto suscepto*, ("from the vow made"), ex-votos are gifts or offerings left at holy sites in gratitude for gifts received and as a testimony to later pilgrims.

60. *The Shrine: Memorial, Presence and Prophecy*, 11. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 11.

This resonates with the transformation that takes place in the Schoenstatt Shrine, where, as Father Kentenich attests: "The 'Mother of Fair Love' has no greater interest or more important task than to set the love in us aright. . . . She sees to it that the covenant with her . . . will develop . . . into a perfect transformation into Christ."<sup>61</sup> In accord with Schoenstatt's origin through ordinary discernment rather than an extraordinary occurrence, the Schoenstatt Shrine is not a place known for physical miracles. Instead, pilgrims to this place of grace experience Our Lady as the Educatrix who intercedes graces for an organic religious and moral transformation. Naturally, such a transformation does not happen magically or instantly. Rather, it reaches far beyond a onetime pilgrimage and in fact bears on every step of life's pilgrimage. In the conviction of Father Kentenich, Our Lady's mission as Educatrix from her Schoenstatt Shrine is foremost concerned with nourishing and educating everyday saints.<sup>62</sup>

The notion of Everyday Sanctity has been connected with the Schoenstatt Shrine from the outset. Already the Founding Document proposes the "acceleration of our self-sanctification" and considers the shrine as "the cradle of our sanctity."<sup>63</sup> These words were spoken at the onset of World War I, which according to Father Kentenich was "meant to be an extraordinary help" for the young co-founders in their "work of self-sanctification."<sup>64</sup> Here we come across a lesson every Schoenstatt pilgrim is invited to assimilate. Challenges, even threats such as war, are not to be avoided or feared; on the contrary, they are open doors on life's pilgrimage

61. Joseph Kentenich, *Mary, Our Mother and Educator*, 183.

62. *Lumen Gentium*, 61. Cf. Joseph Kentenich, *Mary, Our Mother and Educator*, 99.

63. *Schoenstatt: The Founding Documents*, Program, 8.

64. Ibid.

(see Col 4:3) that invite each pilgrim into a deeper faith in God's Providence and trust in the covenant of love with Mary.

At issue are pilgrims who by virtue of the covenant of love distinguish themselves through their magnanimous love for God and souls by performing the ordinary extraordinarily well in all spheres of their daily journey and in accordance with their duties. In a study written in 1952 Father Kentenich asserted: "Everyday sanctity is the ideal we have striven for from the very beginning. While at the beginning we paraphrased it with the sober words *ordinaria extraordinarie*, we later gave it the symptomatic name everyday sanctity."<sup>65</sup> In other words, "Each work of everyday life bears the mark of sanctity on its brow. . . . Each individual work has to contain my total soul."<sup>66</sup>

In 1937 Schoenstatt's bestseller *Everyday Sanctity* (*Werktagsheiligkeit*) was published.<sup>67</sup> As its foreword indicates, it was to become "a handbook and workbook of modern spiritual formation for a wide readership." United with Mary in the covenant of love, the main vocation of everyday saints is "to seek God, to find God and to love Him in all situations and in all people."<sup>68</sup> Deviating

from traditional spiritual literature that considered the world and creation as obstacles or at least distractions on the pilgrim way to God, Father Kentenich taught that all things have, beyond their intrinsic value, a symbolic meaning: they are small prophets reminding people of God and his Providence. "St. Augustine called them a *nutus Dei*, God's greeting or wave. And St. Bonaventure speaks of a *manutergium Dei*: through created things God takes us by the hand, shows us his signs and wishes everywhere and thus leads us into his Father-heart."<sup>69</sup> A corresponding formation, Schoenstatt's founder maintained, needs to aim at mature personalities, affectively and effectively capable of combating the lures of modern thinking, living, and loving—in addition to those of fallen human nature—and willing to participate in and sanctify all aspects of the world (*Weltdurchdringung*).<sup>70</sup> Upon recognizing and understanding these prophets on life's pilgrimage as messengers of God's love, everyday saints strive to respond with gifts of gratitude and perfection, that is, God-pleasing acceptance or renunciation of things and relationships.<sup>71</sup> It goes without saying that such self-gifts ask for a magnanimous heart ready and vigilant "to overcome the downward pull of nature" and "to discipline . . . evil passions."<sup>72</sup> At stake is the practice of Christianity in every situation of life, be it convenient or not.

