

Schoenstatt Movement

Australia

July 18 2023

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1. Covenant Day Message

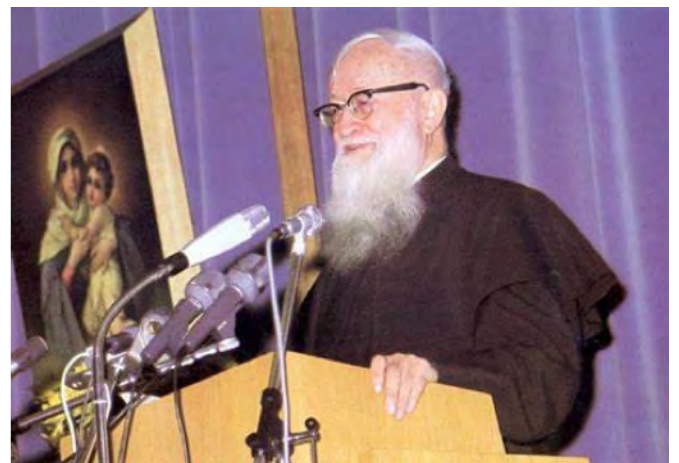
Dear Schoenstatt Family and Friends,

I wish you many blessings on this July Covenant Day. As you know, our national motto for this year focuses on aspects of our father's life that can be seen as a letter of recommendation from God to us. We know that for our father, two important aspects of his life and mission were to share with others his great love for Our Blessed Mother and his strong belief in Divine Providence.

The following is a glowing testimony to Father Kentenich's great trust in the power of the Blessed Mother to always lead her Schoenstatt Family in all situations. These words were spoken at the end of the 1951 October Conference. Father Kentenich knew at this time that he would be leaving Germany only three days later for Switzerland and then Rome, where the decision would be made that he would spend the coming years in Milwaukee. Aware of the gravity of the moment, Father Kentenich spoke these words of faith and trust and encouragement in this "swan song" leading into uncertain times.

"Truly, the Blessed Mother has always remained faithful to our Family. Over the years she has proven herself unshakable in her loyalty to the covenant of love which she sealed in 1914 with this simple piece of land (the Original Shrine) and with the persons who were present here as our representatives. It is only in this way that we can explain how this unassuming place and these unassuming instruments who represented us all could become such a great and worldwide work.

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How often have we recalled the insignificance and inadequacy of the instruments! We are these instruments. We are proud of our smallness, our insignificance. It serves to make the fame of Our Lady shine into the world of today even more brightly and gloriously through our work.

How often have we used the image of little David and the giant Goliath. The sling which we take into our hand and have taken into our hand so often in the past, is on the one hand the acknowledgement of our powerlessness and on the other hand the proclamation of our boundless trust in the power, greatness, and kindness of the Blessed among women. From the beginning it has been my personal approach, an approach which has proven itself in every situation, that the greater the battles became, the more naively and unaffectedly I proclaimed the Blessed Mother out of my deep faith in the genuineness, the power, and the fruitfulness of our mutual covenant of love. Loyalty for loyalty!We acknowledge once more how helpless we are as a family against the powerful foes. But then a great, genuine, warm emotion pours forth from our souls: Clarifica te! Glorify yourself, yes, glorify yourself, Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt, glorify yourself in your work!

From all eternity—so we believe—Divine Providence has planned that Schoenstatt become a monument of your might, your kindness, and your wisdom. This is the only way we can explain the previous growth of our family, the only way we can explain the family itself, the only way we can explain the individual history of our own souls, the history of each of the secular institutes—out of the conviction that in all of this the Blessed Mother wishes to erect for herself a monument, an unprecedented monument of her might, her kindness, and her wisdom, so that she can thus shine forth on the horizon of our day and age.

"Do not worry about the fulfillment of your desire! Ego diligentes me diligo! I love those who love me!" That is what Our Lady says to us in the Founding Document...

Ego diligentes me perfecte diligo! I love those who love me perfectly!

How did Vincent Pallotti put it? How do we put it? We may be outdone in everything else, but there is one point in which we refuse to be outdone—in love, in gratitude, in total surrender to our Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt! No one may outdo us in our instrumentality, our all-embracing character as her instruments!

