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Schoenstatt Australia

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United in the Covenant

Pilgrims of Hope

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1 Covenant Day Message

Dear Schoenstatt Family and Friends,

Blessings and greetings for this Covenant Day – 18th October, a day when we remember and celebrate the founding of Schoenstatt. This has indeed been a year of celebrations. The Schoenstatt Sisters commemorated the founding of their community on 1st October, with the official international celebration in Schoenstatt on 3rd October.

Here in NSW, we celebrated the sister's jubilee centenary on 13th September, and it was a wonderful celebration of the sisters and all they have contributed to Schoenstatt in Australia since 1951.

The Sisters in W.A. will celebrate their Centenary Jubilee on 22nd November at their shrine and we wish them many blessings and graces for this special day.

While this has been a year of celebrations for the sisters, we as a Schoenstatt Family have joined in celebrating with them. We have commemorated the 75 years since the sisters arrived in Australia and 60 years since the founding of the Schoenstatt mission here in NSW. This has been for the sisters, a year of remembrance, gratitude and reorientation to how God wants to lead them in the coming hundred years. As a Schoenstatt Family we need to support our sisters and consider what we can do to help them in our shared Schoenstatt mission.



And now, on 18th October, we remember and celebrate the foundation of Schoenstatt on 18th October 1914. We pray that Our Blessed Mother will send us all many blessings and graces from her Schoenstatt Shrines, and in particular, from the original shrine in Schoenstatt, Germany.

Father Kentenich often said, *"**No one will be lost who is loyal to his Covenant of Love"*** and he also said**, *"If you look for me you will find me in the Shrine."***

This year, part of our National Motto has been: "United in the Covenant". What unites us as a Schoenstatt family- no matter where we come from – our cultural differences, the different ways we express and live our faith? It is our Covenant of Love with our Blessed Mother in the shrine. The Covenant of Love shapes Schoenstatt in many ways. It puts a strong emphasis on being a family of Mary around the Shrine. It forms our spirituality and pedagogy, resulting in a covenant centred approach to faith, hope and love, and to education.

What makes us a family – what is the essence of this Schoenstatt family? In the prayer that Fr. Jonathan Niehaus prepared for our Australian National Conference in 2011, he summarized what being part of the Schoenstatt Family meant for him. The prayer reads:

We are a Family of Mary with our helplessness and limitations.
We are a family of Mary with our abilities and possibilities.
We are a family of Mary with our diversity of backgrounds and longings.
We are a family of Mary with our mission – great and small, with the shrine as our home-fire and our lighthouse.
We are a family of Mary with one another and with all our hearts.
We are a family of Mary.

May we continue to share in the richness of our covenant, as a Covenant Family, united in our Blessed Mother, with our Father and Founder, and with each other.



"The idea of the covenant has grown so deeply into our conscious awareness and our feeling for life that we may unhesitatingly call it our fundamental form, our fundamental meaning, our fundamental strength or force, and our fundamental norm." (JK)

Many Covenant blessings as we celebrate, as a family, the Foundation Day of Schoenstatt.

United in our Covenant,

Shirley Hall

2 Celebrating 10 years of the Crowning of the Mother Thrice Admirable Queen and Victress of Schoenstatt as 'Mother of Mercy and Queen of the Family'

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On the 5th September 2026 we celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the Crowning of the MTA as "Mother of Mercy and Queen of the Family".at the Holy Name of Mary Parish, Rydalmere.

We began with the 5th Glorious Mystery of the Rosary in Heavenwards, The Coronation:

'You reign now in heaven as Queen, and dwell in bliss with the Triune God.
With your Son, you govern the world: He has chosen you to be its Mother.
We longingly lift our hearts and hands and voices:
Lead us safely into the eternal Schoenstatt Land.'

After four months of spiritual preparation and offering our strivings to the Capital of grace, along with the physical planning, the Crowning celebration of our Blessed Mother had finally arrived.
It was such a joy-filled and enriching day.

We began with Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction followed by Holy Mass, fellowship lunch and an inspirational talk by Sr Rita.



