

**Novena in Preparation
for our
Annual Feast Day**



Week Five

***The Covenant of Love
In the Fourth Milestone 1965***

Prayer

We are united in the shrine
where the flames of our hearts
beat for our Mother Thrice Admirable
who, through us, wants to build your kingdom.

Let us glow like brands of fire
and joyfully go forth to the nations,
giving witness to redemption
and jubilantly leading all people to the Triune God.¹

Reflection

We spiritually visit our Shrine, our cherished place, with hearts full of gratitude as we reflect:

*The Blessed Mother has worked miracles. She has truly proven herself as the Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt – admirable in her power, admirable in her kindness, and admirable in her faithfulness.*²

To remind us of our unity and as a symbol of the light that Christ brings to all as the risen Lord, let us join together and **light a candle in our altars or Home Shrines** as we pray for each other and our community.

Dear Mother Thrice Admirable, we stand in the light of this candle representing our nine week novena. *This week we entrust to your special care the Church and the Fruitfulness of the Plenary Council.*

¹ Heavenwards, Morning Prayer. Pgs 15, 17

² The Second Founding Document, October 18 1939; pg 76

May we always stand in the light of the Covenant of Love, which our founder and the founding generation, made with you, more than a hundred years ago.

Reading

Schoenstatt lives out of the *Covenant of Love with the Blessed Mother*; knows it has a home in the *Schoenstatt Shrine* and is attached to the founder, *Fr Joseph Kentenich*. Its fruitfulness depends on the faithfulness to these three fundamental forces from which it originated and developed. The great conflict since 1949 centred especially on the person of the founder or what we call the *third contact point*.

The consequence resulting from the Third Milestone of May 31, 1949 was the Apostolic Visitation and Fr Kentenich's removal from office as founder and his exile. Both of these aimed at one goal - to separate Schoenstatt from its founder and to restrict his authority as a founder. In the conflict revolving around his position as the head of the Schoenstatt family, Fr Kentenich recognized God's plan to permanently safeguard the existence of the foundation in its founder.³

The Fourth Milestone refers to the important historical events of 1965 that resulted in Fr Kentenich's reinstatement by the Church and a return to the Work he founded.⁴

Which events surround this milestone?

³ In Union With The Father; P Wolf; pg 68 (adaptations)

⁴ 200 Questions About Schoenstatt; J Niehaus; No. 193 (adaptations)

On October 22, 1951 Fr Kentenich left Original Schoenstatt for Milwaukee, his place of exile. What were these fourteen years of exile like?

Dachau may have been dangerous for body and soul. He endured it. But Milwaukee was more painful, was more bitter. It meant misunderstanding, suspicion, he was completely written off and marginalized.⁵ As the years went on, humanly speaking, the cross of the founder's exile became harder and harder, the fate of the Schoenstatt Work became more and more uncertain; the hope of return faded more and more.⁶

October 11, 1962 the Second Vatican Council began.
October 6, 1964 a decree separated Schoenstatt from the Pallottines.

The next dates involved the unfolding of a series of dramatic events resulting in Fr Kentenich's release from exile. September 13, 1965 a telegram summoned Fr Kentenich to Rome. September 17, 1965 his arrival in Rome takes everyone by surprise. No one had sent a telegram.

October 22, 1965 Pope Paul VI signs the document that effectively drops all decrees against Fr Kentenich. This date is exactly fourteen years after he left from Germany into exile in 1951.

December 8, 1965 the Vatican II Council solemnly closes.
December 22, 1965 Pope Paul VI receives Fr Kentenich in

⁵ Talk given by Monsignore Wolf; September 14, 2002

⁶ Talk given by Sr M Mattia; 2003

private audience and our founder promises that Schoenstatt will do all it can to help realize the mission of the Church after Vatican II. December 24, 1965 Fr Kentenich returns home to Original Schoenstatt in Germany and celebrates Midnight Mass in the Original Shrine. This moment is known as the *second miracle of the Holy Night*.⁷

What is the meaning of the Fourth Milestone for Schoenstatt's history?

