



July 18 2026 Volume 7 Number 7

United in the Covenant Pilgrims of Hope

1 Covenant Day Message

Dear Schoenstatt Family and Friends,

Greetings and blessings on this Covenant Day – 18th July. I hope you are all coping with the winter weather and enjoying the sunshine when it is around.

In our novena this month we focus on the loyalty of those who are part of the Pilgrim Mother Apostolate. We especially remember the Schoenstatt Sisters who have always loyally supported the laity who began this initiative here in Australia, and the loyalty of those Coordinators and members of PMA Circles who take Our Blessed Mother from home to home each month.

From the humble beginnings of this apostolate in Australia, it has grown into a movement across the country and unites many thousands of people with our Blessed Mother, in their own homes, in their workplaces, in hospitals, in schools and wherever our Blessed Mother is invited to visit people where they are at.



This loyalty can be found in Father Kentenich through the example of his great trust in the power of the Blessed Mother to always lead her Schoenstatt Family in all situations. The following words were spoken at the end of the 1951 October Conference. Father Kentenich knew at that time 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!



"Do not worry about the fulfillment of your desire! *Ego diligentes me diligo!* I love those who love me!"⁴ That is what Our Lady says to us in the Founding Document...

Fr. J. Kentenich "Schoenstatt's Instrument Spirituality" 19 October 1951 (Extracts from P.195-201)

Do we have the trust and courage to live in Covenant loyalty with Our Blessed Mother in all situations that we encounter? We pray that the Pilgrim Mother Apostolate will continue to grow and flourish here in Australia.

United in our Covenant: Love for Love, Loyalty for Loyalty.

Shirley Hall



2 Family Weekend 2026

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A Home Away from Home – Mount Schoenstatt, Mulgoa, 5-7 June 2026

Every year, the Family Weekend at Mount Schoenstatt is a much anticipated event for our families. As this was our third year attending, the excitement was no less than the first. In fact, it felt even more special. As our five-year-old eagerly greeted familiar faces and confidently found his way around the grounds, we realised that Schoenstatt had truly become a home away from home. A place where families gather in faith, friendship and shared purpose, striving to live our covenant motto: "Nothing without You, nothing without us."



This year's Family Weekend was during the King's birthday long weekend. We welcomed eight families, including the special visit of Guil and Barbara Dias, who travelled from the Schoenstatt Family Branch in Perth to share their experiences and insights. Their presence reminded us of the unity of the Schoenstatt Family across Australia.



One of the wonderful initiatives introduced this year was the significantly reduced boarding fees. Bernard Toutounji tirelessly worked with the House to make the weekend more affordable for families in the face of rising living costs. Another exciting development was the opening of the new dining room, where, for the first time, families catered for themselves. Coordinating meals for such a large group was no small undertaking, yet Reny and Rudi Verdy and their family generously accepted this mammoth task with incredible dedication, ensuring everyone was well fed and cared for throughout the weekend.

The weekend began on Friday evening with dinner, a visit to the Shrine, ice-breaker activities and fellowship among the adults, setting a joyful and welcoming atmosphere for the days ahead.

The spiritual formation throughout the weekend was centred on the theme of education within the family, reminding us that parents are the primary educators and ambassadors of God in the home.

Sr Isabell opened the weekend with two inspiring sessions on "The New Person in the New Community." She challenged us to recognise that true renewal begins with each individual. By allowing Christ and Our Lady to transform us, we become instruments for building communities founded on love, unity and hope.



On Saturday afternoon, Fr Sheldon Burke CRS presented a thought-provoking talk on "The Role of Parents in Family Education." Drawing from the teachings of St John Paul II and Father Kentenich, he reminded us that the family is the first school of love. Parents are called to lead by example through self-giving love, prayer and sacrifice. Fathers were encouraged to consciously seek God's will, work diligently without becoming consumed by work, and lovingly sacrifice for their families. Mothers were reminded of Mary's example forming hearts that love God, foster virtue and cultivate a spirit of service.

