



1. Covenant Day Message

United in the Covenant - Pilgrims of Hope

Dear Schoenstatt Family and Friends,

Blessings and greetings for this Covenant Day – 18th May. The month of May is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

At all times, but especially during this month we give special thanks to Our Lady for all the gifts and graces she has given us through our Shrines and through our Covenant of Love and for being always with us in our daily lives.

In this Jubilee Year of Hope, Mary is a true sign of hope because she is a reminder that God was not only faithful to her throughout her life, but that he always remains faithful to us. At the hour of the Annunciation, Mary said her 'yes', her 'fiat' to God and throughout her life, she never withdrew this 'fiat'.

... never withdrew this 'fiat'

When Jesus was born in a stable, Mary said her yes and never lost hope or trust in the Heavenly Father. When the holy family went into exile in Egypt, she said her yes, during his public ministry when Jesus was ridiculed, abused and misunderstood, Mary never lost hope. At the crucifixion, Mary stood under the cross never doubting the faithfulness of the Heavenly Father. She never lost hope. Mary is truly a sign of hope for us in all that we encounter in today's world.

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Father Kantenich said:

"We should see God behind everything in our daily life, in our joys, and in our sorrows. We must remember at all times that there is a definite purpose in all that happens to us, even if it hurts us at the time. In all situations, we should keep in mind that God is our loving father, and we should be ready to say, "Yes, Father," to anything that is in his plan for us, whether it is a cross or joy which he sends. We must put our whole trust in Divine Providence.

(22nd January 1956, Fr. J. Kantenich, "On Monday Evenings Vol.1", P91)

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

In the Bull of Indiction for the Jubilee Year, Pope Francis said that

"Everyone knows what it is to hope. In the heart of each person, hope dwells as the desire and expectation of good things to come, despite our not knowing what the future may bring....

24. Hope finds its supreme witness in the Mother of God. In the Blessed Virgin, we see that hope is not naive optimism but a gift of grace amid the realities of life. Like every mother, whenever Mary looked at her Son, she thought of his future.

Mary cooperated for our sake in the fulfilment of all that her Son had foretold in announcing that he would have to "undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mk 8:31). In the travail of that sorrow, offered in love, Mary became our Mother, the Mother of Hope.



It is not by chance that popular piety continues to invoke the Blessed Virgin as Stella Maris, a title that bespeaks the sure hope that, amid the tempests of this life, the Mother of God comes to our aid, sustains us and encourages us to persevere in hope and trust."

United in our Covenant of Love, may each of you receive many blessings and graces from the Shrine on this Covenant Day and for the remainder of May, this special month of Our Lady.

May our Covenant of Love bring hope and peace and joy to each of you and your families.

United in our covenant,

Shirley Hall

2. Schoenstatt says Farewell to Pope Francis

The article below by Karen Bueno appeared on Schoenstatt.com giving us the news of the many Schoenstatters who were able to be present to farewell Pope Francis. However, we want to share the joyful news that one family from our own Sydney Family groups was also present. We see it as truly divine providence that Le and John Mallet with their daughter Antonia were privileged to be present at St. Peter's Square for the funeral of Pope Francis. They had travelled to Rome with a pilgrimage of young people from their parish to attend the canonisation of Blessed Carlo Acutis which was postponed given the unexpected passing of Pope Francis. They were happily surprised to meet two Schoenstatt Sisters who are stationed in Rome on St. Peter's Square. Just knowing that part of "our Australian family" were present to represent us – unexpected though it was – gives us great joy.

The title of this article uses the word "farewell." Still, it certainly is not the best expression to define the presence of the Schoenstatt members at the liturgical celebrations of Pope Francis' funeral. With the farewell to the Holy Father comes a new ENTHUSIASM to carry forward his legacy and the heritage he left to the Movement and the entire Church.

Several members of the Schoenstatt Apostolic Movement were in Rome and participated in the solemn funeral ceremony of the Pope this Saturday, April 26. Archbishop Monsignor Ignazio Sanna, President of the Pontifical Academy of Theology and member of the Institute of Schoenstatt Diocesan Priests, commented on the past days: "Francis' message is very rich. Among his many words, those we heard most often these days were: Church on mission, infinite mercy of God, supreme good of peace, witnesses of hope."

For Monsignor Sanna, the Pope's death brings forth a renewed feeling of fidelity and love for the Church: "I believe that Schoenstatt must remain faithful to its love program for the Church. A Church that goes forth, a Church like a field



hospital, a Church open to all. This is the post-conciliar Church of the new peripheries."

