



September 18 2026 Volume 7 Number 9

United in the Covenant Pilgrims of Hope

1 Covenant Day Message

Dear Schoenstatt Family and Friends,

Greetings on this September Covenant Day. This month we conclude the Novena we have been praying for vocations to the Sisters Community world-wide, but especially in Australia and the Philippines. We are offering this novena as a gift of appreciation for all that the sisters have done and continue to do for our Schoenstatt Family here in Australia and the Philippines.

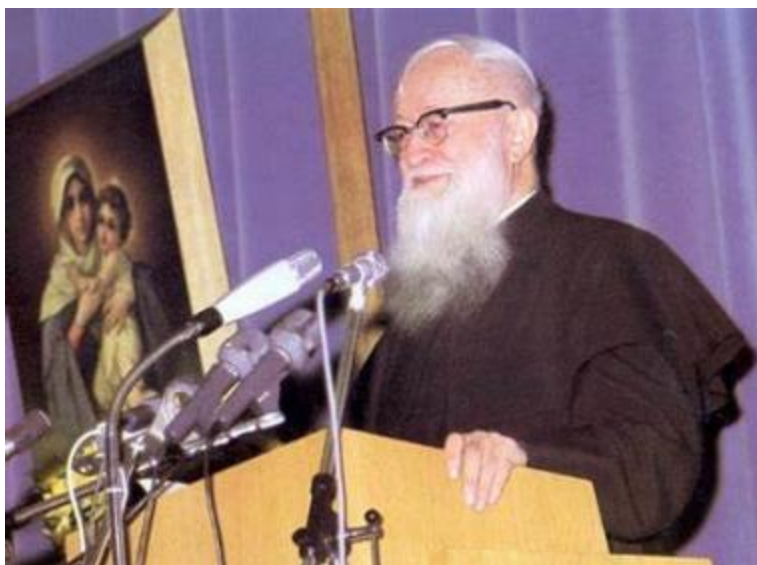
For the past eight months, and again this month, we shared some of the events that have marked the sister's presence here in Australia and the Philippines during the past 75 years. Each month we have looked at a characteristic of the sisters that has inspired them in their Schoenstatt apostolate. This month we are looking to the future and while we don't know what God has in store for our Schoenstatt Family, we do know that the future is in the Father's hands. In the spirit of Inscriptio, we do know that if we hand the unknown future over to our loving Father God then we have nothing to fear.

On 7 September 1968, a week before he died, Father Kentenich wrote a message to the members of the Schoenstatt Family who were taking part in the 82nd German Katholikentag in Essen.

His message ended with an analysis of the activity of the Blessed Mother in Schoenstatt's history, which justified the motto he gave to the Schoenstatters in Essen:

With hope and joy, confident in the victory, we go with Mary into the new era.

He wrote in part: "We wanted to surrender ourselves completely to Mary and allow her to educate us. And she, the great educator of the people and of peoples, accepted the obligation to draw us to herself from her shrines in order to educate us to become useful instruments in her hands for the Marian formation of the coming world into Christ to the glory of the Father.



Topics

1. Covenant Day Message
2. Melbourne Celebrates Our Lady's Assumption
3. Schoenstatt Couples' Orientation
4. An Apostolic Visit to Adelaide
5. Information and Links

We know how both partners carried out their task. All of us have experienced it for ourselves to a greater or lesser degree. She has shown that she is not only the masterly educator of the elite and the masses from her shrine; as the great Missionary she has not only worked continuous miracles of helping people to find a spiritual home, transformation and fruitfulness; she has also proved on a small scale in the many and varied formations of our Family, that she is the brilliant reformer of human society, and the one who crushes the serpent in the battle for Christ and against all diabolical powers. It is not without reason that she is praised as the *terribilis acies bene ordinata* - a terrible army in battle order. Our morning prayer in "Heavenwards" leads us to give thank with all our hearts for this, when we pray:

*We give you thanks for all the gifts we have received in such abundance:
for choosing Schoenstatt as the place of Christ's rebirth
and the place where you radiate into the world
the glories of our Mother,
so that streams of love may pour forth to warm cold hearts.*

.....We also want to repeat in spirit what the first members of the Family at that time promised on oath on their banner as an expression of their consecration, or covenant of love, with the words, *"This is the banner I have chosen, I will not abandon it, I swear it to God!"* We hope that like them we will be allowed to hear the answer of our covenant partner: *This is the instrument I have chosen, I will not abandon it, I swear it to God!* This oath applies to the whole Family; it also applies to each individual member. Let us go out with this attitude into the dark future. We do so with the motto,
"With hope and joy, confident in the victory, we go with Mary into the new era!"

