

Schoenstatt Movement Australia

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1. Covenant Day Message

Family, be what you are: Domestic Church

Dear Schoenstatt Family and Friends,

Greetings and blessings for this Covenant day – 18th April. Once again we unite as Schoenstatt Family here in Australia and also as part of our international Schoenstatt Family to renew our Covenant of Love which Father Kentenich and the small group of boys first made with our Blessed Mother on the 18th October 1914.

As many of us are still not able to go to the shrine on this day to renew our Covenant of Love, we do so in our homes - in our Home Shrines. These sacred spaces have become even more important to us during this past year with the impact of the restrictions imposed because of COVID-19.

In a talk in 1966, Father Kentenich spoke about the Home Shrine and its importance as a sacred space for families. In this year when we are looking at the importance of the family as the domestic Church, with its centre being the home shrine, I think these words of Father Kentenich are particularly apt at this time: He said:



“...the home shrine – is it not something that reaches quite deeply into the supernatural world? The talk of a worldly world means a world that no longer wants to have anything to do with the supernatural reality. And that is the great mission and task we must fulfil as Schoenstatt children. In this worldly world in which everything is profane and permeated and penetrated by the worldly, in the midst of such a world, what does it mean to live in a “sacred space”?

To live in a world that is thoroughly penetrated by the divine..... What is at stake here is the fact that in the midst of a worldly world we need a sacred space, and in a sacred space we need a sacred atmosphere. But [the daughter shrine] is not enough. Divine Providence – and Our Lady’s guidance in the covenant – knows of today’s dangers in a secularized world, a profane world, an unholy world with such a pagan atmosphere!

We therefore have the fruit of the home shrines. What does it mean? If the starting point for renewing a shaken social order is and must be its nucleus – the family – then of course everything depends on the family being able to grow completely into the supernatural world. So that this can take place more easily there is not only the daughter shrine, but also the home shrine. The home shrine! One room in our home wants to be seen above all others as a shrine. And the deeper reason for this: We who must constantly go out into the profane, unholy atmosphere need a sacred atmosphere.

As social beings we are greatly formed by our surroundings. Therefore – and we want to remember this: What a great sign it is from the Blessed Mother that she has shown her loyalty to us by inspiring, encouraging, indeed almost forcing us via the shrine to take the sacred atmosphere with us into our homes! To take it just a little step farther – you will probably understand this quite well: The Original Shrine, daughter shrine, and home shrine ultimately want to see to it that we ourselves become living “churches of St. Mary”, living churches of the Blessed Trinity!”

(Talk on April 24, 1966 to the Schoenstatt Mothers’ and Women’s Leagues of Bavaria)

United in Covenant loyalty,

Shirley Hall



2. Anzac Spirit / Covenant Spirit – A Reflection

As we are all aware, Anzac Day, April 25, is one of Australia's most important national occasions. It marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War. We can say that the Anzac spirit is one of mateship – of unity and solidarity with each other.

If we look at Anzac Day under this aspect, I believe that we can make a comparison with the spirit of our Covenant spirituality. We make our Covenant of Love not only with our Blessed Mother and through her the Heavenly Father, but at the same time we make our Covenant of Love with Fr. Kentenich and all those who have made the covenant before us and those who will make it in the future. So we become part of a great family – the Schoenstatt Family – united in a spirit of solidarity with each other.

And, just as our Australian National Family wants to unite its citizens in a spirit of unity and solidarity, and our own families support each other, look out for each other and pray for each other, so too, in our Schoenstatt Family, through our Covenant of Love, we should also experience this same sense of solidarity, of unity with and for each other. In our Covenant spirituality, we pray for each other, support each other and offer our contributions to Our Lady's Capital of Grace for each other as well as for ourselves and our families.

Perhaps in this spirit of solidarity and unity, we might pray especially at this time for all those of our Schoenstatt family who are sick or have family members who are sick.



3. The Ascension of the Lord – 16th May



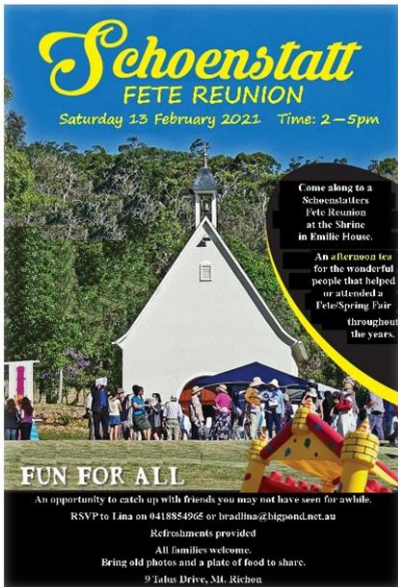
Jesus showed himself to the Eleven, and said to them, “Go out to the whole world, proclaim the Good News to all creation. ...(Mark 16:15)

Just as the Apostles were given a mission by Jesus, so too, we have been asked to be apostolic and share in this mission. Father Kentenich said:
“Whoever has been given a mission must carry it out. Whoever has been given a mission must be faithful to it and do it justice.

