

THE SECOND FOUNDING DOCUMENT

October 18, 1939

Introduction

Schoenstatt's twenty-fifth anniversary on October 18, 1939 was overshadowed by the beginning of World War II and the increasing threat of the Nazis. Despite the difficulties a Jubilee Week was celebrated in Schoenstatt from October 15 to 22. The climax came on the evening of October 18, when the covenant of love of October 18, 1914 was renewed by the entire Schoenstatt Family as a "blank check", a total surrender to the Mother Thrice Admirable, especially with the prayer that she take the future of Schoenstatt into her hands.

Father Kentenich himself could not be present for this celebration. He had to leave for Switzerland on October 13 for a series of retreats lasting until November 5. Before leaving Schoenstatt, however, he wrote the following letter to be read in his name on the evening of October 18. He entitled it:

"Words befitting the hour"

The importance of this text soon made itself clear, and it has since gone down in history as Schoenstatt's Second Founding Document.

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The Second Founding Document

1 Having taken time out from the noise of the day and the haste and anxiousness of our times for this quiet celebration, we are now spiritually united with the entire family in our little shrine. Priests, religious and laity, adults, youth and children, women and men, girls and boys are gathered in colorful array around the picture of our Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt. All have found their way here from home and abroad, from time and eternity. All have come to their favorite place with heartfelt gratitude, fervent love, and ardent expectation. We are in their midst.

2 Our thoughts and sentiments turn to the past. Old memories of blessed events and personal experiences come back to us. How much we would like them to point the way to the future tasks of our family. Indeed, all of us sense that a great world catastrophe and the start of a new era is upon us. We ask ourselves again and again: Is this *the* time for which Divine Providence has built the ark of our family? Or must the flood waters rise even higher and become more devastating? So it is that past, present, and future come together in our hearts with ardent gratitude, silent longing, and joyful expectation.

3 The more we grow into this world through holy recollection and quiet meditation, the more eloquently everything around us begins to speak, interpret, and proclaim. The picture and the altar, the pews and windows and stones, the memorial tablet and monument, the graves of our heroes, the pilgrims' square and the pilgrims' hall, the Old House and the Retreat House, the college and the the house of the pilgrims all speak to us about the great things which God's grace and the interceding omnipotence of our Blessed Mother have brought about from here in the entire family, in ourselves, and in many others during the past twenty-five years.

4 All of which gives us reason to expect even greater divine mercies in the years to come—if we only learn how to become witnesses, interpreters, and imitators of Divine Wisdom in world events.

I

5 A review of the past twenty-five years gives us occasion to warmly repeat the words of the Psalmist, "I will praise the mercies of God for all eternity!" [Ps 89,2]. All the great and valuable things which we have received in this holy place over the years can be directly traced to our Mother and Queen of Schoenstatt. She is simply *the* gift which God in his wisdom, kindness, and omnipotence gave to our family in a special way on October 18, 1914, and through our family in a new way to the world.

6 All that has come about from here is *her* work.

7 *She* has enkindled our heroic living and striving for sanctity in our ranks through her intercession.

8 To *her* we owe a delicate sense of purity and intactness, a feel for the development of noble, creative fatherliness and motherliness, and the longing for a burning love of God and souls.

9 *She* has given us the monumental structure of our ascetical and educational system, which can be so perfectly adapted to the God-given uniqueness of each individual and community. *She* helped us find our personal and community ideals.

10 *She* has created all the branches of our family in accordance with the needs of our times, and has implored and gained for them many and qualified vocations.

11 *She* was always there, in spite of the many times we failed, and gave us the courage again and again to reach out for the stars.

12 All the houses which we have built or been able to acquire, both at home and abroad, are *her* property.

13 *She* has seen to it that we always looked on all our present difficulties as tasks that must be courageously undertaken for our time.

14 *She* has opened our eyes to the great law on which our family is built: As a child of war we can only grow and prosper through battle and strife, through trials and persecution.

15 To *her* we also owe the great grace that all the mighty stones which were meant for our destruction became a powerful stairway which led us safely to God and into the world of our mission and task.

16 Without *her* we would never have been able to steer a prudent course or preserved our clear views in the midst of the differences of opinion in the Catholic world; nor could we have pursued our course so calmly and perseveringly.

17 *She* has formed and educated us, as a family and as individuals, into what we are and has conquered and secured for us the place in the Church which we hold today.

18 So it is that the words of Vincent Pallotti have been realized in us, "She is the great Missionary!" She has worked miracles. She has truly proven herself the Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt—admirable in her power, admirable in her kindness, and admirable in her faithfulness; as Mother of God, Mother of the Redeemer, and Mother of the redeemed. Everything which the Founding Document hoped and

prayed for has literally come true: Our Blessed Mother has erected her throne of grace here in a special manner, and she has revealed her glories to the world in many ways. She has become our Mother and Queen by right of conquest.

