



1. Covenant Day Message

Walking Together, Loving the Church

Dear Schoenstatt Family and Friends,

"Let's reach out to each other"– This is the motto for the celebrations that will take place at the place of Schoenstatt's Third Milestone – the 31st May, 1949, in Bellavista Chile. Now 75 years later, the International Schoenstatt Family will commemorate this event, with the self-critical question of how much have we succeeded in contributing to the development of an organic way of thinking in relation to the mechanistic way of thinking diagnosed by Father Kentenich in the Church and society at that time.

Fr. Kentenich had characterized the inner meaning of May 31 as "standing in divine strength" or an act of heroic love. In this sense, the third milestone is an important reminder that the entire vigour of heroic faith shown on January 20 is not disconnected from a mission and a responsibility for the Church. That Fr. Kentenich was willing to risk everything for the well-being of the Church signals to his followers that they must love the Church, even heroically.

Because of May 31st and its consequences, Schoenstatt became more conscious of its calling to help build an organic Church, culture and society, where the natural and supernatural, faith and life, culture and religion, etc. are not separated but integrated.

(Extracts from "200 Questions about Schoenstatt", by Fr. Jonathan Niehaus)

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What meaning does the 31st of May 1949 have for Schoenstatt today and into the future?

In this Jubilee celebration we celebrate Mary's mission. She teaches us to follow Jesus Christ and to open our hearts to the Spirit who makes us

Church. It is an invitation to cultivate a vital current from our Shrines and with Mary, to commit ourselves to the transformation of the world through an encounter with Christ. We now want to understand the voice of God in our times. To do this, we must look both in the Church and outside the Church, to find more clearly what God is telling us and to discern what God is asking of us, today, from our Shrines. What are the doors that God is opening for us?

(Extracts from the 31st May website, Chile)

In constant union

I would like to include here a story told by Father Alex Menningen (1900–1994) to American pilgrims visiting Schoenstatt, Germany in 1980. (Fr. Menningen had originally been a student at the Pallottine College where Father Kentenich taught, and later became one of his most trusted confreres). I believe that it illustrates how much Father Kentenich lived in constant union with his Schoenstatt Family, and with the Holy Church....“Walking Together – Loving the Church”

"In May of 1951, Fr. Kentenich came to Rome to [appear] before the Holy Office. By this time the exile was a certainty; the only question was whether Father would leave voluntarily and retain the remote possibility of returning or be forced into his exile with no chance of return.

I was the only other member of the Schoenstatt family in Rome at the time. Fr. Kentenich came to my room in Casa Pallotti, sat on the bed, and related how Rome had put the alternatives before him. He then asked me, 'What are we going to do? I have never acted without consulting the Schoenstatt family, and you represent this family now.' Father prayed from Heavenwards and we offered ourselves anew to the Blessed Mother.

Father asked heaven, 'Do you wish to take this child from me?' He said, 'We must put Schoenstatt, like Isaac, on the altar.' 'I was not at all comforted and expressed the dangers: Schoenstatt could become extinct, or crippled and separated. Our conversation continued as I said, 'How can you agree to this?'

'Certainly, if God expects it.'

'But Father, if the sisters are dissolved, and our

other communities as well, we would not exist. It is not possible for me. If you do it, it is heroic. If I do it, it is heroic talking.'

At this point Father asked me sternly, 'Alex, do you go along?' He left and returned with a letter from one of the sisters, and asked again, 'Alex, do you go along?' With this he left me to my thoughts for the evening.

"By morning my choice was clear. I would remain with Fr. Kentenich. When I told Father, he said, 'Alex, we go now together.'

"We spent two days of silence and prayed together. Then, after Mass at the tomb of St. Vincent Pallotti, Fr. Kentenich said to me, 'I know what I must do. If they were to leave it up to me, I would never go, but if they say I must, I will go into exile.'

With these words Father accepted his exile."