Just as the first imprisonment of our father in the Dachau period, the second much longer *imprisonment* of his exile ended with the *second miracle of the Holy Night, a divine intervention* in our history. The exterior liberation of our father from all decrees and his wondrous return home on December 24 are the expression and the result of the *inner miracle* of the Holy Night, which was accomplished in our father and his followers in the course of fourteen years.⁸

Fr Kentenich characterized the inner meaning of the Fourth Milestone as *an inbreak of the Divine in Divine victoriousness* ⁹ or the *ultimate victory of dwelling in the supernatural world*.¹⁰

Wherein is this victory?

On Fr Kentenich's arrival in Rome he said: *The greatest and most beautiful fruit from the past battles is the deep*

⁷ Kentenich Reader Volume I: Meeting Our Father; pg 193 (adaptations)

⁸ Talk given by Sr M Mattia; 2003

⁹ 200 Questions About Schoenstatt; J Niehaus; No. 18

¹⁰ 200 Questions About Schoenstatt; J Niehaus; No. 261-263

*conviction that God intervened in the family and in our personal life's story.*¹¹

We will need many more years to fully grasp what has been given to us through this divine intervention. From our perspective, it is a new or deeper experience of God which also allows us to view the personal self in a new light. It means new graces.

Our father summarized this experience of God and the special grace of the exile period as follows:

*The image of the child, the father and the community has become a new reality in us.¹²¹⁴ We were able to see that not only exterior oppressive shackles had fallen, but interior chains as well... Today we still cannot fully grasp the new manner in which the **image of the child, the image of the father and the image of the community** have become a reality within us... This does not mean that we did not have a clear idea of this threefold image before... We know that this threefold image is capable of development and can be adaptable till the end of our lives... At the same time we may not overlook to **what depths** this change took place by the end of the second imprisonment.*¹³

Pause

Prayer

Father, we believe that you are with us 'from heaven' as you promised. We thank you for your belief *in the inbreak of the Divine in Divine victoriousness* throughout your

¹¹ September 17, 1965

¹² Talk given by Sr M Mattia; 2003

¹³ December 13, 1965

fourteen years of exile and for your genuine example of love for the Church.

Father, go with us into our daily lives and once again intercede for us the grace to discover the fruit of the exile years so that the genuine image of *the new child; the father and the community* become a new reality within us.¹⁴

Pray the First Glorious Mystery - The Resurrection

Mary, the Lord breaks the powerful bonds of death and crushes Satan's power and cunning. Rejoicing, you see him transfigured and beautiful, as we will one day rise in heaven. Let this faith gladden my soul and make my love burn brightly.¹⁵

Our Father ...

Hail Mary (ten times) ...

Glory Be

RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT OF LOVE

Before we renew our Covenant of Love and exchange our hearts with that of our Mother Thrice Admirable, let us prepare inwardly and ask ourselves:

Whom do I wish to entrust to our Mother Thrice Admirable in this coming week?

¹⁴ Covenant Sunday Closing Benediction; October 20 2013 (adaptations)

¹⁵ Heavenwards; prayers by J Kentenich; Rosary of God's Instruments; pg 98

Which spiritual gift can I bring as my gift of love (such as a prayer; a sacrifice or a good deed), which will help me prepare for our Annual Feast Day and make the Covenant of Love more real and practical in my life?

Pause

United with all those who will take part in our Celebration we renew our Covenant of Love:

My Queen, my Mother, I give myself entirely to you, and to show my devotion to you, I consecrate to you this day my eyes, my ears my mouth, my heart, myself without reserve. As I am your own, my good Mother, guard and defend me as your property and your possession. Amen.

We pray for the beatification of our father and founder:

Eternal Triune God, for love of you and your holy Church, Schoenstatt's founder always strove to do your will and win many hearts for you. Through the intercession of Mary, the Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt we pray that he may soon be raised to the honour of the altar so that he may work even more fruitfully than while on earth for you and your kingdom. Amen.