Schoenstatt Fathers: A Moment of Sadness and Gratitude

Father Alexandre Awi Mello, President of the International Presidium of Schoenstatt, said that these days were lived "with much gratitude in the heart and also sadness at his departure." In an interview with Vatican News (Portuguese-language editorial team), he mentioned his last words to the Pope:

"It's difficult. Thank you very much. And I think the entire Church says that. And not just the Church: this 'thank you very much' comes from all humanity. A few days ago, an atheist friend wrote to me and said: 'You know I'm an atheist, but I am sad because the world needs people like Pope Francis.' And, indeed, the whole world at this moment gives thanks. Thank you, Pope Francis, for believing in humanity."



Sisters of Mary: We Saw a Young and Alive Church in Rome



Sister M. Lisianne Braunbeck, a member of the General Leadership of the Sisters of Mary, shared her impressions of her experience in Rome:

"Seeing so many young people participating in this event was impressive. We saw a young and alive Church. And despite the huge crowd, there was a palpable religious atmosphere. The different gestures were very expressive; for example, all the heads of state bidding farewell in front of the coffin, and the cardinals forming an honour guard at the end of St. Peter's Basilica. On a banner carried by some young people, you could read: 'Thank you, Pope Francis! We will not let our hope be stolen!' I believe this sums up the atmosphere well."

*We will not let our
hope be stolen*



The Represented Communities

It is impossible to mention all the Schoenstatt members who attended the solemn celebration at St. Peter's Square, but here we list the representatives that some communities sent. In addition to them, several members of the Apostolic League and Schoenstatt Pilgrims were also present in Rome.

The **Schoenstatt Fathers** were represented by their Superior General, Father Alexandre Awi Mello, along with priests currently living in Italy: Father Pablo Pérez, Father Pablo Martínez, Father Beltrán Gómez, Father Andrés Rodríguez, and two priests studying in Rome: Father Felipe Pérez and Father Miguel Rocha.

Monsignor Ignazio Sanna, Archbishop Emeritus of Oristano, represented the **Institute of Diocesan Priests**.

For the **Federation of Priests**, the auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of La Plata, Monsignor Jorge González, participated.

The **Sisters of Mary** sent two members from the General Leadership: Sister Andra-Maria Lingscheid and Sister M. Lisianne Braunbeck. Also, two Sisters of Mary from Argentina traveled to Rome for the celebration: Sister María del Milagro Figueroa and Sister María de los Ángeles. Alongside them were all the Sisters of Mary residing in Rome.

The **Schoenstatt Family Institute** was represented by Arnulf and Mariette Rausch from Germany and two families from Spain: Jordi and Casilda Pares, and Iñiqui and Macarena Laguna. Several members of the Schoenstatt Movement from Italy were also present.

On this day of farewell, scattered throughout various parts of Rome, the same feeling of gratitude and the desire to keep Pope Francis' spirit alive to set the world on fire in the coming years resounded everywhere.

Translation: Sr. M. Lourdes Macías
(Source: Schoenstatt.com)

3 Historical Schoenstatt Events in May

Father Kentenich often expressed the wish that the members of Schoenstatt should not only know the history of the movement, but that we appreciate the events that have shaped its culture and its spirituality. In the light of this, below are some events that took place at different times during the month of May.

20th May 1945 - Father Kentenich returns to Schoenstatt after his time in Dachau.



*Arrival in front of the Shrine,
Pentecost 1945 (ASF)*

On Pentecost Sunday, 20th May 1945, Father Kentenich returned to Schoenstatt after nearly three and a half years in Dachau concentration camp. Everyone was amazed at how well he appeared after all that he had experienced during his time in the concentration camp.

What had been the secret of Father Kentenich's daring, stamina and heroic love of neighbour in Dachau? He said that it was the covenant of love with the Mother Thrice Admirable.

Throughout his life he wanted to pass on the experience that "The Blessed Mother placed her motherly heart at my disposal on October 18, 1914. I belong to her. I owe her everything". Throughout his life this was his secret, his source of strength.

31st May 1949 – Schoenstatt's Third Milestone

This day marks the 3rd Milestone in Schoenstatt's history. On 31st May 1949, Father Kentenich once again accepted his mission through Mary, for Schoenstatt and for the Church.

"In a talk which he gave to the 20 Schoenstatt Sisters present, he stated his awareness of the risks involved, including to Schoenstatt, but that the danger to Church and world left him no choice but to act. He 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."

Fr. Kentenich characterized the inner meaning of May 31 as "standing in divine power" or an act of heroic love. In this sense, the third milestone is an important reminder that the entire vigour of heroic faith shown in January 20 is not disconnected from a mission and a responsibility for the Church.