If we carry out our mission with faith and love, the Family will become a blessing with us and through us for countless people”. (JK 31.5.1949)



4. Fete Reunion - Mount Richon, WA



A wonderful afternoon at the Mount Richon Shrine brought together many of our members to celebrate and reconnect. There were those who are still active in attending meetings and those who remain connected through the Covenant of Love and their love for the Blessed Mother, the Shrine and Fr. Kentenich.

Organised by Lina for February 13, this reunion of all who have helped organise and run Fetes or “Spring Fairs” or assisted in fundraisers over many years, was a great success.

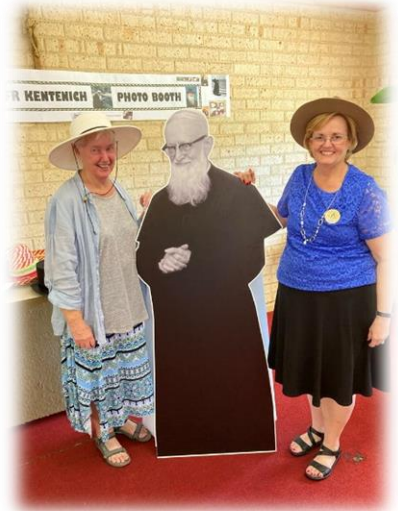
The event was very well attended and there was a lot of sharing of happy reminiscences.

The display boards of major events brought back memories and showed all the great things that have been achieved.

The photo booth with Fr Kentenich was a lot of fun.

So too was the chocolate wheel which kept spinning and giving all afternoon.

Thanks so much to all the organisers for this special event. More photos: www.schoenstattwa.org.au



5. Good Friday at our Shrines

Mt Richon Shrine, WA

The Stations of the Cross at 10.00 am on Good Friday, April 2 was an event many were looking forward to, as we can now safely gather after the Covid restrictions last year. A number of small Working Bee groups were held by Movement members, St Francis Xavier parishioners and volunteers to prepare the grounds, safely clear the paths and even to re-paint the crosses for the event.

Early in the morning small groups of pilgrims came to privately pray the Stations of the Cross on our grounds and to pray in the Shrine, appropriately decorated to reflect Good Friday with a crucifix placed in the middle and five lights to symbolise Our Lord's five wounds. Thanks to Movement member Peter de San Miguel's organisation, parishioners and pilgrims alike could register on the Safe WA app or write down their contact details at our gate, and the arrival and traffic flow went smoothly.

Before the Shrine people gathered to receive booklets and we sisters took this opportunity to greet and welcome them. It was wonderful to see so many families, parents with not only small children but with teenagers as well, along with grandparents. Deacon Patrick Moore led us into a short prayer at the Shrine forecourt, followed by an appropriate song by Vicki as she played the guitar. The crowd of around 150 persons then made their way towards the First Station.



The tableau of each Station was enacted by Youth Building Community, the youth group and parishioners of St Francis Xavier parish, Hilbert. The readers were also parishioners. At some of the stations, the youth group sang appropriate songs to help us continue our reflection of the scenes. Surprisingly, despite the rough track, ant bites and heat, the crowd maintained a very prayerful atmosphere as the stations were prayed for over an hour. At the final Station and blessing from Deacon Patrick, the crowds dispersed with many of the people making a prayerful visit to the Shrine before departure. Most of us felt very blessed indeed to be able to safely gather on this Good Friday for such an event.