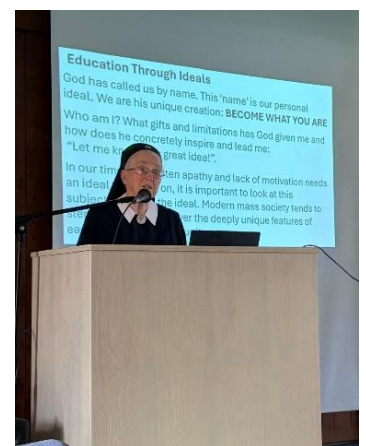


Fr Sheldon shared his testimonial catholic upbringing and beautifully emphasised that our children's first experience of God is through family life, and that when parents place God first, He gives them the grace to love one another more deeply.

On Sunday morning, Guil and Barbara Dias shared their experience of Living with our Home Shrine. Guil and Barbara shared their beautiful story of how they grew up and also met each other in the Schoenstatt movement in Brazil. At present they have this beautiful family life that they are building around the teachings of Fr Kentenich. It was truly inspiring to watch and learn from this young family. They spoke about how the home Shrine becomes the spiritual heart of the household a place where families gather in prayer, entrust their daily joys and struggles to Our Lady, and experience God's presence in everyday life. The practical elements that make the home shrine and how personally the home shrine has had a massive impact on their faith journey. Their witness reminded us that the Home Shrine truly becomes a little Nazareth within our homes.



The final formation session by Sr Elizabeth explored "The Importance of Ideals in Education," drawing on Father Kentenich's pedagogy. She explained that education is not merely about teaching rules but about helping each person discover the unique mission God has entrusted to them. Every individual has a Personal Ideal, given by God, whether they are aware of it or not. Growth comes from striving towards this God-given ideal, allowing it to shape our character, vocation and family life. She also encouraged families to discover and live their own Family Ideal, making their Home Shrine a visible reminder of the mission God has entrusted to their family.



The children and teenagers were equally blessed with engaging programs throughout the weekend. Sr Rita once again formed a wonderful connection with the teenagers through meaningful discussions and activities. The younger children were lovingly cared for by first-time volunteer Mary from the women's group together with returning helpers Tony and his wife Karen, whose generosity allowed the parents to fully participate in the sessions.



Saturday afternoon was filled with laughter and excitement during the "Amazing Grace" family challenge. Adults and children were divided into five teams: Joy, Mercy, Faith, Hope and Love. We embarked on a treasure hunt across the Schoenstatt grounds. Through teamwork and problem-solving, families reflected on the Christian virtues represented by each team while enjoying a fun-filled adventure together.

As always, the Family Talent Night was a highlight. The Toutounji family had everyone in fits of laughter with their entertaining comedy skit. From the children we had an excellent musical piece and a beautiful solo ballet performance, while our teenage girls amazed everyone with some impressive card tricks.







The weekend concluded with our final prayer in the Shrine. As families prepared to return home, there was a deep sense of gratitude—not only for the enriching talks and joyful activities, but for the gift of belonging to a community that journeys together in faith.

We left Mulgoa renewed, encouraged and inspired to continue building our homes as domestic churches, where Christ is at the centre, Our Lady is honoured, and each family member is supported in becoming the person God created them to be.

Cindrella Francis Xavier - Schoenstatt Family Group



3 Farewell Pat Pate (18 May 1939 – 16 June 2026)

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Edith Patricia Pate (Pat) and her husband Terry moved with their children to Australia from South Africa in 1980. They had been heavily involved in Schoenstatt while living in South Africa – Terry, with Pat's support and presence, helped to build the Shrine in Johannesburg. They joined the Schoenstatt Movement here in Australia as part of the Coenaculum Family Group.



Pat and Terry were not only part of the Family Branch, but active and valued members of our movement. They represented the Family Branch on the Central Inspiration Team (CIT) for over 10 years. At the same time, they often presented input at national conferences and other Schoenstatt formation days and regularly attended Covenant Sundays. For some years this meant travelling each month from the Central Coast until advancing age and ill health prevented them from continuing their specific involvement.



Pat has not been in good health for the past three years and during that time, Terry has cared for her until April this year when she moved into Starrett Lodge where she could have full-time care.

Pat died on 16th June and her funeral took place on Wednesday 24th June at their parish church of St. Mary of the Cross Mackillop, Warnervale. The Church was filled with not only their family members, but parishioners, friends of Terry and Pat and Schoenstatt members. Pat surely enjoyed from heaven the community she was able to bring together!