To the extent that we are on fire for it, we will not be able to rest until all whom we love at home and abroad have adopted the same motto. All will then be able to repeat with us: *I firmly believe that no one will be lost who remains faithful to the covenant of love!*

(From: Kentenich Reader 1, P284-286)

As we conclude our Novena for vocations to the world-wide sisters community this month, hopefully we can take to heart these words from Father. We hand the future of our Schoenstatt Family here in Australia and the Philippines over to our Blessed Mother, to our father and founder Fr. Kentenich and to our Heavenly Father God, trusting that they always know what is for the best.

It is in this Inscriptio Spirit that we can now share in the message that Father Kentenich gave to the people in Essen:

We now want to look to the future. We don't know what God has in store for our Schoenstatt Family, but we do know that if we hand the unknown future to our loving Father God then we have nothing to fear.

Love for Love, Adsum

United in our Covenant, we look with confidence to the future, knowing that in our Shrine we have a loving Mother, our father and founder always with us and our Heavenly Father carrying us in his loving hands.

Covenant blessings to all,

Shirley Hall



2 Melbourne Celebrates the Feast of Our Lady's Assumption

Back to Topics

The Melbourne Schoenstatt Family were graced and blessed with the presence of Sr M. Elizabeth Foley from 11 August to 16 August. Sr Elizabeth was also joined by Father Paul Barszczewski OP on the weekend of 15-16 August.



The week preceding the weekend, was spent by Sister Elizabeth meeting with the different Mothers' Groups and Pilgrim Mother Circles in Melbourne. The different groups were most appreciative of enhancing their knowledge and tenets of the Schoenstatt Spirituality as explained by Sister



and sharing their personal experiences and stories.

On Saturday 15 August, the Melbourne Schoenstatt Family celebrated the Solemnity of the Assumption with a Mass at Holy Family Church in Doveton, presided by Fr Paul. Mass was followed by fellowship and a shared lunch.

A *Schoenstatt Formation Session* took place following lunch where Fr Paul presented and shared a presentation on the Queenship of Mary. This was followed by a session led by Sr M Elizabeth wherein she encouraged those present to be serious about their striving and living the Covenant of Love in everyday life, if they want to once again have a Shrine in Melbourne. The joy and enthusiasm were great, and all present want to take the "nothing without us" seriously. Now comes the trust in our MTA to show us the way for such a possibility in the future.



On Sunday 16th August, the Melbourne Schoenstatt family gathered at St Luke's Church to celebrate the Assumption Feast, which commenced with the recitation of the Rosary in the Chapel with our MTA picture from the Kew Shrine. A celebratory Assumption Day Mass, together with the St. Luke's Parish community followed, where Fr Paul was the Principal Celebrant and Fr Joseph Amal, the Parish Priest of St Luke's parish, concelebrated. In his homily, Fr. Paul skilfully combined the readings of the day with tenets of our Schoenstatt spirituality.

Following Mass, the Melbourne Schoenstatt Coordinators were commissioned by Father Paul to go out with the Schoenstatt message and continue the Pilgrim Mother Apostolate for a further 12 months.





In our Schoenstatt Chapel at the back of St. Luke's Church, members presented a single red rose to Our Lady as a sign of our love and commitment on this her special day; the large array of Red Roses was skilfully organised by Delmi Carbello. Schoenstatt hymns were also sung serenading our Blessed Mother before her picture of grace. The renewal of the Covenant of Love concluded the formal celebrations.

A shared lunch, enjoyed by the members of the Community, was followed by the Annual General Meeting of the Community that took place at 2 pm.

A very blessed and fruitful weekend was enjoyed by our community, and we sincerely thank Fr Paul and Sr Elizabeth for their generous offerings and sharing of time and knowledge, to be with us on this very special Feast Day.

Florida Nugara.