69. Annette Nailis, *Everyday Sanctity*, 140. English translation in Jonathan Niehaus, *Schoenstatt's Everyday Sanctity* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Fathers, 2003), 61.

70. Christ's incarnation impacts and transforms the secularity of every human person. Baptism confers a supernatural reality on the Christian's being in the world. In and through grace and the infused virtues Christians are desecularized and challenged to sanctify the world from within.

71. See Nailis, *Everyday Sanctity*, 1, 3, concerning the definition of everyday sanctity as "the God-pleasing harmony between wholehearted attachment to God, work and fellow man in every circumstance of life."

72. *Heavenwards*, 159, 129.

65. Joseph Kentenich, *Das Lebensgeheimnis Schönstatts*, 2 vols. (Vallendar: Schönstatt Verlag, 1971), II: 11. See a similar statement by John Paul II, "Sanctity is acquired by living ordinary things extraordinarily," Angelus Address, September 1, 2002. *L'Osservatore Romano*, English edition (September 4, 2002), 1.

66. Unedited talk given on March 6, 1933.

67. Annette Nailis, *Werktagsheiligkeit*. Ein Beitrag zur religiösen Formung des Alltags (Limburg: Lahn Verlag 1937). English translation, *ibid.*, *Everyday Sanctity* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, 1998). For Father Kentenich "work" includes labor (*Arbeit*), all created things (secondary causes), and suffering: in short, everything a pilgrim undertakes and endures. See Jonathan Niehaus, *Schoenstatt's Everyday Sanctity* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Lithoprint 2003), 19 n21.

68. Joseph Kentenich, *What is my philosophy of education?* Study composed in 1959 (Cape Town, South Africa: Schoenstatt Publications 1990), 19. Father Kentenich paraphrases Ignatius of Loyola, adding "and in all people."

Everyday sanctity challenges all pilgrims, no matter their state in life. While courageously walking their personal pilgrimage, everyday saints may take each step with their covenant Mother and Queen. For Schoenstatt's founder, the encounter of the pilgrim with Mary in the shrine has anthropological and ecclesial implications: Mary as the educated Educatrix is at the same time the exemplar and mother of the new person in Christ. While her promise "to dispense gifts and graces in abundance" is a consoling reality, Father Kentenich emphasized that Mary also "must rely on our cooperation and our self-education."<sup>73</sup>

In this context it becomes evident that a Schoenstatt shrine is a place of grace not because it is physically erected and dedicated but because of loyal adherence to the reciprocal conditions of the covenant of love. In other words, the sanctification of the Schoenstatt Family is essential for the effectiveness of the MTA in her shrine. Moreover, through the relationship between the covenant partners, the law of love's transmission ideally leads to "a reliving of Mary's life, and . . . a continuation of Mary's history" in the world of today.<sup>74</sup> Hence Father Kentenich rejoiced in the fact that Mary's way of "life lives so strongly in us that it accompanies us wherever we go: on the streets, in the workshops, in our places of recreation, to churches and chapels, in basements and living rooms, on airplanes and boats, and especially through the dark portals of death."<sup>75</sup>

At the same time the reciprocal nature of the covenant of love implies the assurance that our motherly educator "takes over

whatever we cannot do."<sup>76</sup> This is especially critical in times of failure and of helplessness. Here we encounter an unusual dimension of holiness that takes into account the wounds, crises, and setbacks belonging to every human life but seldom mentioned in hagiographies. Father Kentenich considered these shadows as self-understood. Decisive for him was a person's willingness to acknowledge his or her weakness and smallness before the Heavenly Father. Everyday sanctity then is not in the first place a school that drills for perfection but a spirituality in which contingency, the need for redemption, and the merciful love of the Father God are at the center. Mary's task on this journey is to assist and accompany her covenant partner to bring about a new beginning after each fall.