At the Mass, the Offertory procession was brought up by the family of Reny & Rudy and their three children. After the Holy Mass, our Blessed Mother was carried, and we processed towards the meeting room and enthroned her there. We recited our Devotional Prayer, followed by the blessing of the PMA images by Fr Pawel. It was a very friendly, joyful atmosphere and plenty of 'catch-up' times for all, members of Schoenstatt and parishioners.



We renewed our Crowning Prayer we had prayed on the 10th of September 2016. We gave thanks for all the blessings and graces we have received from our Blessed Mother through her 'daughter Shrine' in Rydalmere Parish Church. This is a symbol of our Crowning renewal, a sign that we are ready and willing to dare anew to remain loyal and committed to our mission, and a petition to take possession of the Shrines in our hearts. We asked our Blessed Mother to use us as her instruments and educate us, so we can be apostles of the Pilgrim Mother Apostolate. We offered ourselves anew to our Blessed Mother as untiringly useful instruments in her hands.



Just as the angel said to St Joseph, 'Arise! Take the child and his mother ..' (Mt 2.13), so every day we take the child and his mother, and we follow the example of Joao Pozzobon taking the picture of our Blessed Mother into the homes of many people and hearts.

'*Take this picture of the Blessed Mother and give it a place of honour in your home*'. (Fr. J. Kentenich)

All shared the abundance of delicious food. The Jubilee Cake was cut by Reny's family, and it was such a yummy cake that it disappeared quickly.



Comments from parishioners were very positive: 'we should do more here…' 'I am glad I came today…'very rewarding experience'. One responded, 'that she was very thankful that she had been invited'. Another pilgrim expressed the wish to become a coordinator. Another brought a rosary, to remind her of the Crowning Celebration. We were blessed and it appeared that more parishioners were inspired after attending the event.

We thank Fr Pawel Barszczewski OP, who officiated at the Holy Mass and gave us an inspiring homily. We thank him for his support, and we thank Sr. Rita, our PMA Moderator, Sr Elizabeth and Sr Emilyn for their unending support and prayers. We also thank Fr Vincent for his hospitality and support in welcoming us to the parish. Lastly, we thank the Schoenstatt choir who graced our Holy Mass.

Edna Aldana





3 100 Years of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary Mulgoa, Australia – Jubilee Celebration – 13 September 2026

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By Sr. Luisa Maria Fabre

13 September 2026 marked a truly significant day in our Australian history: in Mulgoa, together with movement members, benefactors and friends, the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary celebrated the **100th Jubilee** of the founding of their Secular Institute.

Months and weeks of preparation, together with tremendous organisation and the generous cooperation of so many people, culminated in a blessed and joyful celebration. Above all, we experienced the loving providence of God and the maternal guidance of our Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen and Victress of Schoenstatt, our father and founder Fr. Joseph Kentenich and Sr. M. Emilie, who accompanied us throughout the preparations and on this special day.



The morning dawned bright and beautiful, as though creation itself were rejoicing with us. From as early as 6.45am volunteers were already busy preparing the sound system, cleaning chairs, bringing flowers to the altar, preparing for Holy Mass, organising traffic and preparing the food, etc. Every task, whether large or small, became an expression of love and service.



By 8.00am people from different parts of the state and interstate had begun arriving. Five buses brought pilgrims from different places in Parramatta and Sydney diocese, and reserved seating had been arranged for them. The Archbishop and clergy, guests, members of religious communities, pilgrims and people from the surrounding area continued to arrive. Many had learned about the celebration through announcements in their respective parishes.

By 9.45am the people were seated, and the sight was truly overwhelming. All 1,200 chairs that had been prepared were occupied, and many more people were seated on extra chairs and even on the grass. It was estimated that around 1,500 people attended this memorable and joyful event. The large gathering was a beautiful testimony to the love and appreciation of so many people for our community and its mission.