Fr. J. Kantenich "Schoenstatt's Instrument Spirituality" 19 October, 1951 (Extracts from P.195–201)

May our Mother Thrice Admirable be with each of us today and throughout this coming month. May we have the courage to live in Covenant loyalty with Our Blessed Mother, so that Schoenstatt may continue to grow and flourish here in Australia.

United in Covenant loyalty,

Shirley Hall

2. Walk with Christ 2023

On June 11th, we commemorated the Solemnity of the Holy Body and Blood of Christ. It was a glorious, crisp, and cloudless winter day. Our group of Schoenstatt pilgrims arrived in the city carrying our MTA banner and behind us the large MTA Pilgrim Shrine carried by two of the pilgrims.

We followed the Eucharistic procession as it progressed down Pitt Street through the beautiful city of Sydney and the towering buildings surrounding us. We prayed the Holy Rosary, Litany and Petition prayers and sang. We had come to pray for each other, for our families, the people of Sydney and the world. Fr McCaughan told the crowds, "We walk with Christ today because he is the way, he is the truth, he is the life, and he is the presence of God's total, undivided, complete and utter love for us and for the world." (Catholic Weekly 18 June 2023). For us, we walked joyfully to proclaim and witness to our faith and give our 'yes' to Christ. It was a great way to deepen our encounter with Jesus.



When we arrived at the forecourt of St Marys Cathedral, the crowd knelt and bowed down in reverent prayer. All was silence and adoration. It was such a great sight of proclamation and a feeling of closeness to God. In his homily Archbishop Fisher said, "Sometimes only words can communicate the message. Sometime actions speak louder." He added ..." truth, goodness and the beauty of the Gospel are told in silent adoration but also in actions like this Eucharistic procession."

One pilgrim commented 'I saw you carrying the banner together with the sisters from Mulgoa....It was amazing to see so many people from everywhere walking with Christ'.

Another reflection:" it was a beautiful experience, walking and at same time praying and reflecting on the mysteries of the Holy Rosary, and the thousands of people who joined the walk, young and old alike. I especially applaud those in wheelchairs and with walking frames and walking sticks who made it from Martin Place to St Mary's Cathedral. " The Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction by Archbishop Fisher was a solemn end to the day. My friends and I didn't mind our aching feet and legs as we all felt blessed. Looking forward to joining again next year." Edna Aldana.



Photo by Giovanni Portelli/The Catholic Weekly



3. Family Weekend

Friday - Sunday 23 - 25 June 2023

The weekend retreat for families began on Friday with dinner and then a welcome in the house chapel room. The ice-breaker activity was a great opportunity to meet families. We worked in four team categories: Mothers, Fathers, Children and Young Adults. We were presented with the challenge of constructing as a team the highest structure using marshmallows and uncooked spaghetti straws!



The dads built a rock-solid structure based on a proven engineering concept of connecting multiple triangles. The mum's had a flexible structure with an antennae like extension which could be held up to obtain maximum height.



The young adults developed a promising design using triangular supports as the base foundation. The children contributed to their team with much enthusiasm and came up with an impressive design.



But the stability of the dad's structure won hands down. We learnt about friendship and listening and working together and the strength of three-sided triangles, a visual image of the strength and wisdom of the Trinity – a secure base for each person if we are grounded in God's love.

On Saturday we were immersed in the theme: Covenant.

Fr Pawel treated us to a rich presentation and clear explanation of the history of covenant between God and his people. God has always been faithful, but as his people we have not.

Moving through the Old Testament to the New, Fr Pawel highlighted God's plan for Salvation through Covenant: from Adam and Eve, and through Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Ezekial, and Hosea and looking at God's Law from the perspective of God – His Love for Us!



Bringing us then to the new Covenant in the person of Jesus Christ – Our Saviour and Redeemer. John 15:10–17 highlights God’s plan for us to be deeply rooted in Christ and live his human example of: Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends. To imitate him and respond to God’s invitation, you did not choose me, I chose you to be fruitful, to bear fruit that will last!