As the Schoenstatt Family celebrates the centennial of the covenant of love and of the shrine as its cradle of sanctity, it gratefully recalls the many everyday saints in its ranks. In the Original Shrine ex-votos of Schoenstatt soldiers fallen in World War I and World War II speak eloquently of their heroic love for God and country. Among the first was Joseph Engling (1898–1918) of the founding generation, who offered his life consciously for Schoenstatt's fruitfulness.<sup>77</sup> Father Kentenich's process of beatification opened in 1975.<sup>78</sup> The cause for Venerable Emilie Engel (1893–1955), member of the founding generation of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, began in Trier in 1999 and advanced to Rome in 2002.<sup>79</sup> Gertraud von Bullion (1891–1930), the first woman member of

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76. Jonathan Niehaus, *Schoenstatt's Covenant Spirituality*, 40.

77. Alexander Menningen, *Joseph Engling*, trans. Jonathan Niehaus (Waukesha, Wisc.: Lithoprint, 1998).

78. Engelbert Monnerjahn, *Joseph Kentenich: A Life for the Church* (South Africa: Schoenstatt Publications, 1985).

79. Margareta Wolff, *My Yes Remains: Emilie Engel* (Middleton, Wisc.: Roemer Printing Press, 2008).

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73. *Schoenstatt: The Founding Documents*, 11.

74. Joseph Kentenich, *Maria, Mutter und Erzieherin: Eine angewandte Mariologie* (Vallendar: Schoenstatt Verlag, 1973), 336. English translation in: Jonathan Niehaus, *Schoenstatt's Covenant Spirituality* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Lithoprint, 1992), 75.

75. Joseph Kentenich, *Mary, Our Mother and Educator*, 57, slightly altered.



Schoenstatt, joined the ranks of exemplary everyday saints with the opening of her cause in 1991. The family father and permanent deacon John Pozzobon (1904–1985) initiated the Schoenstatt Rosary Campaign in Santa Maria, Brazil, from where it expanded around the globe.<sup>80</sup> His cause opened in 1994. The process for the Chilean engineer and Schoenstatt Brother of Mary Mario Hiriart (1931–1964) began in 1998.<sup>81</sup> Two years earlier, Karl Leisner (1915–1945), member of the Federation of Schoenstatt Diocesan Priests and prisoner of the Nazis, became the first everyday saint to be beatified as a martyr by Pope John Paul II.<sup>82</sup>

These outstanding examples of everyday sanctity are joined by others whose formal beatification process has not yet been inaugurated; they are, among others, Rev. Franz Reinisch (1903–1942), beheaded for refusing to swear the military oath to Hitler;<sup>83</sup> Gilbert Schimmel (1906–1959), worker and married man who helped found the Schoenstatt Couples League in Milwaukee; and Barbara Kast (1950–1968), member of the Schoenstatt Girls' Youth from Chile.<sup>84</sup> Their pilgrimages give eloquent testimony to Our Lady's education from the Schoenstatt Shrine. United to Mary in the covenant of love, they have discovered the Schoenstatt Shrine as their earthly home and cradle of sanctity. They also asked to be

80. Esteban Uriburu, *A Hero Today, Not Tomorrow: The Life of John Pozzobon 1904–1985* (Waukesha: Schoenstatt Publications, 1991).

81. Benito Schneider, *Mario Hiriart: With Mary Living Chalice of Christ* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Fathers, s.a.).

82. Hermann Gebert, *Karl Leisner: Geschichte einer Berufung* (Vallendar: Patris Verlag, 2001).

83. Ursula-Maria Kowalski, *Das Schönstatt-Heiligtum "Wiege der Heiligkeit" für Pater Franz Reinisch* (Schoenstatt: Schönstatt-Verlag, s.a.).

