

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



Week Six

***The Covenant of Love
and the Place of Grace***

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:

We come spiritually to visit our Shrine, our cherished place, with hearts full of gratitude. We want to *praise the mercies of God for all eternity!*² *Everything which the Founding Document hoped and prayed for has literally come true: Our Blessed Mother has established her throne of grace here in a special manner. She has revealed her glories to the world in many ways.*³

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*

¹ Heavenwards, Morning Prayer. Pgs 15, 17

² Ps 89:2

³ The Second Founding Document, October 18 1939; pg 45

we entrust to your special care the sick, the elderly and all those affected in any way by the Corona Virus Pandemic.

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

We remember the beginnings of Schoenstatt as a *place of grace* in keeping with the words of the Founding Document. We immerse ourselves in this original source of life in order to discover anew and even more profoundly the ‘fascinating beauty of the founding charism of Schoenstatt’.⁶

With awe and gratitude we recall everything that has been given us in the course of covenant history and remember especially the gift of the *Original Shrine* on May 22 and September 22, 2013.

As Schoenstatt began to expand outside of Europe, it became clear that a replica of the Shrine was needed for others to experience the spirituality. The first to be built was in Uruguay in 1943.

The catalyst was a group of sisters working in Nueva Helvecia, Uruguay, who wanted to give people an experience of being in the Original Shrine. The founder was in the concentration camp of Dachau when the sisters wrote him their request. He confirmed their actions and from then on spoke of the Original Shrine and *Daughter Shrines*.

From one single Original Shrine, a stream of grace flows to embrace the world, because today, a network of more than two hundred *Daughter Shrines* has spread over all continents, to heal and sanctify a globalized, secularized and de-personalized world.⁴

We bring our gratitude for the places of grace on our continent – 1952 the *Kezw Shrine* in Melbourne; 1968 the *Mulgoa Shrine* in Sydney and 1991 the *Mt Richon-Armadale Shrine* in W.A.

As families became increasingly a part of Schoenstatt, the *Home Shrine* developed as a way of experiencing the graces of the Schoenstatt Shrine within the family and in the home.⁵

This came about while the founder was in exile in Milwaukee, USA as the idea of the *living Shrine* developed. In 1963, couples began to choose individual items or symbols in the Shrine, and both parents and children worked spiritually to exemplify their symbol. In effect, each symbol was a tangible expression of their personal ideal. This current gave rise to much life.

Fr Kentenich took up this spiritual development and on November 19, 1963 gave a talk which has since been known as the *Founding Document of the Home Shrine*. One is immediately struck by the decisive way in which the founder applied statements about the Original Shrine in the Founding Document of 1914 to the Home Shrines.

The idea that the Blessed Mother is present and active as our *educator* is central. She is invited into the individual home and the family expect from her the necessary grace and

⁴ The Shrine Source of Life; P Wolf; Forward pg 8 (adaptations)

⁵ Aspects of Schoenstatt's Marian Spirituality; J Niehaus

help in the education of their children and in passing on the Christian faith.

The strong connection between the Home Shrine, families and their homes soon gave rise to the question of whether the Home Shrine was limited only to families. The founder's answer was the origin of the next step in the development of the *Heart Shrine*.

In retrospect, the founder mentioned that the Home and Heart Shrines are the great gift of the exile period.⁶

The Shrine, in any of its forms is a place where we encounter God, a place of evangelization. Each Shrine, from the Original Shrine to each Heart Shrine lives from the contributions to the Capital of Grace of each individual person and the entire Schoenstatt family.

It is in the Shrine where life becomes the gospel and the gospel becomes life.⁷

Pause

Prayer

Father, we believe that you are with us 'from heaven' as you promised. We thank you that in the course of more than one hundred years of Schoenstatt history, we could experience that the Mother Thrice Admirable made the *Original Shrine*, *Daughter Shrines*, *Home Shrines* and *Heart Shrines* her tangible places of grace. Here she is close to us. Here she blesses us with generous gifts of love. We especially want to thank you that she dwells in our Home Shrines just as she does in the

⁶ The Shrine Source of Life; P Wolf; Forward pg 20-21

⁷ Ibid. pg 8 (adaptations)

Original Shrine. To ensure that the Covenant of Love will always be a blessing and remain fruitful, we promise anew: Your covenant – our mission! With you we pray: *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.*⁸

The Third Joyful Mystery - The Birth of Our Lord

Mary, your Shrine is our Bethlehem, pleasing to God through its sunrise.

There you gave virginal birth to the Lord, who chose you as his Bride and Mother. In your miraculous fruitfulness you brought forth the Sun of Righteousness.

You have graciously established Schoenstatt so that our times can see the Eternal Light. From there you want to go through our dark world as the Christ bearer sent by God.

Jubilantly place the Lord into my soul anew, so that, like you, I may perfectly resemble him. Let me be a Christ bearer for our times that they may shine in the brightest radiance of the sun.⁹

Our Father ...

Hail Mary (ten times) ...

Glory Be ...

⁸ Heavenwards; Morning Consecration, pg 13

⁹ Heavenwards; prayers by J Kantenich; Schoenstatt Office; Lauds pg 49

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?

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.