In this new era of the Church, we too are asked: "Alex, do you go along?" We want to give our "yes" and make our contribution to the stream of life and graces which will bring about this healing and fruitfulness for the Church. (pp.152–153 , The 31st of May, The Third Milestone, Fr. Jonathan Niehaus)

This thought was also reiterated in the talk which Father gave to the 20 Schoenstatt Sisters present in the newly constructed Bellavista Shrine on 31st May, 1949 when said:

"Whoever has a mission must fulfil it, even if it leads into the darkest and deepest abyss, even when it requires one death leap after another. A prophet's mission always includes a prophet's fate."

May the spirit of the 31st May continue to inspire us as a Schoenstatt Family here in Australia as we too strive to live our mission and to love the Church as heroically as did Father Kentenich. May we continue walking together, united with our Blessed Mother, and with our father and founder in our Covenant of Love.

United in our Covenant,
Shirley Hall

2. A secret of happiness

(Sermon by Fr. Joseph Kentenich in St. Michael's Church, Milwaukee, 6th June 1965)

I would like to introduce my Pentecost sermon with a rule of life Cardinal Mercier wrote down shortly before he died:

I would like to reveal an important secret of holiness and happiness to you. If you manage to apply it, your life will be happy, and you will find consolation even amidst suffering and pain. It is this:

Try to control your imagination for five minutes a day. Close your eyes to all earthly things, close your ears to the noise of the world, in order to enter into your inner self, into the sanctuary of your baptised soul, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Speak to the divine guest dwelling there and say:

Holy Spirit, you are the soul of my soul. I adore you. Enlighten me, guide me, strengthen me, comfort me. Unveil your wishes to me, give me your orders. I promise to submit to all your demands, to accept what is to happen to me by your decree. Let me only recognise your will. Amen



If you manage to follow this advice, you will find that you will always receive grace in proportion to your trials and it will give you the strength to get through them. You will arrive at the gates of heaven laden with merit.

Such surrender to the Holy Spirit is the secret of holiness. If you want to become holy, you will become happy. If you do not strive for holiness, you will look in vain for true happiness here on earth and in eternity. Accept this rule of life; withdraw daily, even if only for five minutes.

At such times we should veil the pictures of our imagination and close the doors of our souls, in particular, the doors to our eyes and ears. We should gaze deeply into our own hearts in order to become aware that they are truly temples of the Holy Spirit. Let us then confront ourselves with the Holy Spirit, enter into a dialogue with him and say:

"Holy Spirit, you are the soul of my soul. I humbly adore you. Enlighten me, strengthen me, guide me, comfort me. Reveal your wishes to me as far as this is in accordance with the will of the Eternal Father. Show me what Eternal Love wants of me. Show me what I should do. Show me what I should humbly and thoughtfully accept, bear and endure. Holy Spirit, show me your will and the will of the Father, for I want my whole life to be nothing else than a continuous, and everlasting yes to the wishes, to the will of God, the Eternal Father."

If you try to do this, you will not only be cheerful and joyful, but you will also be happy even in the greatest difficulties and times of suffering. You can be sure that the measure of your suffering will never surpass the measure of grace. Whilst you master life bit by bit in this manner, you will one day reach the gates of eternity filled with an abundance of merit.

Why am I quoting this prayer and this rule of life today? It is most important for us to withdraw daily for five minutes and enter into dialogue with the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son. In explaining this rule of life and its

significance, I would like to point to two aspects we should concentrate on. They are:

1. Our souls are temples of the Holy Spirit.
2. The Holy Spirit is the soul of my soul.

1. Our souls are temples of the Holy Spirit

Our whole person is dedicated, consecrated to the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. We can only understand this truth in the light of faith. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit! When do we grieve him? When we forget him, when we forget to think of him, when we no longer seek him.

We know the example of the boy who wanted to be searched for. His friend was supposed to search for him, but he did not really try. When the boy realised what had happened, he cried and cried. His grandfather then explained that in a similar way God wants us to search for him, yet we often fail to do so. People search for money, for material things, but fail to seek the eternal God.