84. Jonathan Niehaus, *Gilbert Schimmel: The End Crowns the Work* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Fathers, 1996). Esteban Uriburu, *God's Tabernacle: Barbara Kast* (Epping, South Africa: Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, 1992).

sent from the shrine as instruments of the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt in order to imprint Christ's image on the world.

### Instrument Spirituality and the Pilgrimage Grace of Apostolic Mission Zeal

Pilgrims "who have come to the shrine of 'dead stones' become a shrine of 'living stones' and are thus capable of having a *renewed experience* of that communion in faith and holiness that is the Church."<sup>85</sup> In approaching Mary in the shrine, pilgrims are drawn into the paschal dimension of the Christian pilgrimage, which gradually transforms their life and grants them "the strength to begin again with a new freshness and new joy in their hearts, and thus to become, in the midst of the world, transparent witnesses of the Eternal."<sup>86</sup> This is the experience of pilgrims to the Schoenstatt Shrine. Here, they are welcomed by a Mother who loves them unconditionally, no matter the guilt and pain carefully hidden in the backpack of their heart. In the shrine they are invited to seal the covenant of love with her, to experience Our Lady's transforming education, and to be sent as instruments in her hands. This latter aspect of the pilgrimage—the being sent back into everyday life—corresponds to Turner's conclusion that "the curative, charismatic aspect of pilgrimage is not thought of as an end in itself."<sup>87</sup> Rather, the individual pilgrim, altered by an intensive experience, returns to the community from which he or she has come as transformed witnesses of the Holy and reminders of the goal of human existence. Being a pilgrim denotes a person on the way "through the fields" (*per ager*) and "beyond the frontiers" (*por eger*). *Lumen*

85. *The Shrine: Memorial, Presence and Prophecy*, 12.

86. *The Shrine: Memorial, Presence and Prophecy*, 11.

87. Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage*, 14.

*Gentium* 21 fittingly describes the church on “a pilgrimage toward eternal happiness.” We are thus continuous pilgrims to our eternal home, a reality and goal surpassing all shrines of this world.

“Lord, from the altar we now depart to give your form to our daily lives.”<sup>88</sup> With these words pilgrims often bid farewell to the Schoenstatt Shrine. They form the first line of the *Ite, missa est* song of the “Mass of God’s Instruments” composed by Father Kentenich while in the concentration camp at Dachau. As prisoner 29392 in that “city of pagans, slaves, madmen, and death,” Father Kentenich pondered the dehumanizing exterior bondage of Nazi Germany as a challenge meant by God to “destroy the secret reservations which nest in the hidden corners of our hearts and are to blame that our outward efforts lack the fruitfulness God desires.”<sup>89</sup> At stake was the interior freedom of his spiritual family. Would Schoenstatt pilgrims, amid life’s greatest threats, remain faithful to the goal of their earthly pilgrimage; and would they be free and firm enough to swim *contra torrentem* as befits the freedom of the children of God (see Rom 8:21)? In his study on “Marian Instrument Piety” (*Werkzeugsfrömmigkeit*)—illegally disseminated from Dachau—Father Kentenich develops his understanding of personal freedom as an indispensable prerequisite for “souls who, in [Christ], are willing to freely bind themselves to the Father’s wish.”<sup>90</sup> Such an attitude leads to the fundamental decision to pray what may be the most difficult petition of the Our Father: “Thy will be done”! Countless times the Pilgrim Church and each pilgrim personally is confronted with discerning and accepting God’s

will and with believing that God “may always use us as instruments . . . and form through us . . . the face of humanity today.”<sup>91</sup> This apostolic witness of the church and individual Christian is essential for their daily pilgrimage.<sup>92</sup>