19 For our part, the captivating power of her love, kindness and care have made it easy for us to elevate her again and again, freely and willingly, to the throne of our family and of our hearts. Thus she rules in the world of Schoenstatt with sovereign freedom and generosity, not only by right of conquest but also by right of election.

20 This free election was first made by our family in the Founding Document. We did not see this as a daring act, for we believed that the Blessed Mother, in accordance with the plans of Divine Providence, had chosen us in a special way. The family elected Our Lady to be its Mother, Queen, and Intercessor in a unique way, and the venerable Mother of Our Lord made our little family her favorite creation and occupation. The Founding Document is therefore a voluntary act of mutual choice and self-surrender.

21 Each consecration which has been made over the last twenty-five years, either individually or in community, may be seen as a mysterious participation in the Founding Document and consequently a renewal and repetition of this mutual voluntary act of choice and self-surrender.

22 The process therefore becomes understandable by which we have gradually become accustomed to looking on our consecration to the

Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt as a freely chosen and freely willed declaration of our special childlike and chivalrous attachment to her for all eternity, but at the same time as a freely chosen and freely willed declaration of her special motherly and queenly attachment to us for all eternity.

23 God alone knows how often this consecration has been made since 1914. To him alone is also reserved the knowledge of the depth and warmth of each individual consecration, and the degree of readiness to be used.

24 We may consider it a special gift of grace that on this anniversary the family as a whole has become so mature and found its way so deeply into the spirit of the founding contract and consecration, that its members have declared their readiness to offer our Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt not only all the faculties of body and soul, not only all their material and spiritual possessions, but even their own lives, completely and forever, for her work. It is extremely gratifying and encouraging to know that all who are united with us in our little shrine at this moment have given the Mother Thrice Admirable a complete blank check over themselves and their lives.

25 This is the same grace which made Max Brunner exclaim in youthful enthusiasm, "*Ave, Imperatrix, morituri te salutant!*" Hail, O Queen, those prepared to die greet you! We know how seriously Our Lady took this offer.

26 However, we are also well aware that this readiness is not yet the final degree of surrender. Here, as in all things, Joseph Engling is our model and patron. We are familiar with his consecration. It states:

27 "Dear Mother, Mother Thrice Admirable, I give myself to you again as your sacrifice. I offer you everything I am and have, my body and my soul with all its capabilities, everything I own, my freedom and my will. I want to belong entirely to you. I am yours. Use me and whatever is mine entirely as pleases you. But if it can be reconciled with your plans, let me be a sacrifice for the aims which you have assigned to our (family). In humility, your unworthy servant, Joseph Engling" (June 3, 1918)¹.

28 Is it necessary to draw attention to the fact that the little sentence, "*If it can be reconciled with your plans, let me be a sacrifice for the aims which you have assigned to our (family)* ," contains and implies more than what the family as a whole now sees in the blank check and the life act?

29 Through this act of surrender we repeat in our own way the *Fiat* ["Let it be done unto me...", Lk 1,38] and *Ecce ancilla Domini* ["Behold the handmaid of the Lord", Lk 1,38] spoken by Our Lady at the annunciation. She thereby declared her unreserved readiness to accept blindly whichever blows of fate God would permit and will for her in connection with her motherhood. She never took back her blank check, even when it was God's wish that she flee from the murderers sent to kill her Child, that she travel desert roads and live as a refugee in a foreign land with foreign customs, foreign ideas, and a foreign religion, that she

live in the seclusion of Nazareth, or accompany the Redeemer of the world on his way of redemption, or stand beneath the cross next to the dying God-man. *Stetit!* [She stood! Jn 19,25]. She always stood to her blank check. She stood to it beneath the cross as well, when her heart was pierced as if by a sword. Her whole life was spent entirely in the service of him who had chosen her to be his Mother, Bride, and Helpmate. As a result, every personal interest in her life receded into the background. She knew but one goal—the Redeemer and his work. Is it not a great blessing and grace to be raised by God's inscrutable mercy to a similar spiritual height and mission in life through the blank check?

30 A hero is one who dedicates his life to something great! We, the entire family, offer this valuable gift from God to our Blessed Mother for the realization of the world's redemption. And there can be no greater imaginable work than that of redemption.

31 God in his wisdom and kindness has given us the royal gift of our free will. He would like us to return this will to him of our own free choice and volition. He wishes to receive it from us completely and in all its ramifications as a gift in return. Those who make the blank check in the right spirit perfectly respond to the call, wish, and will of the eternal God. They will not want to hold back anything for themselves. From then on they will want to form and bear their lives in complete submission and conformity to the will of God.