*Below are some excerpts from the Eulogies given by her four daughters and one of her nine grandchildren. We think these say better than anything else, who Pat was and what she meant to her family and to all those who called her a friend.
May Pat now rest in Peace and may our Blessed Mother keep her in her tender care.*

Please continue to pray for Terry, their family and friends as they mourn the loss of Pat.



Extracts from the Eulogies at Pat Pate's funeral – by her 4 daughters and 1 granddaughter

Juliet:

I would like to read a tribute to our Mum that our cousin, Mel, wrote. Mel has known my mother longer than any of us. It is a beautiful tribute and captures our mother exactly.

My Auntie Pat was a shining light in my life from the day I was born – on her twelfth birthday. She was dependable, reliable, and loyal to a fault. Her generosity knew no bounds. She taught me to see the good in others and more besides, was always welcoming and made me feel special. She loved her daughters dearly and was immensely proud of them and their achievements. They and her grandchildren brought her tremendous joy. Most of all, she loved Terry and knew a kinder and more steadfast mate she couldn't have found. Though I will miss her more than words can say, I will carry her with me forever in my heart.

Our Mum had many friends, people she loved, and people who loved her, of all ages, across continents, in all circumstances. She made a community everywhere she went. This was very important to her. She was kind, good intentioned, and generous to the people she met. It was sometimes hard to keep up with her, her sense of humour got her into trouble at times but as soon as she realised something had gone awry, our mother was the first to try and make it right. She was a strong believer in good communication being the key to successful partnerships and she believed in trying until she got it right.

She was a strong woman with a determination to create a beautiful family. She and Dad were married a few weeks shy of 62 years before she died, and she loved Dad more than anything. She used to tell us that she had ideas, but she needed Dad to give her the confidence to carry them out. Dad's love and steadfast loyalty to Mum was priceless to her.

Juliet shared a long list of things she thanked her mother for. Here is just one of them:

- Thank you for showing me that updating your opinion based on new information is possible. Mum was a woman of strong convictions, yet she often listened to us and her grandchildren and updated her ideas based on modern information right into her 80s, a skill and a gift.

I'm going to miss my Mum for the rest of my days. She has been such a large part of me in everything I do: loving my family, my friends, laughing a lot, rising to a social occasion, all her traditions firmly entrenched in our lives. This is our mother's legacy. She sometimes wished she'd done something more consequential with her life but in reality, her influence will be felt by all of us in very important ways for a long time. Mum had a long and full life and we are celebrating it.



Claire:

Mom embraced life with enthusiasm and commitment, contending fear and the unknown with a brave heart. Even if she didn't always think so herself, we - her family, especially in recent times - watched and knew it.

That she sometimes moved forward to the detriment of her own health is also part of her legacy. It is both an inspiration and a warning, and one that she would be fully prepared to face. Discussing topics of great import with humour, practical wisdom, and personal references is a memory of Mom that I will hold for forever.

Mom's sense of social justice was formative for me.

We grew up expecting to see Mom act on behalf of anyone who needed her help. And living in South Africa gave her many opportunities to do so. She was famous for raising funds for a project with jumble sales or picking up three trolley loads of footballs to 'on sell'. We made a caterpillar line at the checkout: Jules on cart 1 and 2, me on cart 2 and 3, Meri struggling with the back end of cart 3 and Ro, barely walking, shoved in amongst the footballs...somewhere.

Mom was not always an easy person, what she was... was determined... determined to create rather than accept the world as it is.... She saw life as a continuing work, unfinished by any one person. A great journey to take and revel in. and her journey hasn't finished; it is carried on by all of us. Her community.

These are memories that make me feel very close to my mother.

We are very different people in many ways, but we are also remarkably alike.

We are filled to the brim with the things we care about.

We believe in the goodness and potential of people.

We see possibilities where others see obstacles.

And we face this scary, bright and exciting world with courage.

Mom spent her life looking for a better version of the day she had been given. She spent her life helping to build her own little piece of Jerusalem. And because she did, that work continues.

Mom, I am carrying on our journey.



Pat with her 'favourite' Schoenstatt Sister in South Africa.

Meredith

You know my mother wanted the world for her girls, in fact she wanted everything for us, every opportunity that she didn't have in her world growing up.

