

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



Week Eight

The Covenant of Love in Its Width

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:
Our Mother Thrice Admirable, in the image of the Pilgrim Mother Shrine, challenges us to eagerly bring many people from many nations, including youth and children, to her Shrine.

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 our Pilgrim Mother Coordinators and the members of their Circles.**

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.

¹ Heavenwards, Morning Prayer. Pgs 15, 17

Reading

The picture known to us under the title of the Mother Thrice Admirable, was placed in the Original Shrine in 1915. From then on it became the *picture of grace* now inseparably linked with the Shrine, the ideas and the mission of Schoenstatt.²

In an effort to promote Schoenstatt and the picture of grace, images of the Mother Thrice Admirable were enthroned in churches; chapels and wayside shrines from 1919 onwards.

From 1943 onwards it became internationally widespread through the building of Daughter Shrines and Home Shrines. Today the picture of grace is welcomed in by many in the portable form of the *Pilgrim Shrine*, Schoenstatt's most popular apostolate to date.³

The Pilgrim Mother is an apostolate within the International Schoenstatt Movement.⁴ It is the unique portable Shrine which can easily be carried from place to place to bring the blessings of the Shrine to many people.⁵

It originated in Brazil, in the Holy Year of 1950 by Servant of God Deacon John Pozzobon, a Schoenstatt member. He began to visit families with this image, promoting the rosary and literally took the words of Schoenstatt's founder, Fr Joseph Kentenich, to heart: *Take the picture of the Blessed Mother and give it a place of honour in your home. Your home will then become a little Shrine in which the picture of grace will mediate*

² Meditations on the Schoenstatt Shrine; pg 9 (adaptations)

³ Article: Aspects of Schoenstatt's Marian Spirituality; J Niehaus (adaptations)

⁴ Brochure What Is Schoenstatt?

⁵ 200 Questions About Schoenstatt; J Niehaus; No. 66

many graces; create a holy family atmosphere and form holy family members.

It blossomed into a full-scale apostolate when twenty-five Pilgrim Shrines were commissioned for Argentina in 1984. Two years later in 1986, the apostolate began in Australia.

Millions of people throughout the world welcome the Pilgrim Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt into their homes, parishes, workplaces, schools, youth and university groups, hospitals, prisons and wherever she is invited. It fosters prayer, evangelization, and allows the Mother Thrice Admirable to bring the three pilgrim graces of a home, transformation and mission zeal to all she encounters. Above all, it strengthens a personal relationship with the Blessed Mother and her Son, Jesus. ⁶

'When my turn to host our Pilgrim Mother came around, I took her to my parent's house. My family is not as involved in Schoenstatt as I am, except my brother, but they were still glad to have me bring home the Pilgrim Mother and set up a temporary little 'Home Shrine' in our living room. We prayed the rosary together as a family in the presence of Our Lady's picture, and she prayed with us. Sometimes I know Our Lady must be smiling!' ⁷

*Mary, Mother of God, in your picture of grace you reveal yourself as the **Thrice Admirable Mother!** You are Mother of God, Mother of the Redeemer but also our Mother. Your eyes follow me with*

⁶ Brochure What Is Schoenstatt? (adaptations)

⁷ L.S. USA; Pure Life; www.schoenstatt.de

kindness and love. You seek me wherever I am and wherever I may go. You see me in my joy and sorrow. You watch me when I follow God's ways, stand at crossroads, struggle or fall. You see the people I bear in my heart but also my distress and tears.

*I look up to you as **Thrice Admirable Queen**. The radiance which surrounds you points to your Queenship. Your eyes, O Queen, ask for my contributions to your Capital of Grace. Be the **Thrice Admirable Victress!** I ask you, be the Victress in my heart. With your love, conquer all that is contrary to God there. Also be the Victress in all the battles of God which must be fought in this world.*

Pause

Prayer

Father, we believe that you are with us 'from heaven' as you promised. Go with us into the next one hundred years of our history. We thank you for the Covenant of Love in its width through the Pilgrim Mother Apostolate. Countless souls welcome our Mother Thrice Admirable in the picture of grace. Through this apostolate may many hearts be drawn to the Covenant of Love and thus pave the way for the new evangelization for our time.

Pray the Second Joyful Mystery – The Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth

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.⁸

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?

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

⁸ Heavenwards; prayers by J Kentenich; Schoenstatt Office; Lauds pg. 49

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.