32 The rarity of such an unconditional surrender to Divine Providence and the Eternal Wisdom can be inferred from fact that so many people today completely resist the will of the Creator and Father of the

Universe; and of the many others who wish to serve him, only a few are prepared to unreservedly give up their sick self-will.

33 Only very few can pray sincerely with Our Lord in the Our Father: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" [Mt 6,10].

34 Only very few are able to say in every situation of their lives: God's will, be still! —Nothing is mere coincidence; everything comes from God's providence! —God is Father, God is good, everything he does is good!

35 Only very few can pray with Nicholas of Flue, "My Lord and my God, take from me all that separates me from you! My Lord and my God, give me all that brings me closer to you! My Lord and my God, take me from myself and give me entirely to you!"

36 With deep reverence and gratitude we bow before God's mercy and goodness, by which we have been called to belong to this small circle of the dear children of his heart and wisdom. This gift, too, we owe to our Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt.

37 And if God really does take our offer seriously? Then we will recall that the blank check is already found in the Founding Document and our consecration, and that both are a mutual act of self-surrender and election. If we have placed ourselves and our lives unreservedly at the disposal of our Blessed Mother, she, too, will give herself entirely to us

in a similar manner—with her mighty arm, the arm of her interceding omnipotence, with the Child on her arm, with the tongue of fire over her head, with the *Ave* in her ear, the *Magnificat* on her lips, and the sevenfold sword in her heart. Thus we are no longer alone. With our entire soul we can pray and sing:

"Though storm may rage and wind may howl

and lightning strike again,

I think as does the mariner's child:

My Father is at the helm."

The magic word which "worked miracles" during the [First] World War from 1914 to 1918, and which has accompanied us until today, now gains a deeper ring and a fuller meaning. It is "*Mater habebit curam!*" [Mother will take care!]. The great hope which the Bishop of Trier expressed at the dedication of the Retreat House must and will be realized. He said:

38 "I conclude with the thought which came to me as *I knelt in the shrine of grace* . I see it as a genuine omen from God that the consecration of this house is on the solemnity of the Assumption of Mary, on the greatest Marian feast of the liturgical year. *And as I read the words around the picture in the shrine: Servus Mariae nunquam peribit!—A servant of Mary will never perish—I thought to myself: The Apostolic Movement which emanates from here shall also never perish. Our Lady will bless her work!*" [August 15, 1928].

39 So in spirit we now unite and renew with deep humility, great fervor, and powerful readiness to be used two mottos of historical significance. One is: "Our lives for our Queen!" The other: "Let us die for our Queen!"

40 The first leads us back many years into the history of Castile. For ten years Queen Isabella had been waging a mighty battle against the Moors. The inveterate enemies of Christianity could only be driven back slowly. Finally, they remained entrenched in one last fortress. They could not bear the fact that they had been so defeated by the forces of a woman. One of them dared to mock and insult Isabella publicly. This infuriated all her noble knights and vassals, arousing their courage to the utmost. They stormed the fortress with the cry, "Our lives for our Queen!", and the fortress was quickly taken. In the future our motto will therefore be, "Our lives for our Queen!"

41 [Empress] Maria Theresia was surrounded by her enemies once more. As a result, she went to Hungary's capital to inspire the nobles and leaders of the people to fight. Her request for help was answered by a tremendous choir of enthusiastic cries: "*Moriamur pro Regina nostra!*" "Let us die for our Queen!" In the same way, we, too, are ready to endure cross and suffering, and if necessary even death, for our Blessed Mother and for her work.

42 As a proof and expression of this attitude, and as a lasting monument for everything which our Mother and Queen has done for us in Schoenstatt, our Sisters of Mary are giving our Mother Thrice

Admirable of Schoenstatt a crown for October 18 in the name of the whole family [2](#).

II

43 We are entering an era which can be spoken of as the final link in a four-hundred-year development, and are doing so as a united front, spiritually well-equipped, full of hope and expectation, and ready to do everything to assist Our Lady in a time of collapse to realize the significant words about "the shadow of the shrine [3](#)."

44 We are justified in considering the blank check, which we have [now] made officially and as one family, a mutual renewal of the founding contract.

45 Nothing of the ideas, perspectives, and goals of 1914 has changed. Nothing, absolutely nothing has been given up in the course of the past twenty-five years. Everything which has come about in the family during this time can be traced back in all its detail to the Founding Document.

46 And yet there is a great difference between then and now. All of the "peculiar ideas" which are contained in the founding contract, the source of our "Schoenstatt secret", have withstood the severe trials of recent challenges to both their theory and practice [4](#). As a result, our attitude has become significantly deeper, our devotion and readiness to be used

stronger and more balanced, our faith and trust firmer and greater, and our knowledge of the meaning and implications of the contract and the family's task clearer. Those who were here in 1914 were of a handful of young, immature boys. Today the altar is surrounded by many men and women deepened and matured by life. Among them are those who have sacrificed their lives for Schoenstatt and who now continue their cherished life's work in eternity, not only through their example, but also through their powerful intercession.