Instrumentality furnishes the third component of Schoenstatt’s spirituality. The inner connection to the other two is evident: Everyday sanctity focuses on the relation to creation and strives to consecrate each of these encounters as a covenant response. Instrument spirituality stresses the uniqueness of each person and their calling as God’s “chosen instrument” (Acts 9:15) in the covenant. Corresponding to this call is the grace of apostolic mission zeal that Our Lady mediates in the shrine. The grace of being at home there and of inner transformation affords the pilgrim the vigor to become apostolically active and effective. “What is meant,” writes Schoenstatt Father Jonathan Niehaus, “is an outspoken sense that the covenant of love with Mary in the Schoenstatt Shrine and the unique participation in the founding act of October 18, 1914 draw each member and community into a deep partnership with the Mother Thrice Admirable for the realization of God’s plans for our times.”<sup>93</sup> At issue is the pilgrim’s wholehearted cooperation with and conformity to God’s will.<sup>94</sup> The prototype of proper instrumentality is found in the person and life of Our Lady. Her

91. *Heavenwards*, 92.

92. See *Lumen Gentium*, 33; CCC, 913.

93. Jonathan Niehaus, *Schoenstatt’s Instrument Spirituality* (Waukesha, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Fathers, 1995), 10.

94. Father Kentenich distinguishes six features that a pilgrim needs to develop in order to become a pliable instrument in God’s hands: (1) detachment from enslavement to one’s self-will; (2) attachment to God’s will, which leads to true freedom; (3) readiness to be used by God, in spite of one’s contingency; (4) realization of one’s dignity as a child of God, being created in his image and likeness; (5) interior freedom and security in God; and (6) abundant fruitfulness on life’s pilgrimage.

88. *Heavenwards*, 43.

89. *Heavenwards*, 79.

90. Joseph Kentenich, *Marianische Werkzeugsfrömmigkeit* (Vallendar: Schönstatt Verlag, 1974). English abridged translation: *Marian Instrument Piety*. Composed in Dachau, 1944 (Waukesha, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Fathers, 1992); *Heavenwards*, 83.

“earthly pilgrimage of faith” consisted of an increased detachment from self in order to belong undividedly to God.<sup>95</sup> He, in turn, could use this humble handmaid for the most supreme mission ever entrusted to a human being. As Mother of God, Mother of the Redeemer, and Mother of the Redeemed, her life was and remains abundantly fruitful.

The most important aspect that has been entrusted to Mary’s education from the Schoenstatt Shrine, according to Father Kentenich, is not merely the teaching of pious exercises or exterior forms of veneration. Although he certainly was not opposed to that, Schoenstatt’s founder feared that traditional devotions would not suffice to change a person from within. Toward the end of his life, he reflected, “I think often of the years 1950 and 1954. It seemed as if all of Catholicism was seeped in Marian devotion. But see how little depths it had. What is left of it today?”<sup>96</sup> And elsewhere, he said, “How little it [Marian devotion] had taken root in the subconscious life of the soul!”<sup>97</sup>

Authentically walking the pilgrimage way with Mary means, Father Kentenich argued, being drawn into Mary’s mission by bearing, bringing, and serving Christ. This was Mary’s way of being at God’s disposal and it continues to be her most efficient method

95. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter on the Blessed Virgin Mary in the life of the Pilgrim Church, *Redemptoris Mater*, March 25, 1987, 2, 5, 6, 14, 17, 19, 25, 26, 28, 30, 31, 33, 40. John Paul II describes Our Lady’s self-emptying as “perhaps the most perfect kenosis in human history.” *Redemptoris Mater*, 18.

96. Jonathan Niehaus, *For the Church*. Forty-one texts exploring the situation of the church after Vatican II and Schoenstatt’s contribution (Manuscript, May 2004). In 1950 Pius XII proclaimed the dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and declared a Marian Year 1953–1954 in commemoration of the centenary of the declaration of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception by his predecessor, Pope Pius IX in 1854.