There is a book which contains a poem entitled, "You – You". it refers to a person who is utterly selfless and never uses the word, "I", but only "you". Only "you" exist, ultimately only the eternal God.

"Wherever I stand – you.
Wherever I go – you."

It means that I should not circle around myself, indeed not, but only around the one I love.

"Only you, again you,
always you, – you, you, you!
As long as I am well – you.
When I am not well – you.
Always only you. – you, you, you."

I think you will understand what is meant here. Who of us can claim to possess such an attitude? If we are honest, we have to admit that we are always saying "I", whilst we should ultimately say, "You. Always only you." Do not grieve the Holy Spirit!

In our practical lives we are not impressed by the existence of the Holy Spirit. His presence does not touch us very much. And yet we should be familiar with this truth. We should live by it as the fish lives in water. We tend to live, eat, drink only in this worldly world.

"You who have received life by the Holy Spirit should live by the Holy Spirit." The apostle is admonishing us. It is the Holy Spirit who says in us: Abba, dear Father!

Let us ask ourselves to what extent the heavenly Father matters in our lives. Is he a living person for me? God the Father says to me: my dear child. This continuous game of life and love is the deepest meaning of my life.
(Translated by Mary Cole)



3. Women's breakfast, Holy Family Parish Menai

A splendid success!

As one of the organizers of two 'Women's Breakfasts' we have held so far at the Shrine with huge success, it was tempting to wonder whether it could be pulled off in a parish setting. So, when our newly ordained Deacon Sone gave a wonderful talk in Advent last year in our parish of Holy Family Menai, on 'Mary and her 'Yes' to God', it was a no-brainer to ask him to talk to the women of the parish. Though few in number by comparison to former times, they are the committed workers of the parish in some ways. He was delighted to be able to accommodate us and thrilled to speak on "Mary's Fiat".

Our lovely parish secretary was soon on board having attended the second of the Shrine Breakfasts at Mount Schoenstatt. She immediately set about putting together a flyer and advertised the Breakfast throughout the month of March and early April in the parish bulletin, other parishes, and the schools. Funnily enough many of the people came as a 'friend of a friend', being bumped into (providentially) in the car park of the shopping centre or seeing the flyer on the door of the Church.

As the numbers trickled in there were heart stopping moments when we asked, "Would \$5 a person cover the costs of the day?" "Would there be too much food or not enough?"; as the women were all asked to contribute, 'a plate of food'. Well, 48 women responded and came, and brought enough food to "feed the 5000" and waxed lyrical about the set-up of tables and décor as well as the wonderful speakers - Deacon Sone and Sr. Elizabeth.

What did we learn? Deacon Sone had been asked to speak about "Living Our Lady's Fiat in everyday life". He unfolded the theme and answered the question of how to do this, by reflecting on three



aspects of Our Lady's life: Love, self-surrender and being an Instrument. In a nutshell:

"We live Our Lady's FIAT by practising the following in our lives: first to love, second to selflessly give our time and thirdly, through this we are to be instruments of this FIAT to others." Deacon Sone spoke of the Schoenstatt Covenant of Love as being a means to renew our love daily with others, our families, friends and even those with whom we do not see eye to eye. Such love, he said, will move us to act selflessly, placing others and their needs before our own and this selflessness will bear fruit as we become instruments in God's hands to bear his love to others."

It was then easy for Sr. Elizabeth to give a response, to build on Deacon Sone's talk, and take us deeper into a Schoenstatt perspective. She reinforced our Schoenstatt understanding of the Covenant of Love as being a renewal and deepening of our Baptismal Covenant. She stressed the importance of our cooperation in our journey towards holiness by imitating Our Lady's yes, as an instrument in helping to fulfill God's plan of love.