Mulgoa, NSW

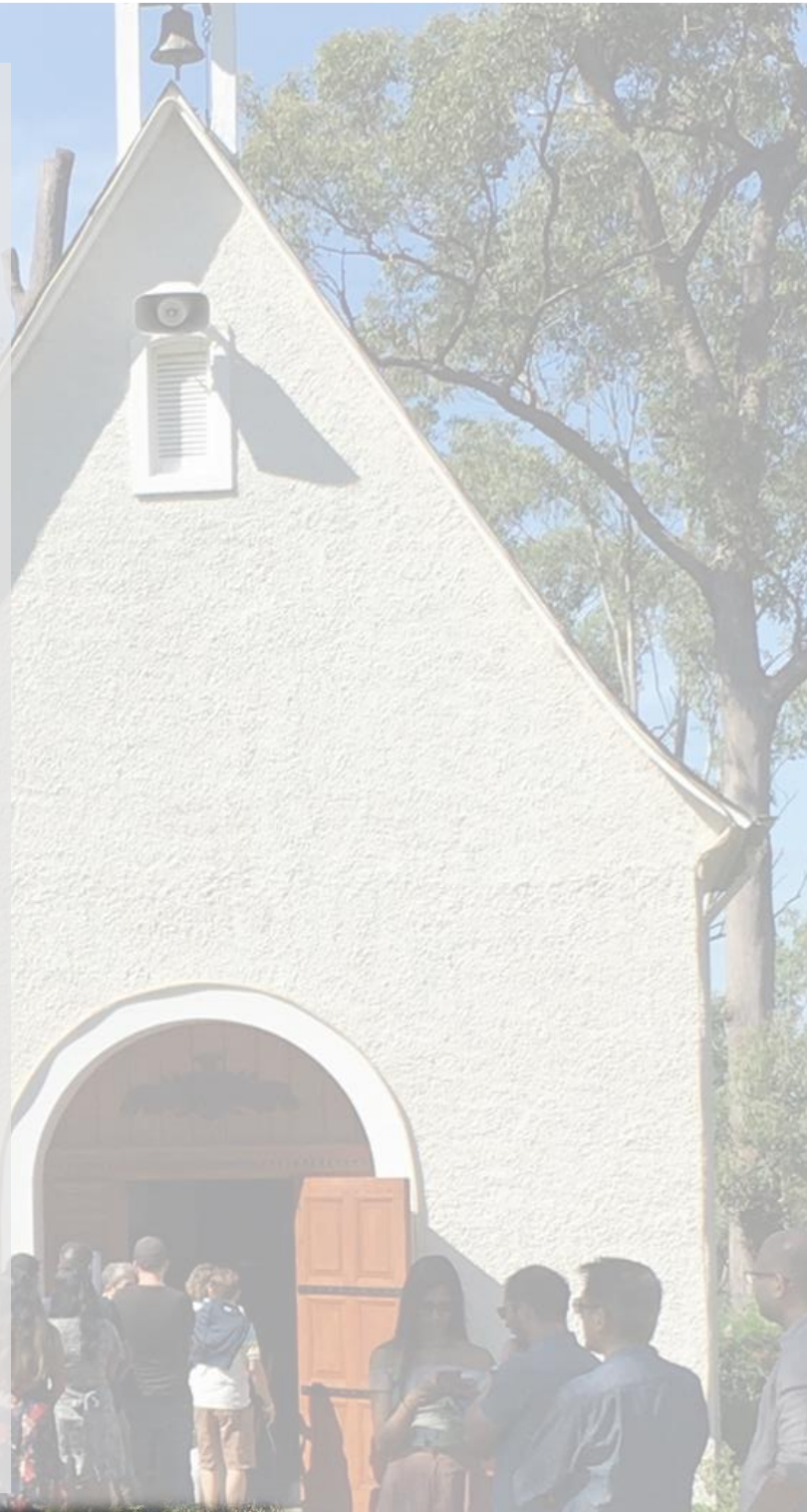
Good Friday is generally a day when hundreds and even thousands visit Mount Schoenstatt. Last year, due to the pandemic, Mount Schoenstatt was closed, and Good Friday and Easter were truly very quiet times. This year, due to difficulty in monitoring the numbers of visitors and complying with all the necessary restrictions we again cancelled the 'public' praying of the Stations of the Cross but invited people, if they wished to pray in small groups or alone.



It was astounding to experience the number of people and groups who made use of this opportunity to join with Jesus on his way of the Cross and to thank him for his great love for us. Some had downloaded the text of the Stations of the Cross with Mary, which had been posted on the Website. Many families with young children also joined in this time of prayer. As there was almost a continual stream of groups praying, each group waited in silence as the group before them moved from one Station to the next. It was a beautiful testimony to the faith of the people.

The doors of the Shrine were also open for people to pray outside or in a small space inside as they wrote petitions and prayers of thanksgiving. The patience with which the people waited for their turn in the Shrine was truly uplifting. Checking in with the QR code was accepted as mandatory and in general there was a prayerful atmosphere around the Shrine and along the Stations of the Cross.

We thank God and the Blessed Mother that in this way, many were able to enter into the spirit of Good Friday as they prepared for the Resurrection of Our Lord, the great feast of our liturgical year which brings hope to our troubled world.