97. *Ibid.*

today—with the help of those who have been formed in her shrine and are continuously offering themselves to her as instruments! The transformation into an *altera Maria* is, in the estimation of Father Kentenich, the most fruitful result of a pilgrimage to the Schoenstatt Shrine. In his own words: “Each of us bears a large share of the responsibility for the form that the world will take in the future. If this future—regardless of the specific characteristics it will have—is to bear the resemblance of Christ, then Mary must step more into the foreground and be acknowledged everywhere as the official Christ-giver, Christ-bearer, and Christ-bringer.”<sup>98</sup>

A concrete enactment of such a Marian instrumentality is the Schoenstatt Rosary Campaign of the Pilgrim Mother. It was initiated in the Holy Year 1950 by the family man John Pozzobon, who took an image of the MTA on pilgrimage in Southern Brazil. He walked more than 87,000 miles and brought the shrine-shaped image weighing over twenty-five pounds to a different family each day. In addition, he visited schools, prisons, and hospitals. Pozzobon’s pilgrimage began each day with a visit to and a holy Mass in the Schoenstatt Shrine of Santa Maria. There he renewed his covenant of love and received the necessary strength to carry out his mission with zeal. Throughout the day he worked in his grocery store to secure the livelihood for his wife and seven children. In his free time he considered himself “the donkey of our dear MTA,” carrying her to groups of people. During each visit they prayed the rosary and begged for the renewal of families and individuals, as well as for the special pilgrimage graces from the shrine, including Mary’s intercession in all of their needs. Upon his retirement, this apostolate became John’s full-time engagement. During thirty-five

98. Joseph Kentenich, *Mary, Our Mother and Educator*, 118.

years of service, even up to the day of his death, he brought Our Lady to countless homes, hospitals, schools, and jails.

Others have continued and expanded the work begun by Pozzobon. Today the pilgrim shrines visit some 110 countries throughout the world, taking the graces from the shrine to several million persons. Through this effective New Evangelization, Mary herself acts as “the protagonist of a New Visitation to the homes of our people” and as “the ‘Missionary’ who will aid us in the difficulties of our time and . . . open the hearts of men and women to the faith.”<sup>99</sup>

### Conclusion

As John Paul II has said, shrines can be compared to “milestones that guide the journey of the children of God on earth; they foster the experience of gathering and encounter, and the building up of the ecclesial community.”<sup>100</sup> On October 18, 2014, 10,000 pilgrims from all over the world joined the centennial celebration at the Original Shrine in Schoenstatt, followed by a second pilgrimage to Rome for an encounter with Pope Francis. They were spiritually accompanied by the many thousands who were united in the daughter and home shrines, as well as through the media, to celebrate Schoenstatt’s centennial: the covenant of love with the Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen, and Victress of Schoenstatt.

From its small beginning, the Marian place of pilgrimage has become the spiritual home for an international ecclesial movement with twenty independent communities. The three pilgrimage graces have borne fruit in a universal apostolate and a rich

threefold spirituality. In the words of Father Kentenich, “Our Lady’s preeminent activity as covenant partner in Schoenstatt’s shrines is as the great educator of the Christian nations, leading them to the summit of everyday, instrument and covenant piety, and as the foundress and leader of a comprehensive and modern movement of education and renewal. It is from there that she wishes to draw those hearts to herself which consecrate themselves to her in the spirit of Schoenstatt, to educate them as instruments in her hand, and to use them in all places.”<sup>101</sup>

Fittingly, therefore, the centennial celebration took the form of a pilgrimage to the Original Shrine, from which the Schoenstatt Family was sent out anew. From this international encounter of Schoenstatt communities and individuals with the Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen, and Victress of Schoenstatt at the Original Shrine, all Schoenstatt pilgrims “like the Apostles before them, will be impelled to proclaim by word and by witness of life ‘the mighty works of God’ (Acts 2:11) as their pilgrimage crosses the threshold into the next one hundred years.”<sup>102</sup>

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99. Cf. Final List of Propositions of the Synod of Bishops 2012, 58. Enrique Soros, *Conquering All Hearts* (Madison, Wisc.: Schoenstatt Editions, 2010). Cf. *The Shrine: Memorial, Presence and Prophecy*, 18.

100. John Paul II, *Homily in Corrientes, Argentina* (April 9, 1987).

101. Joseph Kentenich, *Mary, Our Mother and Educator*, 334. English translation in: SCS 1992, 74.

102. *The Shrine: Memorial, Presence and Prophecy*, 18.



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