47 It is not without reason that God's wisdom and kindness have brought about this transformation.

48 If our size and attitude had remained that of the past, we would not be equal to the task which faces us today. The era into which we are being catapulted is too turbulent and sinister, too insensitive and hostile to God; the general state of crisis, distress, and helplessness too great; and the opportunities for transforming the world into Christ too few and dangerous for us to be any fewer or anything less.

III

49 What may Divine Providence expect in the near future of the family which it has prepared in this way? We can, as is our wont, allow God to give us the answer through the circumstances of our time. However, another and simpler way will lead to the same end: We turn to the ideas and institutions in Schoenstatt which heretofore have been the focus of the most controversy. We are guided by the thought that God permits

such challenges in order to draw our attention to the things which he wants us to emphasize and make effective in a special way. Those who have grown up with the family know that the battle especially centered around the "peculiar ideas", i.e. around the concepts of mission [consciousness] and instrumentality, around the mutual contract and the local attachment [to the shrine], and around the capital of grace of the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt.

50 It follows that our family currently faces a threefold imperative:

1. Carefully foster the awareness of your divine mission and instrumentality;
2. Firmly adhere to your pronounced Marian character;
3. Reemphasize the importance of the contributions to the capital of grace of the Mother Thrice Admirable.

51 These are the three pillars on which the life of our saintly Joseph Engling was built and to which we have rededicated and repledged ourselves in the blank check.

52 *Carefully foster the awareness of your divine mission and instrumentality!*

53 Those who have a greater insight into the order of salvation and the present state of the world will know how important it is to stress the awareness of a supernatural mission and of being an instrument.

54 It is a long-standing law that only those individuals and communities can have a deeper influence on the Kingdom of God who are expressly called and sent by God. The evidence for this is not only provided by the priests and prophets of the Old Testament, but also by Our Lord, the apostles, the conviction of the Church, and the general consensus of the Catholic faithful.

55 Our Lord would withdraw in order to pray, and then send out the ones he had chosen. He made it clear to his followers: "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" [Jn 15,16]. During his high-priestly prayer he declared to the heavenly Father that he had kept his chosen ones safe from the world—those given to him by the Father [cf Jn 17,12].

56 The apostles, especially the Apostle of the Gentiles [St. Paul], greatly stressed the fact that they were sent by God and Christ.

57 In theory and practice, the Church adheres to the principle that no-one can be chosen or sent unless called—as Aaron was.

58 And in the common usage of the Catholic faithful, the words "mission" and "vocation" have been reserved exclusively for the individuals and communities which have this especially divine mission.

59 The circumstances of our times remind us of the law which Donoso Cortez discovered in Church and world history. According to him, there are epochs in which the Church is beaten back everywhere. Try as she may, she remains unable to bring herself out of the catacombs. Only when she fully recognizes and honestly acknowledges the limitations of the human elements within her, comes the eternal God to suddenly reappear on the pinnacle of the temple and sound the trumpet—and then the walls of Jericho will collapse. In times like these, anyone who does not possess the unshakable conviction of having a special mission from God and the divine strength to carry it out, is doomed from the outset to unfruitfulness, lethargy, inactivity, and total collapse. Only those who are endowed with an indomitable trust in this divine strength and mission can brave the high and dangerous seas of life.

60 Today we are astonished that our young founding generation was borne by such a deep awareness of its mission and instrumentality twenty-five years ago. We would do well to investigate the reasons for this. We know what they are. At that time, not many of us would have been convinced. We can better grasp the evidence of this divine mission as it started to become clear in 1919, at the end of the World War, after five years of fruitful existence. The reasons revolve around the well-known words: the insignificance of the instruments, the greatness of the difficulties, and the greatness of the success. Everything which we have fought for and attained since 1919 lends deep and broad support to this line of argumentation, and, as a result, deepens our faith in our mission

and our awareness of being an instrument. We therefore have ample reason to give heartfelt thanks to all those who were used by Divine Providence to cause us difficulties. Without them we would not be so firmly rooted in our joyful and victorious faith, hope, and love—in a time when so much is collapsing and discouragement is paralyzing so many.

61 It is now up to us to deepen this faith in our mission through prayer and by studying the history of our family and the history of our times.