Fr Pawel then drew our attention to the importance of Baptism as a Covenant and incorporation into the Body of Christ, the holy church. For by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body. We were recommended to read the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) or listen to the amazing podcasts of Fr. Mike Schmitz – CCC in a year.

Marriage is a solemn Covenant and Fr Pawel explained that this grace proper to the Sacrament of Matrimony is intended to perfect the couple’s love and to strengthen their indissoluble unity; Grace to help one another to obtain holiness in their married life and in welcoming and educating their children. CCC 1601, 1617, 1641. https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P50.HTM Sr Elizabeth enlightened our understanding of the Covenant of Love with Mary who is our model. Mary who lived the covenant with God most perfectly is our surest and quickest way to Christ.

Using the video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_9SA8QqC6oU together we explored the striving to live covenant as a renewal and deepening of our Baptismal promise, a means to become more like Mary who will help us to be more Christ like. The Blessed Mother is the permanent helpmate and associate of Christ in the entire work of redemption: LOVE.

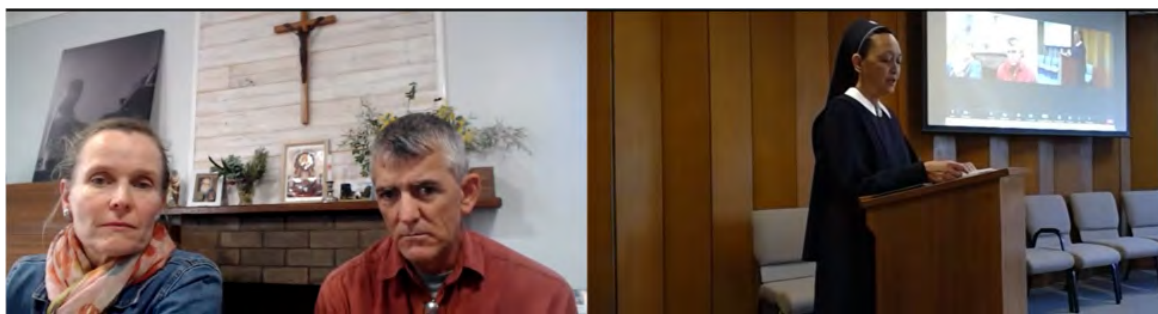
Experiences in Living the covenant of love were shared by Fiona and Paul Webb, Carol and Ted Maslak and Sr Rebecca.

It was valuable to hear three different perspectives and lived experiences of the Covenant of Love in our vocations – two in family life and one in religious life. Holiness lies in joyful surrender in the ordinary things and circumstances of our life and our efforts to form and grow. The grace of Apostolic Zeal as it is experienced in the covenant of love was witnessed to in three different experiences of the speakers.

The Maslak Family experience and desire to enter the Covenant of Love in December 2009 was founded through the experience and example of people who gave heroic witness to faith and love of the Blessed Mother. Sharing that Sr M. Henriette (Sister of Mary), Nancy Green (Schoenstatt Women’s League) and their mothers Joan Sattler and Katarina Maslak who were a personal message, an icon of living the Covenant of Love and being accepting of transformation through suffering and grace. Through them others experienced in a tangible way:

That with LOVE the value of the human person is special
With CHRIST and LOVE the human person is a treasure of supreme value
With GRACE we become a CHILD of GOD and transformed into BEATITUDE
To find our HOME in the HEART of CHRIST

The Webb Family through their experience of making the Covenant in 1998 and then strengthening their commitment in the Blank Cheque offering to Our Lady in 2004 they were “inspired to learn, live and share God’s plan for marriage, family and life.” Listening to them, we were impressed at their intentional living of the covenant within the family and being an example to their children.



“Daily consecration (many times on some days), daily scripture and/or spiritual reading, unique for each day, person or family... each day is a step on a staircase... making the covenant engages Our Mother in making sure the staircase is a “Stairway to Heaven” ... daily renewal ensures we are taking steps daily ... in the right direction. They shared how this had influenced the formation of their children into young adults now choosing their path in life listening to the call of God. Paul and Fiona emphasised the importance of working with and contributing to your parish.