That Fr. Kentenich was willing to risk everything for the wellbeing of the Church signals to us that we too should love the Church, even heroically. His great love for the Church which he demonstrated on 31st May 1949 is a challenge for us to continue his mission and be his witnesses for Schoenstatt and for the Church.

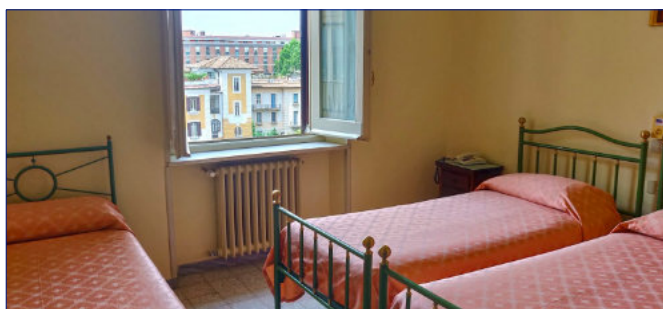
200 Questions about Schoenstatt, p.136.

A time of Decision – May 1951

This story was told by Father Alex Menningen (1900–1994) to American pilgrims visiting Schoenstatt, Germany in 1980:

"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 return 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 I said, 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.

(The 31st of May, The Third Milestone, P.152–153
Fr. Jonathan Niehaus)

4. Stations of the Cross at Mulgoa

On 18 April, Good Friday morning, approximately 1,500 faithfuls flocked to Mt Schoenstatt valley to embark on a memorable journey following Christ's Stations of the Cross with Mary.

Everyone was treated to a most glorious day that reflected the glory of the occasion, with temperatures in the mid 20's, not a single cloud in the sky nor the faintest breath of wind; nothing could interrupt the solemnity with which the wooden cross was carried by volunteers up the winding road, stopping at each of the 14 stations marked along the way.

Fr Paweł Barszczewski OP led the congregation in reverent prayer, with members of the Schoenstatt Movement reading the reflections and members of the choir singing the beautiful words to the Stabat Mater at the end of each station.

The peace and serenity of the surrounding nature created the ideal atmosphere for meditative prayer as a sea of people reflected on the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. The journey finished at the Shrine where Fr Paweł gave his final priestly blessing.

Hundreds of people then lined up to enter the Shrine, spending a brief moment with the Blessed Mother in prayer before allowing the next person in through the door. Many families and friends also found themselves a nice spot on the grass or around the grounds, enjoying the sunshine and company of each other.

An estimated further 500 people prayed their own private stations of the cross throughout the day or simply came to visit our Mother Thrice Admirable in the Shrine. God's blessings on the day were felt by all in super abundance, highlighting evermore the merciful ways in which God loves us infinitely.

Sr. M Olivia



5. Girls Day Out at the Shrine



Once again in the Easter school holidays a day of fun, games, prayer and singing was organised for girls from 10–18 years of age. Sr. M. Rita planned these days together with a small group of enthusiastic young women. The program was

repeated for two consecutive days according to the age groups. Two teenagers stayed both days to help as junior leaders along with four young women who volunteered their time to assist with the Girls Days Out.

After a few icebreaker games and songs, the girls enjoyed an Easter scavenger hunt. They were challenged in small groups to find different things in the bush or around the house that could represent different celebrations or symbols related to Easter. The girls were very creative for example collecting a teaspoon to represent the thirty pieces of silver or a tissue for the linen cloths. By using these symbols, we together discussed the great mystery and joy of Easter as a beautiful celebration of hope.



In the second session the girls discussed the theme of hope. The scriptural passage of Mary Magdalene's **encounter** with the risen Lord.



Easter morning was looked at more closely. The major take away point was that through an encounter with Jesus what sometimes seems hopeless can be transformed into great hope and joy.

Our emotions can sometime cloud our vision, but Jesus knows each one of us and calls out to us by our name particularly amidst our pain and suffering.

After lunch we gathered all our intentions and together prayed a rosary. This was then followed by an hour of craft activity where the girls were invited to make an Easter card or basket which they all very much enjoyed.

It goes without saying that the Easter Egg hunt was also very much enjoyed and appreciated by everyone.



The day concluded with a short prayer time of thanksgiving in the Schoenstatt Shrine which particularly in this Jubilee Year is a place of hope and where an encounter with the risen Lord is possible.