3 Schoenstatt Couples' Orientation Day

[Back to Topics](#)

Sr. Luisa Maria

When Sr. Luisa Maria returned to Australia in June, one member of the Movement said to her at the Shrine, "If God called you back to Australia, it means that your mission is not yet finished." She shares what this comment meant to her and the consequences:

"I wondered, *what could this mission be?* I began praying a novena to Sr. M. Emilie. On the last day of the novena, a thought came to me: *How can I bring people to Schoenstatt?* The answer seemed clear — to begin a Schoenstatt Couples' Group. So, I spoke to a couple whom I thought could help me. Their response was very positive, and they immediately invited another couple to join them. The answer was again a definite "YES!"

After several phone calls and exchanges about planning and clarifying the programme our first Schoenstatt Couples' Orientation Day was held on Covenant Sunday, 16th August. For the many practical preparations, a "Team" helped me.

On the day itself, fifteen couples who had registered came. The joy of meeting them was great, especially when we began the programme. The husbands introduced their wives, and the wives introduced their husbands. They shared how long they had been married and a little about their lives together.



There were five parts to the programme. The first was **Getting to Know Each Other**, followed by the **Couples' Memory Challenge**. We then shared **Afternoon Tea**, followed by a 20-minute talk on the theme "**With Mary, Growing in Love and Faith.**"

The fifth part was the **Couples' Conversation**, which unfortunately we did not manage to do because we ran out of time. Instead, I gave each couple a questionnaire to take home as their assignment.

We ended the session with a beautiful song video, "**My Queen, My Mother.**"



Afterwards, people stayed for a while to chat. They thanked us for the wonderful day and returned their completed sign-up forms. Of the fifteen couples who attended the Orientation Day, fourteen committed themselves to coming to monthly meetings and becoming part of the newly established Couples' Group.

Special thank you to the Team: Derek and Joycelyn, Willy and Yolly, Annie and Sr M Renee. Thank you also to Martina who helped with the registration. At the end of the day, another family joined the Team — Billy and Lya from Glenmore Park. Billy, a licensed electrician, helped me set up the projector and made sure my laptop kept working. Lya helped with the registration. Their willingness to serve was a great help.

I could only say a grateful 'Deo Gratias'."

Because of the overwhelming response, Sr. Luisa Maria held a second Schoenstatt Couples' Orientation Day on Sunday, 30th August. This time, the invitation was extended to three neighbouring parishes and eleven couples joined for this second orientation. Six of these couples also indicated their interest in joining a monthly meeting. Let us accompany this new initiative with our prayers.



4 An Apostolic Visit to Adelaide

[Back to Topics](#)

Written by Sr. M. Olivia

Following a successful apostolic visit to Adelaide in 2025, the invitation came again to visit in 2026. Once again, it was the priests in Hectorville Catholic Parish, Fr. Jeevan Gabriel, SMM and Fr. Anthony Beltrame, who extended the invitation for Sr M. Elizabeth and I to return and offer the people of Adelaide some spiritual nourishment.



Similarly to last year, the idea was to deliver another retreat day on Saturday, 8 August – the Solemnity of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop – but this time on the topic of Everyday Sanctity. From there, two further apostolic possibilities arose, and so a little itinerary was put together for the City of Churches.

It all began on Thursday, 6 August on the Feast of the Transfiguration of the Lord with an evening for women. At 7:00pm, the altar was graced with the presence of the Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament, where a Holy Half Hour was spent in silence and in prayer. This was a most perfect way to prepare myself for the talk of the night titled, “BEING Woman: A Gift for the World – Challenging the Status Quo on Femininity”.

Around 60 women of all ages were first engaged to describe the perceptions and expectations of women that they have experienced in today’s secular world. “Independent”, “ageless”, and “in control” were but a few answers given before the all-important question was asked: Well, what is the Catholic antidote to all this? The Catholic antidote, of course, is to gaze upon the most blessed among women, Mary, to learn how to be a genuine woman in today’s society. Three virtues in particular were focused on: gratitude, mercy and piety, as key qualities to embody and bring into all areas of our current world. In highlighting these three virtues, one significant moment in Mary’s life was emphasised in all its glory. It was Mary’s Magnificat where Mary, in the spirit of *prayer*, praised and glorified the greatness of the Lord in *gratitude*, for the *mercy* that God had lavished upon her. A very contrasting message, indeed, to how a woman should live in today’s “be it all, have it all” mentality in the world.