Sr Rebecca’s talk witnessed to the experience of grace through the hands of Our Blessed Mother from the prayers and contributions of others to the Capital of Grace. Her experience of personal impossible health challenges allowed an experience of the care of the Blessed Mother, the charity of others, being placed in situations where health care workers could come to her for advice and consolation, and the healing hand of God Our Father to whom nothing is impossible.

Saturday Night was Family Fun Full on! A lively bush dance called and instructed by Jane Toutounji. Then a bonfire and toasting marshmallows before night prayer together in the house chapel room.

A big thank you goes to Jane and Bernard for organising all the activities. Especially the children’s program. The children’s activities paralleled the covenant themes parents were learning, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, and his Blessed mother. The family team recreation events were a blast of energy. Thank you to the volunteer children’s supervisors who made this possible. They were dedicated, established genuine rapport with each child and knew how to consistently set safe limits for the children. This made the weekend beneficial for the parents.



A big word of appreciation is extended to the cooks and staff. The food was generous and well prepared. Many thanks for the beautiful Sunday Lunch and afternoon tea.





In response to the session on Practical ways to live the reality of the covenant of Love, the Fernades Family submitted this picture of their special May Blossoms home shrine contributions to Our Lady.

The pebbles and sticks represent their contributions to the Capital of Grace... Nothing Without You Nothing Without Us!

Finally, our thanks go to our Mother Thrice Admirable who continues to bless and guide our families. We were able to bring our thanksgiving and our contributions to the Capital of Grace to her in the Shrine at the end of our weekend which had proved to be a great blessing for each family.

Carol & Ted Maslak
Le & John Mallet



If you are interested in learning more about the Schoenstatt Family Branch and Family Groups contact families@schoenstatt.org.au

4. Contentment

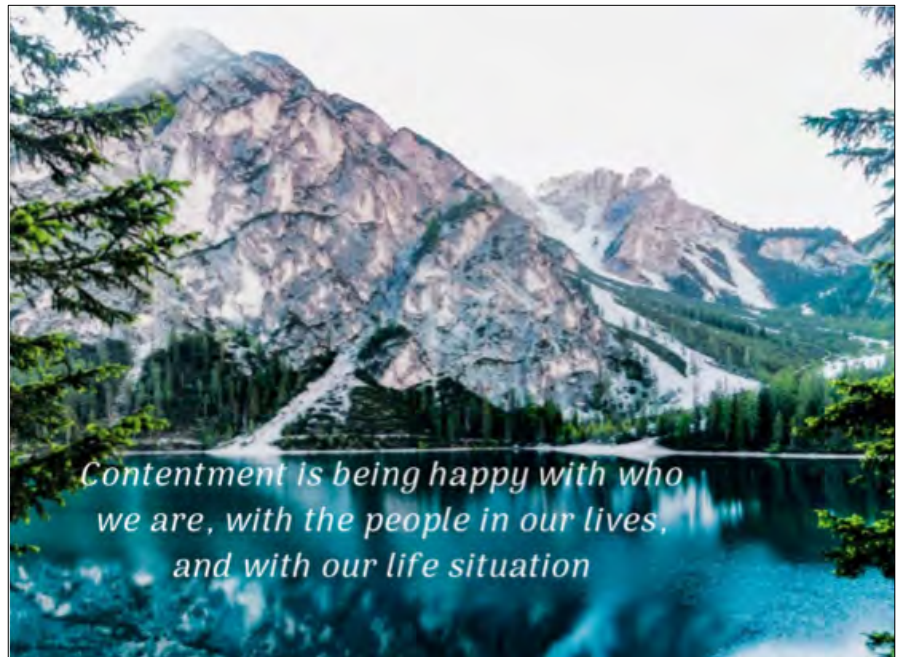
Means to attain it?

Every week there are many sources of nourishment for the faith if looked at with an open mind and believing that God's divine providence is guiding my life. Today for instance I was informed by the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Bible, particularly 1 Timothy 6:2-10, prayer from the Daily Office as well as my usual Schoenstatt prayers. How can such disparate sources all come to have a common theme particularly that of 'contentment'?