62 The more often and effectively we do this, the greater and richer will be the fruits that we harvest. The awareness of our dependence on the living God will increase. Our mistrust in our own strength and purely human means will become greater. Our sense of shelteredness and being at home, our tranquility and security in God will help us stand more firmly and act with more certainty. And our confidence in the victory of the forces of God in and through our family will become invincible, so that in the end we will be able to say with conviction, "If God is for us, who can be against us!" [Rom 8,31]. "I can do all things in him who strengthens me" [Phil 4,13]. We will experience the truth of St. Augustine's words: "Whoever beholds the face of the Almighty will not be afraid to face the mighty ones of this world!" Even if God should demand our lives and the temporary dissolution of our family, we will see in this the most perfect opportunity to prove our faith in the divine powers working in our family. We will then become like Our Lord, who by word and example laid down the fundamental law for the development of the Kingdom of God: "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all things to myself..." [Jn 12,32]. The grain of wheat must fall to the earth and die—then it will bring rich fruit [cf Jn 12,24].

63 Those who are deeply filled and transformed by the blank check which we have made, will live with all their soul out of this divine faith in the mission and instrumentality. It would be absurd to dedicate all the faculties of one's body and soul, all of one's spiritual and earthly possessions, much less one's life, to a work which offers no earthly advantages, unless this faith backs it up as an invisible powerhouse. In order to deepen this faith, let us study and meditate on the life of our Joseph Engling in more detail. Without this divine element, his life and work would be simply inexplicable and inconceivable.

64 *Firmly adhere to your pronounced Marian character!*

65 The pronounced Marian character of our family is a fruit of our history. It corresponds to the divine laws of universal government, universal order, and universal perfection and the dependence of our human nature on the senses.

66 In his wisdom and reverence for his creatures, God rules the world through secondary causes. He gladly transfers his qualities, rights, and authority to things and persons, and wishes that we transmit the love and attachment owed to him to other creatures, and through them to him. The result is a great organism of attachments. In the Blessed Mother the all-merciful God created a being upon whom he lavishly bestowed a share in his own attributes. It is therefore his wish and will that we use her as a holy bond to which we tenderly unite ourselves in order to be drawn, with her, into his own heart.

67 Because our nature is not only spirit, but also sentient, our hunger for eternity expresses itself in a deep longing for transparencies of God. The almighty, all-merciful, and all-wise God gives this need its due in many ways. He sent us his only-begotten Son. In him we can see the face of the heavenly Father in his love for us. He gave us the host of saints, who fulfill the same task in their own way. The same may be said of Our Lady. Since God created her in an ecstasy, as it were, she represents a relatively perfect mirror of the divine perfections. Those who look upon her and surrender themselves to her, will be drawn close to God in an incredibly deep manner. They will stand in awe before his greatness and feel drawn into his heart in a simple but effective way. For us she is the official Christ- and God-bearer, -bringer, and -server. "Those who find her will find life and receive salvation from the Lord" [cf Prv 8,35].

68 The objective position of Our Lady in the plan of salvation is manifested in our family history in an extraordinarily clear manner. The Blessed among women is the origin and partial goal of our family. At the same time, she exemplifies and illustrates its entire work method.

69 Everything which has come about in our family developed in conscious dependence on her intercession and her example. We therefore like to call her our Foundress, our Regent, our Queen. Our every thought and striving wishes to further our sense of being inwardly dependent on her.

70 Our blank check wants to make this dependence and attachment more perfect and permanent. In doing so, we are guided by the great law which St. Isidore expressed in the words, "*Ut sim servus filii, appeto servitutem Genitricis*"—"In order to attain an intimate love of our Savior, I seek a deep attachment to his Mother." Pope Pius X expressed the same law in its classical form: No one has "more power to unite us with Christ than this Virgin. As Christ said, '*This is eternal life—that they know you, the one true God, and him whom you have sent, Jesus Christ*' [Jn 17,3]. However, since it is through Mary that we arrive at this life-giving knowledge of Christ, through her, too, shall we all the more easily obtain that life of which Christ is the source and beginning." And at another point he testifies, "Who cannot see that there is no more sure and easy means of uniting all people with Christ than devotion to Mary, so that we obtain through him perfect childhood, becoming holy and spotless before God?" (Jubilee encyclical, February 2, 1904 [5](#)).

71 The spiritual life of Joseph Engling proves how clearly and accurately the "Pope of the Eucharist" perceived and explained this point. Joseph Engling saw himself as *Mancipatus Mariae* [property of Mary], and formed his life accordingly. It was precisely because of this that his love for Our Lord became so deep. The history of our family during the past twenty-five years is also a testimony to the truth of this same law. Because the family attached itself so deeply and organically to our Blessed Mother, it was always receptive and open to the divine, and for this reason was successful in its striving for a great closeness to Christ and a childlike love for our heavenly Father. The fact that we have constantly preserved a healthy moderation and powerful depth in our attitude to the liturgy is also something which we owe to our Marian attachment and attitude.

72 It is good that we call to mind these far-reaching implications. If our love for Mary has already given us so much in the past, how much more can we expect now that the entire family has consciously, deeply, and permanently reunited on this soil through the blank check!

