

JUNE 2022 – THIRD STATION OF NINE MONTHLY (CAMINO -NOVENA) MEDITATIVE SHORT WALKS

The full 'Camino Walk' at Mt Schoenstatt will take place on Sunday 4th December, 2022. To build spiritual appreciation and understanding for that journey there is a monthly focus on one spiritual site involving a short walk, and meditation on an object in the Shrine. For June we will meet at the 3rd station which is the **Fr. Kentenich Statue**.

FR. JOSEPH KENTENICH – FOUNDER of the SCHOENSTATT MOVEMENT:



To try and condense the life of this immense influencer of lay spirituality and promoter of understanding of, Jesus' Mother as Model and Educator is something that cannot be done in a couple of paragraphs. He has written many books with the intent of helping people see Mary as more than someone to be devoted to or as an intercessor. His firm belief that Mary was his Mother and Educator totally influenced his own life and this is his wish for us. He saw Mary as having been with him from his childhood when his mother took him to the orphanage and dedicated him to her, right through to his dying day – in fact every one of his days was seen by him as lead by her, and him fulfilling her wishes despite being locked in a bunker by the Gestapo, sent to prison in Dachau Concentration Camp, and exiled to a foreign country waiting for Mary's and the Holy Spirit's will for him and the Schoenstatt Movement to be fulfilled.

So what do we see when we stand in front of Fr. Kentenich in the form of a statue in the shadow of the Shrine? Do we see it as just a statue - which it will remain if we do not come to know him as father and founder? Can we accept his mission and make a Covenant of Love with Mary and then commit to take it seriously? Finally can this statue itself become for us an encounter with Father Kentenich? Fr. John Evans whose story follows was one who firmly believed that following Fr. Kentenich was the right path, seeing with his eyes; walking with his feet, his hands; thinking with his mind and listening with his ears.

FATHER JOHN EVANS – AUSTRALIAN SCHOENSTATT FATHER:



Fr. John Evans was born on the 31st October 1932, the last child of seven, in Melbourne, Victoria. Little can be said of his childhood except that he grew up in a very religious atmosphere with his mother being a lay apostate in the Pallotine movement in which Fr. Evans eventually became a priest. Even when Fr. John felt that his calling was completely to the Schoenstatt Movement, she was his greatest support, understanding that Schoenstatt had become the love of his life and she understood that he had given all his love and life to it. Fr. Evans' love of Schoenstatt came to him through "an honest search for direction and meaning in (his) own vocation". He became a member of the Schoenstatt Movement in 1951 and a Schoenstatt Father in 1966. His priestly life was mainly spent at the Shrine in Kew, the Kimberley's, the Mother Shrine in Germany where he did his studies, Mulgoa and Warragamba as their parish priest. He had great admiration for the students and novices who strove to put together the MTA picture for the Melbourne Shrine pictured above. From his own words we hear that the handmade light frame with the words "Servus Mariae Nunquam Peribit" was done in their own time often at night with second hand materials. The letter sent to Fr. Evans by Fr. Kentenich on the eve of the opening of the Melbourne Shrine is recognised as the "Founding Document for Schoenstatt in Australia". In Mt Druitt, along with Fr. Boes whom we met last month, Fr. Evans was very involved in the planning and building of the Mulgoa Shrine and was present In September 1967 when the turning of the soil took place and the 19th October, at the private "laying of the Foundation Stone" by the Schoenstatt Family.

In later life Fr. Evans fostered love for the "Father Statue" we have here today. Visitors from Australia to Chile were inspired by the Father statues they had seen in South America so one was considered for Mount Schoenstatt, Mulgoa to help more people have a closer encounter with Father Kentenich. The idea of erecting one was discussed at the October Conference 2000, and though costly, was taken up by the Schoenstatt family. At a meeting with Fr. Kentenich, Sister Aloise had one asked him when he would come to Australia? His answer was, "I will come from heaven". The more we can encourage people to share in his mission, the more we will now encounter him here with us, together with Our Blessed Mother, "in the shadow of the shrine". More on Fr. Kentenich next month.....

We return now to the Shrine for some reflection on the 'Picture of Mary' and its frame .

IN THE SHRINE: As you complete the Third Station in preparation for the full Camino, you now come before the Blessed Sacrament in the Shrine again. Quietly sit before the Lord and share with Him your heart's deepest longings.



As you open your eyes or become more aware of your surroundings, you see the picture of the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt. Your eyes meet hers. First, sit in silence and speak to your Mother.

We then reflect:

Mary is the swiftest, shortest and surest way to a vibrant relationship with Christ and an enthusiastic love for the Father.

As Mother Thrice Admirable she is:

- Admirable as Mother of God, Mother of the Redeemer and Mother of the redeemed;
- Admirable in her power, in her kindness, and in her faithfulness;
- Admirable as daughter of the Father, Mother and bride of the Eternal Word and vessel and shrine of the Holy Spirit.
- Admirable in her faith, hope and love.

The words **“Servus, Mariae, Nunquam, Peribit”** which we see placed around the frame of the picture tell us that **“A servant of Mary will never perish”**, so together we can say:

With heartfelt love, I thank you Mother dear with you to guide me I need have no fear.
When all around seems dark and drear and gray, you stand as beacon for a brighter day.
Your smile illumines every wakeful hour, you do uphold me with your gentle power.
Thanks, a thousand thanks to you, to God shall be now and for all eternity.

With confidence we dare to say:

I trust your might your kindness, Mother dear, I do believe that you are always near.
Whatever happens, Mother mild, I blindly trust in you and in your child.
You know the way for me you know the time, into your hands I trustingly place mine.
Your plan is perfect born of perfect love, you know the way for me, that is enough.

Therefore I ask:

Let me walk like you through life, let me mirror you forever, strong and noble, meek and mild, peace and love be my endeavour. Walk in me through our world to help me make it ready for the Lord. Amen.

Thank you for joining us today. The 4th Station in July will focus on Fr. Kentenich the founder of the Schoenstatt Movement and his spiritual writings on the ‘Stations of the Cross’ which are depicted on the path behind the Shrine, together with personal stories of this path from members of the Movement. The object(s) in the Shrine for meditation will be the St Peter and St Paul statues either side of the tabernacle.

Can't make it each month? You can follow this **‘Camino Novena’** at schoenstatt.org.au or on Facebook, search: **Mt Schoenstatt Shrine & Retreat Centre, Mulgoa**