That's how her decisions and drive were focused, she put all her effort and resources into giving us skills and experiences which would last us a lifetime.

So, for me, I see what is left now she is gone - her four irreplaceable daughters. She would have seen that as her greatest and most worthwhile achievement.

My Mother exposed us to art, ancient history, theatre, creative play, sewing, music, speech and drama. We all had an amazing education. She was determined we would all swim, do girl guides, have home sewn formal dresses, attend a debut ball, have careers, and with all of that, being wrapped up in being "good people" faith filled, upstanding contributors to our communities. In essence, she wanted us to touch the world as talented and creative, capable beings so we could thrive in our worlds and have the best chance at happiness.

Mum. Rest easy. Your job is done. You can go now into the warm loving embrace of your Heavenly Father, your beloved deceased family and be happy. Without pain, fear and worry.

I know you are fine now. And that's all that matters to me really.

Roanne:

Mum had a fraught, often highly insecure childhood. She had fearful memories of those times that she would sometimes allude to, but always with the swift rider in the form of a story about her father's love for her. She felt deeply loved by both her parents. And she reflected often on their struggles - trying to understand, particularly her father, to piece it all together.

I think this is what forged in her a bone deep, visceral compassion for the fallible nature of human beings. One of her most ardent sayings was 'There but for the grace of God go I'. When she converted to Catholicism, initially because she was marrying dad - she embraced it, you guessed it, 100%. Her faith, I think, made sense of her life experiences of the tragedy of the human condition and gave her a light to follow. She developed a deep and abiding connection to Our Lady.



Coming to Australia in 1980 was a culture shock for us all, and especially for mum. She'd just left South Africa in the midst of apartheid where she'd moved heaven and earth (or more accurately run garage-sales, chicken sales, football sales, and various other fundraising activities, as well as strong-armed the appropriate authorities) to get a house built for Angelina our housekeeper and her six children, who had until then been living in someone else's kitchen in the township Tembisa.

So initially there was a culture shock adjusting to Australia (safe trains? neighborhood watch?) but mum loved Australia - and true to form, she set about forging new communities. The church, of course (the various churches, and Schoenstatt) and many, many friends. In fact, mum (with her rock, Dad), were so good at fostering community, at welcoming people into their life, that I used to joke that every time I went to visit them after I left home, there would be another tribe of people that I'd never met before invited to the gathering.

As time went on and everything else fell away, family remained the most important thing in Mum's life. She really just wanted to be with us. Dad cared for mum for 3 years at home, which allowed her to feel secure and enveloped in the love of her family, particularly after her heart operation. And mum didn't think it was too bad either, that he took over all the cooking, washing and life admin! I do remember asking her if she wanted to make something in the kitchen with me. No! She immediately said.

She didn't like moving into Starrett Lodge in April this year, but she accepted it. The ladies at her table warmed to her smile, the staff loved her wry humour, and we saw again her strength of character. One of the last things mum said to me was "You don't have to worry about me!"

Dying is hard work, it turns out. But mum was courageous. In the very way she died, mum showed us how it's done. I am so proud of her.

Mum, you lived a good, full life. You were a bundle of nerves, a fish out of water, an action hero, a guardian angel whisperer. A reader, and adventurer. A migraine sufferer, a staunch defender. You were chocolate cakes, fish cakes, granny's chicken and shepherd's pie. parsnips, brussel sprouts, a nice cup of tea, homeopathic drops. You had the absolute best smile and a look that could kill, the strength of ten, and a heart that loved to soar in song. You had four girls, nine grandchildren, a good dozen beloved pets, and countless friends. You had our Lady, and most of all, your beloved, Terry. A good, full life.

Mum, as you once said to me, It's time for you to rest now.



Nina

On behalf of all the grandchildren. (Dani, Jacob, Will, Holly, Nina, Blake, Megan, Greta and Maia)

I have to say, we are not surprised in the slightest to see how many people are here today. Because Granny brought people together. That was Granny's favourite thing, community and family, being together

When we think of her, we think of our guardian angel. We knew we could be whoever we wanted to be and try many different things along the way, and she'd always support us. She was our cheer squad, always on our team, no matter the niche hobby or distance to travel. At every opportunity from choir concerts, theatre productions, confirmations, graduations, she was always there for us. She was so excited to see the people we were becoming.