Holy Mass
The entrance procession began with the Schoenstatt flag carried together with the three national flags: Germany, Australia and the Philippines. The other national flags had been placed in position in front of the Shrine. These symbolised the international character of our community and the journey of our



Sisters throughout the past 100 years. Archbishop Anthony Fisher, Archbishop of Sydney as the principal celebrant together with twelve priests concelebrated the Solemn Mass. There were also two permanent deacons, and three acolytes and altar servers were present. Sr M. Isabell, the provincial superior of Australia and the Philippines welcomed the Archbishop, clergy, guests, pilgrims and visitors. She then read the Jubilee greetings from Dr Biberger and Sr M. Joanna, expressing gratitude to the Archbishop, clergy and all pilgrims for their support and friendship towards our community throughout the years.

The official Jubilee Holy Mass then began.
In his introduction, Archbishop Fisher greeted the Sisters, clergy and guests. He recalled the humble beginnings of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary in 1926 and their remarkable growth over the past 100 years. He highlighted the Sisters' arrival in Australia in 1951 and their coming to Mulgoa in 1968, describing the Shrine as a "little gem" which has since become a shining witness of hope. He encouraged the Sisters to continue being a Marian "light of hope" for the century ahead.



In his homily, Archbishop Fisher reflected on the suffering and conflicts in our world, particularly the terrorist attack of September 11, and emphasised the urgent need for forgiveness, mercy and reconciliation. He highlighted the Marian mission of the Schoenstatt Sisters: like Mary, to bring Christ to others and to become instruments of His mercy, especially through their service to families, young people, the Church and society. He reminded us: *"As we grow in faith and virtue, we learn to forgive, to reconcile, to make strangers our neighbours, make neighbours our brothers and sisters. The life of the Schoenstatt Sisters summons us to such mercy, in caring for the needy, teaching the ignorant, mending divisions, evangelizing those far from God."*

After 100 years of being formed by Mary, the Archbishop encouraged the Sisters to continue walking in her footsteps and to remain a "light of hope," bringing the merciful face of Christ to a world in need of His love. He beautifully concluded: *"For a century now Mary has been forming you, dear sisters, to walk through life like her, and so preparing our times for Christ. May she continue to do so. And may she form all of us, your friends, so we might bring the merciful face of her Son, our Redeemer, to a world desperately needing His love."*



The celebration of Holy Mass was further enriched by the 39-member choir from across the Diocese of Parramatta, together with the musicians and organist. Their beautiful singing created a prayerful and solemn atmosphere. One person remarked that it sounded "like angels singing from heaven." As an offering of thanksgiving after Holy Communion, the choir sang our Jubilee hymn,
"Maria, Light of Our Hope."

Offering of the 100 Roses
After Holy Communion, 100 white roses were offered to the Blessed Mother in the Shrine, representing the 100 years of our community. Five Sisters, each carrying twenty roses representing the five-generations brought the roses to the Shrine. Sr M. Olivia, the youngest of the province sisters then led the Jubilee prayer over the loudspeaker, and all the Sisters joined together in prayer. It was a moving moment of gratitude: 100 years placed into the hands of Mary, with trust for the years yet to come.



Jubilee Celebration refreshments and program
After Holy Mass, everyone was invited to the large tent, where food and refreshments had been prepared. Special tables were arranged for the Archbishop and clergy, religious communities, members of the advisory board, elderly pilgrims and our Sisters. Further seating arrangements were made outside the tent. Soon all seating positions were filled, and conversations and joyful encounters took place as everyone enjoyed the meal together.

At 12.30pm the Jubilee programme began. The MC welcomed Sr. M. Isabell who gave an introduction about whom we are as Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, our 100 Years of existence and our mission in the Church of today. Sr. Luisa Maria then presented an introduction to the 100-year history of our community and its international character. This was followed by presentations from Sr. M. Olivia on our identity and charism, Sr. M. Rita on our mission, and Sr. M. Elizabeth on the Shrine. In between the presentations, testimonies were shared by Fr Sheldon, originally from Perth and Karin Southgate from Melbourne. They gave witness to the impact of Schoenstatt and the Sisters' mission in their personal lives.
After a 10-minute break to prepare the Jubilee cake, the celebration continued with the cutting of the cake and the presentation of gifts and expressions of gratitude.