The following night, Friday, 7 August brought something different to the program – a vocations night hosted by the Vocations Centre of the Archdiocese of Adelaide. Fr. Olek Stirrat, a long-time acquaintance of mine

was recently appointed as the Vocations Director of the Archdiocese and was keen to make the most of my presence in Adelaide despite his own absence being overseas at the time. This didn't stop him from putting plans in place to host an evening on the topic of vocations, which providentially fell during National Vocations Awareness Week.

The evening's event, titled, "Beyond the Collar & Veil" began at 6:00pm with dinner at the inner-city Wakefield Hotel just across the road from Adelaide's St Francis Xavier Cathedral. This was followed by an interview facilitated by a young gentleman named Maddy, himself a member of the Adelaide Vocations Centre and a recent convert to Catholicism. On the panel were me and Fr. Anthony Beltrame. Questions were submitted by the attendees during their registration process for the event, and they came from various angles. "What did you do before becoming a sister and a priest?", "How did you discern your call?", "What sacrifices have you had to make?", "Are you fulfilled in your vocation?", were just some of the questions that were fired at Fr. Anthony and me throughout the night, before finishing with a fun series of rapid-fire questions that we needed to answer in 7 seconds or less. One of those quick questions was: what would we say to the Pope if we had the chance to meet him? My answer: Would you like to have a game of tennis? It was a very enjoyable night for me, and hopefully an insightful night for the 50-odd people who were in attendance.



The trip to Adelaide culminated on Saturday, 8 August with the Everyday Sanctity retreat day. The day began at 9:00am with Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Anthony in the beautiful Annunciation Church at Hectorville. This was followed by a move over to the parish hall for the nearly 70 people who had registered for the event. The morning was filled with two talks, both on the topic of striving for holiness in our everyday lives, no matter what state or stage of life one was in. The talks were broken up by morning tea and fellowship, and lunch was served to conclude the morning's input.

After lunch a panel discussion was led by Amanda, a very good friend of mine who had helped significantly in the practical organisation of the day, together with her husband, Gary. On the panel were me and Sr. M. Elizabeth, Fr. Anthony, and Joanne and Ben Lucas, a married couple with four children. The retreatants were encouraged to write down any questions they had throughout the whole morning of my talks. After lunch, the questions were then collected and read out anonymously by Amanda for any of the panel members to respond to. It was a riveting hour of questions and answers, and hearing different perspectives from the different voices and states in life made for a very interesting session, one that I think was the highlight of the day for many of the people.

The retreat day concluded back in the Church with a Holy Hour of Adoration in front of the Blessed Sacrament. During this time, Sr. M. Elizabeth led everyone in praying the luminous mysteries of the Holy Rosary with reflections inspired by Fr. Kentenich on the theme of the day. Fr. Anthony also made himself available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout this time. The day ended with thank you's from both sides, and hopefully many spiritually nourished hearts. Often times you walk away from these sorts of apostolic engagements not knowing how you may have impacted the lives of those you encountered. But a few days following my trip to Adelaide, I received a message from a good friend of mine who attended the retreat day. She is now married with two kids under the age of three, and she had this to say to me:

"I just wanted to again say how much of a blessing it was to attend the retreat on the weekend and what a gift it was for you to be here ... Your words were exactly what I needed to hear, and your conviction not

only reflected how beautifully you live out your vocation but encouraged and reminded me how much I want to live out mine as zealously as you. I hadn't had the opportunity to sit in adoration, go to confession or sit in Mass the way I did in so long. I can't express how much fruit, peace and grace has come from the day. Normally retreats come and go then daily life kicks in and distracts me but the past days have been filled with reflection and encouragement ... Everything you spoke about, and the panel discussion really hit home for me. I've had some big struggles, and I've been blessed with some huge graces, consolations and answered prayers. I think it finally gave me the opportunity to listen to God and know that holiness is found in the mundane and everyday struggles. God really is so good. Thank you so much."

Even if just one life like this was impacted by our little apostolic venture to Adelaide, I say it was worthwhile. We can be very grateful to God and to Our Lady for continuing to open the door to this beautiful city and giving us the opportunity through the Hectorville Parish to bring our Schoenstatt mission to my hometown. Deo gratias!



6 Information and Links

[Back to Topics](#)

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

September 2026 With hope and trust we look to the future. **Zoom meeting 18th September**

August 2026 – We give thanks for all our Schoenstatt Pilgrimages & Jubilee Celebrations

<https://youtu.be/lIXq7zfm5U0>

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5E6T-PeX3js>

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>

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.