73 We do not want to stop there, however, merely satisfied with constantly orienting ourselves on Our Lady as an example and intercessor. According to God's plan she may and must also be the organic partial goal of our apostolic activity.

74 This is in keeping with the spirit of the Founding Document and the entire history of our family. Once more and as always, our Joseph Engling is a classical example of this.

75 This is in keeping with the wish of Our Lord, who came to us through his Mother and recommends to us that we take the same way to the Father.

76 This is in keeping with the needs of our own hearts, for the mouth overflows with that which fills the heart. And what we have personally experienced and gone through is what we like to share with others.

77 This is in keeping with modern man's extraordinary dependence on the senses. His receptivity—to the extent that he has a sense for the

supernatural at all—is one which is especially directed to lived examples of religious values. God takes this need into account by classically illustrating the great ideas of Christianity for mankind in the image of our Blessed Mother.

78 This is in keeping with the general crisis and helplessness of pastoral work today. So many of the proven methods of the past for leading souls to religious and moral values have become unworkable or ineffective. All the more reason for the enlightened and supernaturally minded apostle call on Our Lady, showing her to the faithful and presenting her as the "great pastor". In God's plan, "she is the great Missionary—she will work miracles" (Vincent Pallotti). Yes, she has worked miracles! When all other means fail, she performs great and marvelous deeds. She is the *gratia plena* [full of grace, Lk 1,28]. And God has made our souls so deeply receptive to her influence that the religious instinct must have completely died for a Christian to have lost all access to her.

79 The Church knows unquestioningly from experience that [Mary's] pastoral influence is also extraordinarily great in overcoming the heresies of any given age. She therefore confesses and sings, "*Omnes haereses tu sola interemisti in universo mundo!*" You alone have overcome all the heresies in the whole world!

80 Our blank check includes a renewed, joyful, unmistakable, and irrevocable profession to this apostolate of Marian devotion. We give ourselves completely and undividedly to the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt and her work. This must urge us to enkindle in the widest

possible circles not only love of her work, but also warm enthusiasm for her person. The precise way of attaining this depends on the specific situation. Most of us have had many years of experience in spreading genuine and enlightened love for our Mother Thrice Admirable. For this reason, you do not need any suggestions. Only one point deserves particular mention. It may be of some significance that recently we have been gathering those entrusted to our care around the MTA-altar in their own homes or in a neighboring MTA-shrine more often than before. We have given MTA-pictures and medals to those in danger, to soldiers, refugees, the suffering and those in need. We have also placed them unobtrusively in air-raid shelters. Mary's motherly heart frequently offers far more shelter than any other place. All in all, the ancient law holds true: when genuine love is at work, it will not be difficult for us to find ways and means to win more and more devotees and followers for the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt.

81 We wisely call our efforts to spread Marian devotion an *organic* partial goal of our family mission. This states that we consider and use our Marian attachment—always and solely—as an organic point of passage and not the final goal of our endeavors. In it we see an extremely valuable and proven means of reimprinting Christ's features on the world. This has always been our clearly defined intention. In [the First] World War we expressed this in the two well-known prayers which have since become the common possession of the whole family. They are:

82 Mother Thrice Admirable,
teach us, your knights, how to do battle,

spreading devotion to you
despite the number and might of the foe,
so that the world renewed through you
pay homage to your Son.

83 Mother, with your Child from heaven,
descend upon our nation's plains,
so that, following your footsteps,
it find true and lasting peace.
Mother and Child, united in love—
only through you can our nation be healed.

84 If, in the spirit of the blank check, we take our apostolate in the service of the MTA seriously and give ourselves wholeheartedly to its promotion, we hope to be found worthy to help renew our times, times in which the Church rightfully sings, " *Omnes haereses— **etiam anthropolgicas** —tu sola interemisti in universo mundo!* [You alone have overcome all the heresies— *including the anthropological heresies* —in the whole world!] You have also overcome the *anthropological heresies* of the modern era and brought about a new Christian social order. May this, at the same time, be our practical contribution to the clarification of the question of Mary's mediation of all graces.

85 Is there a deeply religious soul who would not be in-spired by such a beautiful twofold aim and urged to invest all his strength [in its realization]? May our Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt select and use many children and members of our family for this sublime task!

86 But that is not yet the complete revelation of the Marian character of our family. When we think or speak the words "Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt", we see her not only as the origin of our family and the partial goal of our task, but also as our method of education and pastoral care.

87 From this standpoint she is for us, in the perfection of her being, the classical point of intersection between the natural and supernatural realities, the unique embodiment of the harmonious union of nature and grace, and therefore the representative and guarantee of an organic ascetical approach and method of education.