6. Schoenstatt's National Central Committee

You may be interested in a recent development in the coordination of our Schoenstatt Movement in Australia.

Already in 1982, a body was set up to be a channel for information and coordination of our Australian Schoenstatt Family. Because of the distances in our vast country the members of this body have, over the years, been people who lived in Sydney. The Schoenstatt Fathers and Sisters who worked in the other States (WA, VIC & QLD) provided information about the projects and developments which took place there.

Last month, thanks to the development in technology and our use of it during the past year of pandemic, this body, now known as the National Central Committee (NCC) met via Zoom for the first time with representatives from WA, QLD, VIC and NSW.

The purpose of the NCC is to provide for the spiritual formation and education of the Schoenstatt League Communities and enables it to work in the apostolate. It takes into account that “the education and inspiration in the spirit of Schoenstatt’s spirituality is the responsibility of

each individual branch of the League” (International Statutes for the Schoenstatt Movement) but, when asked for, gives support and inspiration to the individual Schoenstatt League communities (Families, Men, Mothers, Single Women, Youth, Pilgrim Mother Apostolate etc.).

The NCC also has the task to inspire and coordinate apostolic projects and undertakings if they involve more than one diocese or State – the autonomy of each diocese or State is respected but if more than one State is involved then it helps with the inspiration and coordination; it cares for spiritual trends and takes up and promotes existing vital impulses; supports the interests, goals, and initiatives of the State Coordinating Teams (see below) and carries out events of the whole Apostolic Movement on a national level. The latter is normally the annual National Movement Conference where it offers spiritual input and agrees on a fitting and ‘timely’ theme which can inspire and direct our apostolic endeavours for the coming year. This year the motto is “Domestic Church – Be what you are”.



The present members of the NCC are:

WA: Terry Huxtable and Ida Stokes

VIC: Karin Southgate and Florida Nugara

QLD: Paul Webb

NSW: Fr. Terry Bell, Shirley Hall, Michael King, Angela Benson, Sr. M. Isabell and Sr. M. Elizabeth



If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact any of the above.

The State Coordinating Teams

These teams, in WA and NSW, have representatives from each of the Schoenstatt League Communities (Families, Men, Mothers, Single Women) and the Pilgrim Mother Apostolate. In VIC, the State Coordinating Team has elected representatives (owing to the fact that it is an incorporated body) from the Mothers League Community and the PMA (the other communities do not yet exist in VIC).

Each State Team usually meets about three times a year to share the life, initiatives and life-streams in the various communities. Since our movement is so small in Australia these teams rely on sub-committees to help organise functions for the Schoenstatt Family in their respective States. This year we are trialling a national approach to the celebration of Covenant Sundays. See the YouTube Channel Schoenstatt Australia for presentations prepared for these Covenant Sundays.



7. Information and Links

- **Note:** Responses to the survey for the Pentecost Congress 2022 **are due by April 18.** (See previous communication of April 7.)

- **Shrine Opening Hours:**

Please check the websites for updated opening times of the Shrine.

Mulgoa Shrine, NSW - **Opening times have changed.** (<https://schoenstatt.org.au>)

Mt Richon / Armadale Shrine, WA (<https://schoenstattwa.org.au>)

The Kew Shrine, Melbourne, VIC is open for individual visits from 7am – 5pm daily.

- **Covenant Days in 2021**

To enable as many people as possible to participate in the renewal of the Covenant each month, a video (**see link below**) will be made for each Covenant Sunday covering a theme connected with our motto for the year: **Family, be what you are – Domestic Church.**

- **Links:**

Official Schoenstatt Website

<http://www.schoenstatt.com>

Schoenstatt Australian Website

<http://www.schoenstatt.org.au>

Schoenstatt Australia YouTube Channel

Video for April Covenant Sunday may be viewed on:

www.youtube.com/schoenstattaustralia

Recent videos on the Channel:

Stations of the Cross at Mount Schoenstatt

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgsGAmDfIUg>

**Video for March Covenant Sunday – Family – participating in the mission of Church
– priest, prophet, king.**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_N2sTCpaW9Y

Video for February Covenant Sunday – Centre place of the Domestic Church - the Home Shrine

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bt7d1-5jRj8&t=3s>

Video for January Covenant Sunday - The Family- Church in Miniature

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qb4rpUPIF4o&t=124s>

The Sisters singing the consecration prayer may be viewed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O29tXet2DQQ>

- **Contributions to the Newsletter are welcome.**

Please send to movtoffice@schoenstatt.org.au before the beginning of each month.