She knew how to have fun, she was so playful, which must have been why she had so much patience for us, as we demolished that house. When we pulled all the blankets and pillows off all the beds and couches and even pulled off whole mattresses to build forts that started in the living room, went via the dining table and then up the passage, she would open the linen cupboard, reach up to the top shelf to get us some more.

She took us to all sorts of shows, theatre, ballet, museums... She wanted us to have the experiences that she might not have always had. She instilled in us big dreams and the confidence to go after them.

When we think of Granny, we think of God, and her commitment to her faith, which she shared with us. Blake was always up very early in the mornings, and he would see Granny and Grandpa taking turns, reading the bible together. And after decades of praying the rosary with Granny, Grandpa led us in praying the rosary last week, while Blake and I were visiting Granny.

And so, when we think of Granny, we think of our Grandpa, and her four daughters, all of whom we all love just so much. And I think of my cousins, who I've had the blessing of growing up with. It was so much fun. Granny brought our family together, and we will always have that.



4 Remembering Bob Camilleri

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A faithful member of the Schoenstatt Men, remembered with gratitude and affection. With deep sadness, and with grateful hearts for a life well lived, we remember Bob Camilleri, a long-standing member of Schoenstatt Men, who was called Home to the Father on Saturday, 27 June 2026, while in hospital.

Bob was a big man in stature, but even more so in generosity, kindness, and quiet service. Those who knew him will remember his warm heart, his readiness to assist whenever he could, and the sincere care he showed to his fellow members. He had a way of being present that brought reassurance, friendship, and a sense of belonging.

His faithfulness was an inspiration to many. In particular, his devotion to our MTA reflected a deep and steady trust in the Blessed Mother's guidance and protection. Through his example, Bob reminded us that the Schoenstatt spirit is lived not only in words, but in loyalty, simplicity, service, and love.

Bob had lots of experience in pastoral care and was very involved in his parish. He was grateful for any time he could spend in the Shrine and in 2016 wrote: "I was in the Shrine all evening from 6pm to 9:30pm. It's been a long time since I was able to spend those three and a half hours with the Lord. I felt the forgiveness, the mercy, and the love that only my Lord could give."

We give thanks for the many ways Bob enriched our community and touched the lives of those around him. His presence among Schoenstatt Men will be remembered with affection, and his witness of faith will continue to encourage us.

May Bob now rest in peace, close to his beloved Mother Mary and her Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. We entrust him to God's mercy and pray that his family, friends, and all who mourn him may be comforted by the hope of the Resurrection.

Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen and Victress of Schoenstatt, pray for him.



4.1 5 Information and Links

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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 – Second Sunday each month 7-8pm Shrine, Mulgoa

➤ Links:

Official Schoenstatt Website

<https://www.schoenstatt.com>

Schoenstatt Australian Website

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

Our YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/schoenstattaustralia>

Western Australian Website

<https://schoenstattwa.org.au>

Schoenstatt Men Website

<https://schoenstatt-men-australia.mailchimpsites.com>

➤ Zoom Gatherings for Covenant Days

– 18th of the Month 7.30 – 8.30 pm AEDT

Videos

July 2026 - The Founding and Development of the Pilgrim Mother Apostolate in Australia

Zoom Meeting 18 July

June 2026 - The Founding of Schoenstatt in the Philippines - <https://youtu.be/adWAhe4K8ZE>

May 2026 - History of our Australian Schoenstatt Shrines – <https://youtu.be/lfvNWDQKWWA>

April 2026 – History of Schoenstatt in Queensland – <https://youtu.be/FHXwwNnggvc>

March 2026 - History of Schoenstatt Family in Melbourne <https://youtu.be/a9EAWZ69i0c>

Note: These videos don't upload from the Schoenstatt Australia YouTube site

DON'T FORGET

“We are all Schoenstatt” - A Challenge Shared by All

It is time to unite, embrace our origin and spread together our Covenant for the future.

The International Schoenstatt Movement continues to need our support.

How to Donate

Donations can be made through various channels, mainly through the **Donorbox** platform.



➤ Contributions to the Newsletter are welcome.

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



LinkTree - a platform where you can view and access all essential links and social media for Schoenstatt Australia.