St Paul whom Timothy is quoting believes that contentment and godliness go hand in hand. To be content means I am grateful to God for who I am and what he has given me. It means I trust God to meet my needs in food and clothing and therefore I can focus more on others than myself. Because I have sufficient, I can give to others more needy than myself because I feel that God is caring for me. Faith in God's providence leads to genuine contentment.

The Catechism backs up this line of thinking in Paragraph 313, quoting Dame Julian of Norwich, who states, that because of the Lord, and her steady keeping of the faith, she is content that from this belief, comes the strength to take "my stand on and earnestly believe in what the Lord shewed in this time - that all manner (of) thing shall be well" (The Revelation of Divine Love Ch.32, 99-100).

One of the lines from the 'Morning Prayer' of the Divine Office today declares that God's "peaceful presence, giving strength, is everywhere" and when felt "fallen men may rise again on wings of prayer". It is this state that Fr Kentenich was talking about when he wrote in the morning prayer in 'Heavenwards' that led by God's wise plans we can achieve the ideals we believe God wants of us and they will shine brightly before us if we can achieve contentment knowing that we are doing it all in love and striving with all our strength to achieve them.



What many do not have in this life is a Personal Ideal (the conscious identification of what I believe is the reason why God created me - God's ideal of me - and therefore what I want to strive to achieve in this life). At the recent 'Women's Breakfast' held at Mulgoa, Elizabeth Le Breton pointed out many reasons why we might not be able to find one - Elizabeth called it the "best me". On her 'Wheel of Life' model she basically showed why we cannot achieve the contentment that recognising a Personal Ideal brings, because of a lack of health and wellbeing; relationship disturbance; career/business not being satisfying; not enough fun and recreation; spirituality and faith not up to scratch and personal development not being undertaken. It all adds up to an inability to be grateful for all the emotional and spiritual blessings

we are not aware of around us; an inner acceptance of the fact that God made me unique, and he loves me this way. This gives me such a feeling of contentment, of being happy and grateful for who I am.

When life gets out of kilter, never is there more of a need for it all to be examined i.e., using the particular examen. If I can name what is hindering my spiritual and mental wellbeing, I am already back on the path to finding contentment. Sr. Emilie suffered in many of the areas I have mentioned above particularly her health and wellbeing, and fun and recreation wouldn't have been high on her list either. Yet because of her ability to use the 'particular examen' she focussed on attributes of 'Mary' that she thought she could spiritually strive for. Those attributes I've mentioned before if put into a 'spiritual wheel of life' would mean I would examine how much:

I'm being aware of God's Providence in a day;
I feel I'm following God's lead rather than letting my wilful inner child rule the roost;
I am trusting in God's will as the best for me at this time;
How much courage do I have to go on;
How calm I am in the present time;
How much attention I'm devoting to prayer;
How apostolic am I being;
How much am I being a path to God?

Like areas on the 'Wheel of Life' which are all valid as contributors to contentment, Mary's (and Sr. Emilie's) attributes are necessary contributors to keeping the spiritual life in balance (content) as well as the psychological life we all lead as well.

One thing's for sure, true contentment is when I feel like I'm glowing like a brand on fire, ready to go out to the nations to give witness to redemption and I'm leading the people I associate with to the Triune God. (Heavenwards pg. 15). Angela

5. Information and Links

Shrine Opening Hours

Mulgoa Shrine, NSW. Open daily: 7am – 7.30pm

Mt Richon / Armadale Shrine, WA. Open daily 7am – 7pm.

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

Links

Official Schoenstatt Website	http://www.schoenstatt.com
Schoenstatt Australian Website	http://www.schoenstatt.org.au
Our YouTube Channel	www.youtube.com/schoenstattaustralia
Western Australia Website	http://schoenstattwa.org.au

Videos for Covenant Sundays

July	Fr. Kentenich, the Priest www.youtube.com/schoenstattaustralia
June	Documentary: Father Joseph Kentenich, A Prophetic Vision www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdTDGLtcJSU
May	31st May, 1949. Father's daring action: A Letter of Recommendation. www.youtube.com/schoenstattaustralia https://youtu.be/NFFWJqPgTj4
April	Gertraud von Bullion: A Letter of Recommendation https://youtu.be/AiyZytmileM

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 movtooffice@schoenstatt.org.au by the beginning of each month.