The two hours flew by and many left at 12 Noon although an enthusiastic few stayed on. Sr. Elizabeth spent time with one group of ladies who all wanted to know more about Schoenstatt and another group, who all bar one, were familiar with Schoenstatt, were entertained by Sr. Renee (who came with Sr. Elizabeth), and Deacon Sone. Many women spent much of their time being "Marthas" in the kitchen and all the food despite so much having been left over, went home with someone.

The smile hasn't come off my face a week after the event and I'm still getting 'Thank You's' from people I bump into. Our 'What's App- Holy Family Ministry' site ran hot for a couple of days with so many positive comments. It's been such a spiritually up-lifting event in the parish to the point where I told Deacon Sone if he could motivate the men of the parish, I would approach the women to 'cook for them' and run something similar using the same format. - I 'know' they will say 'Yes'.

My feeling is overwhelmingly that "Mother has taken Perfect Care". With the Chapel door near the entrance to the main Church left open and the statue which Fr. Denis had made in the image of Mary looking out over us all the time, the event couldn't help but be a success. The MTA Picture is also in this Chapel and I am happy to say that our Mother Thrice Admirable was visited by some during the morning.

So now we come to what for many would be a disappointment. That is, there was only one photo taken in the early part of the day by a friend. This is a sign for me of a deeper meaning, "a spiritual moment"! By not picking up the phone to take photos on the day, the women and their happiness and joy were the all-encompassing spiritual moments for me, moments that you just cannot capture in a photo.

So, to all those who contributed, whom I haven't mentioned already, especially Zenny and all those I have, I say let's keep the 'Movement' going by doing more of this in our other parishes!

In the Covenant, Angela



Holy Family Parish
Menai



WOMEN'S BREAKFAST EVENT AT HOLY FAMILY MENAI

Join us on
Saturday, April 20th, 2024
for a morning of community and
connection over a delicious
breakfast.
Cost: a plate of breakfast/brunch
goodies to share and \$5

Please join us for:

9.15am for Mass

10am for Breakfast/Brunch (provided by all)

10.45am for Deacon Sone's Talk: "Living Our Lady's Fiat (Yes) in Everyday Life"

11.30am for 'Round Table Discussions'

11.50am for a 'Schoenstatt Response' from Sr. Elizabeth Foley
Bookings for seating purposes - to Angela organiser at
angandrickbenson@gmail.com or Andrea at the Parish Office.



4. Girls' Day Out at the Shrine

Sr M. Rita

Young girls between the ages of 10–17 years old were invited during the school holidays to spend a day out at the Schoenstatt Shrine for fun, games, singing, prayer and formation. The same program was offered on two separate days to accommodate the different age groups.

With the help of three young women as volunteer leaders, eighteen girls between the ages of 15–17 years gathered for the first day and six girls aged 10–11 years came together on the second day to enjoy the day's activities. It was amazing to see how motivated, open and joyful all the young girls were and how quickly bonds of friendship were made.

The theme of the day was: "Gifts from Heaven" and the sessions in the morning were dedicated to the various gifts that God, through the Church give us: the Eucharist, the Holy Spirit, the Blessed Mother and ourselves.

After lunch the girls completed a craft activity where they were able to create a dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit, out of a paper plate. Although the task was quite simple it gave each of the girls the opportunity to express their individuality and process what they had learnt in the morning sessions.

Both days concluded at the Shrine where we were able to sing and pray together as a group.



In one of the morning sessions the girls were invited to write down their name and all their loved ones on a small piece paper in the shape of a heart. At the end of the day, they could present their hearts to the Blessed Mother in the Shrine. This was a symbolic way to represent the covenant of love, a mutual exchange of hearts!

The echoes from the girls testify to what a great success the day was. Here are just a few examples:

- "I liked when we made the Holy Spirit bird, that was fun."
- "My favourite part of the day was when we gave our hearts to Mary in the shrine."
- "I really had lots of fun and liked singing together."
- "I made lots of new friends today and cannot wait for the next one!"



5. May Pilgrimage W.A.

We had a lovely sunny Autumn day for our annual May Pilgrimage on Sunday 5th May 2024 at Mt Richon in WA. Around 180 people attended.