88 Because we have always conceded this position to her in our thinking, willing, and acting, we have not only retained a closeness to God in everything we do, but also a closeness to man and to life, and with calm and modest certainty have found our way through all the extreme tendencies of our time, both within and outside of the Church.

89 Our blank check is a renewed and conscious affirmation of this organic view of the world. It obliges us to surrender ourselves without reserve not only to the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt, but also to her work. And an essential part of the Schoenstatt work is how it

views life as an organism—quite apart from the fact that an enlightened and tender devotion to Mary naturally leads to an organic thinking and acting.

90 Through the blank check, we renew and deepen our yes to the serious and difficult task of helping rescue a whole multitude of the vitally important points which are endangered in the organism of Christian thinking and living. In particular, we are reminded of the creative tension between individual and community, of freedom in attachment and attachment in animated spirit, of sound Christian courage and vigorous independence, of heroic, selfless service, of Immaculata spirit and the spirit of truth, of love of peace and love of God—in short, of the new human personality, the modern everyday saint which God seems to be demanding of us through the circumstances of the world today, and exemplified in the person of Joseph Engling.

91 *Reemphasize the importance of the contributions to the capital of grace of the Mother Thrice Admirable!*

92 Everything which we have said thus far about the awareness of our divine mission and the Marian character of our family, finds its concrete expression and culmination in our contributions to the capital of grace of our Mother Thrice Admirable.

93 It is therefore understandable that they have been among the things which have been most questioned in the battles of the past years. This gave us abundant opportunity to reexamine their dogmatic foundation,

psychological significance, and educational usefulness. The result was a more conscious retention and a more fervent support for this proven practice.

94 They stand at the beginning of our family history, of every new Schoenstatt shrine and every fruitful undertaking for Schoenstatt. In the course of the years they became an expression of our unreserved surrender to our Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt and her work; of an enlightened and effective union of our activity with that of God; of a supernatural faith in our mission and a profound Marian attitude. As a result, it became a measuring rod for the reliability and usefulness of the individual members of the family.

95 Through the blank check we give the contributions to the capital of grace of our Mother Thrice Admirable that high position once more in the whole family and in our own lives which they possessed in the efforts and striving of our Joseph Engling and which they, in accordance with God's plan, must always have.

96 Thanks be to God! So it is that we again place ourselves with both feet on the ground of our tradition, and carry one of the most essential fundamental forces of the living organism of our family with new vigor into a perilous future. We rejoice because we know and recognize the ancient law: "*Omne regnum iisdem mediis continetur, quibus conditum est*"—i.e. the prosperity of a kingdom is determined by the faithfulness of its members to the basic forces upon which it was originally founded. Our family was essentially built through the contributions to the capital of grace of the Mother Thrice Admirable. It must therefore be

uncompromising in its faithfulness to this point for all times if it wants to survive the trial by fire. For the family and its fruitfulness it is a matter of live and death.

97 In addition, we are approaching a time in which the contributions to the capital of grace of our Mother Thrice Admirable may not only be the most important and effective, but also the only means of serving the Marian apostolate. To understand this, we must recall that these contributions are nothing more and nothing less than a sound, serious, and effective striving for sanctity in the service of the Marian apostolate.

That which Lucie Christine says with regard to priests in certain situations applies to us all. She writes, "When a priest is no longer able to work, there is still one thing he can do—become a saint. A great many misguided and confused souls may be unmoved by the spoken word, but will find it impossible to resist plain sanctity."

98 Finally, we should recall what the situation of our nation demands of us as a categorical imperative. In the language of the Gospels they are the evangelical counsels; in ascetical teaching the spirit of the vows—namely radical simplicity, moral purity, and fidelity rooted in God. If, in the spirit of the blank check, our seriousness about making contributions [to the capital of grace] is greater than previously, we will not find it difficult to make the spirit of the vows a part of our everyday lives and to cultivate it with deep love and faithfulness. That is how they help us make the imperatives of our times fruitful for our striving for holiness and for our Schoenstatt work.

99 As a Jubilee gift, may our Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt implore for all her children the correct understanding of the contributions to the capital of grace, of the Marian character of our family, and of its divine mission.

+ + +

100 We have come to the end of this hour of celebration and of consecration.

Will it one day be looked upon as a day of great importance in the history of our family? We all feel as if we had witnessed a second founding. The foundation is the very same as it was in 1914; but it is now firmer and more unshakable than it was then. The blank check is the turning point between two epochs of our history. It is the end of twenty-five years of a development rich in grace, work, and success.

And it wants to mark the beginning of a new, even more far-reaching development. The past was obviously "under the protection of Mary".