6. May Pilgrimage Mount Richon, W.A.

On Sunday 4th May 2025 there was a hive of activity before the May Pilgrimage, but everything was ready in time for our 2.30pm start. We prayed that the rain would hold off, although we did have a light shower as we started off on our Rosary procession. This didn't last long and did not hamper the crowd of approximately 250 people who prayed and sang together to honour Our Blessed Mother.

Our theme for the day was "Mary, Pilgrim of Hope!" After the procession we listened to three aptly selected reflections. The first from Pope Benedict XVI, (Spe Salvi – #49–50) – Mary, Star of the Sea, which spoke about "Human life is a journey, a pilgrimage of hope".

The next reflection was from Pope Francis, (11 April 2020 & 6 November 2024), titled "Pilgrims in search of Hope". The women who went to the tomb were met by an angel who said to them: "Do not be afraid. He is not here; for he has risen" (Mt 28,6). Then they met Jesus, the giver of all hope, who confirmed the message and said: "Do not be afraid" (Mt 28,10). This is a message of hope.

The third reflection was from Fr J Kentenich, (15 October 1951). Sometimes we might feel like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Jesus joins them on their way and the disciples begged him to stay with them (Lk 24:13.35). As Pilgrims of Hope, we ask our Lord and the Mother of God to go with us through our day, through life. The plea: "Stay with us, Jesus and Mary", could become our daily prayer.

The reflection readings were followed by the Commissioning of seven new Pilgrim Mother Co-ordinators, and the resending out and re-Commissioning of Co-ordinators. This was followed by Benediction.

Many people wrote out prayer requests and filed into the Shrine afterwards to place them in the jar and to pray in the Shrine. This made all of us very happy.

During the afternoon tea and fellowship, I was able to ask people what they thought of the afternoon and they responded that it was lovely. One of the new Pilgrim Mother Co-ordinators said she was going straight from there to take the Pilgrim Mother to the first person in her circle. She was very excited to be able to do this.

It was truly a blessed day.

Philomena Theseira





7 Shrine Time prepares the way for the Covenant of Love

Shrine Time in April was definitely more special than during any other month!

Shrine Time is a Holy Hour for youth and young adults that takes place at the Schoenstatt Shrine in Mulgoa every fourth Sunday of the month. The number of young people who attend fluctuate greatly from month to month and vary from about 10-25 people.

Each month a different priest is invited to be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the evening ends with Benediction. There are also several people/groups who assist with the musical accompaniment each month.

After Shrine Time the young people gather for fellowship and discussion in the Pilgrim Centre. Questions about the Schoenstatt spirituality, the blessed Mother and the Shrine often arise out of these discussions.

One of the regular guitarists who enjoys coming to Shrine Time is a young man who lives in Austral, about 30 minutes from the Shrine. He has an amazing voice and plays the guitar really well.

Over time he has developed an real attachment to the Shrine and a deep devotion to our Mother Thrice Admirable. He was very inquisitive and interested in sealing the Covenant of Love with Mary and attended the information and follow up session that was offered in March.

After some prayer he soon decided to seal the Covenant of Love with Mary. Although quite nervous he made the decision to make this commitment during Shrine Time. He testified that he had received the first two graces from the Shrine, that of being at home and inner transformation. He now wanted to provide witness to the other young people and thus fulfil the third grace of apostolic fruitfulness.

The Covenant of Love celebration took place on Divine Mercy Sunday and Fr Pawel OP gladly accepted his consecration during Shrine Time. The evening was very beautiful and there was a particularly deep and prayerful atmosphere in the Shrine.

It was also a great joy that his mother, sister and a close friend could also be present to support him with their prayers. The celebration continued in the Pilgrim Centre, where the young man was able to express his gratefulness for coming in contact with Schoenstatt, the Shrine and the blessed Mother. This gratitude is probably something that we all can share!

Sr. M. Rita



8. 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/>



Events

- Covenant Sundays – Third Sunday of each month
11am Mulgoa, NSW; 3pm Wantirna, VIC; 3pm Mount Richon, WA
- Men at the Shrine – Second Wednesday each month 8–9pm Shrine, Mulgoa
- Shrine Time – for young adults – Fourth Sunday each month 7–8pm Shrine, Mulgoa

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 Days - 18th of the Month 7 - 8pm AEDT

Video for May	Christ's Love, our Hope https://www.youtube.com/schoenstattaustralia
Video for April	Jesus and Mary give us hope https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAswD5pe-q8&t=8s
Video for March	Mary's Fiat in everyday life https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFInjQXKLLY
Video for February	The Consecration Prayer gives us hope anew each day, how our Covenant of Love invites us to hope. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGJt4KJMYXU&t=11s

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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