Our theme this year was chosen after Pope Francis inaugurated a Year of Prayer ahead of the 2025 Jubilee, calling on the faithful “to pray more fervently to prepare ourselves to live properly this grace-filled event and to experience the power of hope in God”.

We commenced with a Rosary Procession, followed by Reflections from Fr Kentenich, Pope Francis and Pope Benedict XVI on our theme “Mary Teach Us to Pray”. This added to the atmosphere and helped us to take away practical applications of the importance of prayer in our everyday lives.



The Commissioning of one new Co-ordinating couple, and the re-commissioning of many Pilgrim Mother Co-ordinators followed the procession. Singing many hymns to our Blessed Mother was our means of honouring her in a special way in the month of May. The celebrations concluded with Benediction.

Our officiating Priest for the day was a newly ordained Priest, Fr Errol Lobo from the Armadale Parish. It was a real joy that he was able to join us at the Shrine so soon after his ordination last week and many people took the opportunity to receive Fr Errol’s Priestly Blessing. There is no doubt that this was a special addition to our day.

Afternoon tea and fellowship was then enjoyed down at Emilie House. A working party stayed up at the Shrine to pack away the gazebos and chairs etc. Just as they finished packing away the rain came down, so we were truly blessed that everything went so well, and Our Lady stopped the rain till everything was in good order.

Many people have shared with us that this was truly a lovely afternoon.

Philomena Theseira



6. Womens Reflection Day Mount Schoenstatt

The Reflection Day for women, held at Mount Schoenstatt at the beginning of May, was a truly blessed day. Close to 40 women participated and, as always, enjoyed having some time away from the busyness of everyday life while spending time to grow closer in our relationship with God and our Blessed Mother. As the topic was:

“Deeply fill our souls with the Love that comes from you”

we reflected on the upcoming feast of Pentecost and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Love between the Father and the Son, and we were encouraged to open our souls so that the Holy Spirit may fill them and deepen our love for God. As we sat in small groups, we reflected on which Gift of the Spirit we would like to grow deeper into.

I personally chose the gift of Wisdom and so did the group I was in. We agreed that having this gift leads us to grow deeper in the other gifts of the Spirit as Wisdom is the Grace to be able to see everything in the world, situations, and problems through God’s eyes and not through the way we want to see them.



We had quiet time to prepare ourselves for reconciliation and were grateful to Fr Jack who offered Holy Mass for us.

Our final session was a craft session, enjoyed by all. We were asked to choose a saying about our Blessed Mother to take home as a reminder of the continuous love we receive from her. I chose a saying from St. Louis de Montfort which means a lot to me:

“If you put all the love of all the mothers into one heart, it still would not equal the love of the Heart of Mary for her children.”

Despite of the weather forecast for rain, Sr Mary Louise kept reminding us that it will not Rain! So, we were blessed with good weather. Thank you again for a wonderful day.

Mary Testa



7. INFORMATION AND LINKS

Shrine Opening Hours

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

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

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

Melbourne: St. Luke's, Wantirna, Divine Mercy Chapel

Opening hours: <http://www.stlukeswantirna.net/>



Links

Official Schoenstatt Website	https://www.schoenstatt.com
Schoenstatt Australian Website	https://www.schoenstatt.org.au
Our YouTube Channel	https://www.youtube.com/schoenstattaustralia
Western Australia Website	https://schoenstattwa.org.au
Schoenstatt Men Website	https://bit.ly/47x72n1

Videos for Covenant Sundays

Text for May 31st May 1949 – 75 Years of Schoenstatt's Third Milestone
(no video this month – text available upon request)

Video for April A Listening Church
<https://www.youtube.com/schoenstattaustralia>

Video for March A humble and healing Church
<https://youtu.be/4DBfVXL6GAs>

Video for February An inclusive and welcoming Church
<https://youtu.be/qfGr5DBMcnc>

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 before the beginning of each month

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