For that we are grateful from the bottom of our heart, and with deep emotion and simple humility we proclaim to the whole world, "*Nos cum Prole pia, **benedixit** Virgo Maria!*"—the Virgin Mary, with her loving Child, *has blessed us!* At the same time we want to add the confident petition, "*Nos cum Prole pia, **benedicat** Virgo Maria!*"—*May the Virgin Mary, with her loving Child, bless us!*

101 Will the future "under the protection of Mary" really be as secure and fruitful as we expect? "To me it is as if at this moment, here in the old chapel of St. Michael, Our Lady were speaking to us through the

mouth of the holy archangel", as she did in 1914: "Do not worry about the fulfillment of your desire. *Ego diligentes me diligo* . I love those who love me." This love will and must bring about an intense and humble mission consciousness and confidence of victory, zealous work for the pronounced Marian character of our family, and enlightened and effective contributions to the capital of grace. That is our task.

102 We leave everything else to our dear Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt. With the words "*Mater habebit curam*" [Mother will take care] on our lips and in our hearts, we joyfully enter the time which lies ahead.

103 There will be no lack of difficulties. We know they are coming, and hope with God's grace to master them as we have in the past twenty-five years.

104 During the Spanish Civil War, the communists had designs on the national Marian shrine at Saragossa. In order to achieve their goal with as little resistance as possible, they painted their plane with the colors of the [Spanish] nationalists. They released three bombs from a height of a few dozen yards over the church of pilgrimage. The first, weighing about 100 pounds, landed close to the church but did not explode. The second fell through the tower and broke into two pieces. The third hit its target—the sanctuary—but did not explode either. Experts who later examined the bombs declared that such a thing had never happened before: the fuse had burnt through, the mechanism was in order, each bomb contained over 60 pounds of explosives—and yet, there had been no explosion. It was a miracle!

105 We do not know the details of the difficulties that are awaiting us. Will they be like those in Saragossa? Or will they be different? One thing is certain: We confidently hope and believe that the Blessed Mother, who erected "her throne here in a special way" in 1914 in order "to distribute her treasures, and to work miracles of grace", will follow the plans of Divine Providence and not abandon us as long as we do not abandon her and courageously and persistently try to fulfill the above mentioned threefold task.

106 In 1918 we were allowed to present her with a monument and memorial tablet in gratitude for the gifts we received during the World War. If she leads us victoriously through the new dangers, and despite all obstacles gives us the opportunity to do justice to our mission, we would like to erect a new monument which will proclaim her might and kindness to all coming generations. Should it be the construction of a pilgrims' church or the erection of a pillar to our MTA? Or should it be something else? [6](#)

107 Whatever the final choice may be, in the end it can only be a symbol of the great living cathedral of Mary which our family is meant to build in the world and for which each of us is called to be a living stone.

108 When the people of Saragossa heard of the miraculous event, they went by the thousands to the altar of grace and smothered it with flowers. Night after night they gathered for a prayer of thanksgiving and

reparation. Dignitaries of Church and state, university professors and the general of the garrison marched through the city in joyful and enthusiastic procession, and were untiring in their song of praise for the *Madonna del Pilár*. On one such occasion, the general forced his way through to the statue of grace, kissed it with deep reverence, and proclaimed to the crowds in his brisk, military manner: "I hereby proclaim the Madonna of the Pillar the commander in chief of my troops!" He then hung around her neck the highest decoration which the commander of a regiment may wear. The rejoicing of the people knew no bounds.

109 Will this historic fact one day be repeated in Schoenstatt at the end of the great world catastrophe? Will the family be able to work for the canonization of a second Joseph Engling at the end of the next twenty-five years? May God grant it!

FOOTNOTES

[1:](#)

Consecration of May 31, 1918 on the shore of the Lys River near Calonne, France on the front lines of World War I; as written by Joseph Engling on June 3, 1918.

[2:](#)

Because Father Kentenich was not in Schoenstatt on October 18, 1939, the crowning was postponed until the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The solemn crowning of the Mother Thrice Admirable as Queen of Schoenstatt consequently took place in the Original Shrine on December 10, 1939.

[3:](#)

Father Kentenich is referring to a remark which he made in 1929: "In the shadow of the shrine, the fate of Church and world will be essentially co-determined for centuries to come."

[4:](#)

Referred to is the discussion which surrounded Schoenstatt in the 1930s concerning its "peculiar ideas" such as the concepts of the "contract" with Mary (the covenant of love) and the capital of grace. The discussion about Schoenstatt's "secret" (the covenant of love with Mary in the Schoenstatt shrine) also came up at that time. The fruit of these discussions was a clearer understanding of the importance of the covenant for Schoenstatt's spirituality. See No. 49.

[5:](#)

Papal encyclical "Ad diem illum laetissimum" commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

[6:](#)

The Adoration Church on Mount Schoenstatt (completed in 1968) was built as this sign of thanksgiving for the protection and help received from the Mother Thrice Admirable during the Nazi era and World War II.