These included a presentation by Shirley Hall who, on behalf of the Australian Schoenstatt Movement, expressed gratitude for the work of the sisters and presented Sr. M. Isabell with their spiritual gift of a nine-month Novena for vocations to the Sisters' Family. Representatives from Melbourne then presented Sr. M. Isabell with two gifts, a plaque with a picture of the Kew Shrine and an inscription of gratitude as well as a mounted picture expressing their spiritual bouquet which included many Masses, rosaries, novenas, hours of adoration and special efforts.

Sr. M. Isabell and Fr Andrew Fornal, OP, one of the Dominican Fathers who serves us regularly for our daily Masses etc, cut the Jubilee cake together. Fr Andrew then gave a serious but at the same time a light-hearted talk expressing his experiences with the Shrine, the Sisters and our mission, bringing joy and laughter to the gathering.



Exhibition and Encounters
The exhibition area in the Family Hall was well attended throughout the day. Visitors had the opportunity to learn more about the history and mission of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary. Many also took the time to write messages in the Congratulatory Book and on the long roll of paper provided, expressing their best wishes, gratitude, and appreciation to the Sisters.



The exhibition was prepared through the hard work and dedication of Sr. Mary Louise. On the day she was supported by several volunteers from the Youth Group, as well as our sisters who faithfully assisted with mingling with the people, offering give aways and selling merchandise connected with our jubilee. Their generous service helped make the exhibition welcoming and meaningful for all who visited.

After the official programme, an optional video presentation, *"From Within,"* was offered. Only a smaller group remained to watch it, while others preferred to spend time in the exhibition area. Throughout the day the many personal encounters were deeply meaningful. The day was not simply about celebrating the past; it was also an opportunity for people to discover more about who we are, our mission and our vocation as Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary.

Several people expressed a desire to know more about Schoenstatt and to become more involved in the Movement. In this way, the Jubilee celebration became not only a thanksgiving for the past 100 years, but also an opening towards the future.

A Grateful Heart
As we look back on this extraordinary day, our hearts are filled with profound gratitude.
Special thanks to our Lord, to our Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen and Victress of Schoenstatt, and to our Father and Founder, to M. Emilie who accompanied us and made this Jubilee celebration such a memorable and grace-filled occasion.



A special thank you to the many volunteers whose generous service, time, and dedication made the celebration possible. Every helping hand, every prayer, every chair prepared, every meal served, and every welcome offered became part of this beautiful celebration.
We are deeply grateful to the Jubilee Team of our Sisters who worked so hard to make this wonderful day possible. We are also grateful to all the Sisters who helped in so many different ways, especially through their prayers for a blessed celebration and favourable weather.

Not least, we give a special and heartfelt thank you to the deceased Sisters of our Province, who devoted their strength and lives to the mission of Schoenstatt in Australia. Their dedication, courage, and faith continue to be an example and inspiration for us as we carry forward the mission entrusted to us by our Father and Founder, which began in Australia in 1951 and in the Philippines in 1987. We also thank our benefactors, volunteers, and friends, past and present, for their generous support, friendship, and dedication throughout the years.

One hundred years of grace, one hundred years of Mary's guidance, one hundred years of mission—and now, with grateful hearts, we place the next 100 years into her hands.
May Mary, the Light of Our Hope, continue to lead us, form us and send us forth to bring Christ to our world.

4 Homily for Mass for 100th Anniversary of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A), Mt Schoenstatt Shrine, Mulgoa, 13 September 2026

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MOST REVERENT ARCHBISHOP ANTHONY FISHER, OP, ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY

Twenty-five years ago this week, the September 11 terrorist attacks took the lives of 3,000 people, while the rest of the world looked on in horror. In the days that followed, people rarely seen in church came in droves, looking for somewhere to put their numbness and grief, fears and prayers. World leaders, reporters and others unaccustomed to religious language found themselves slipping naturally into it, as human beings so often do when trying to speak the unspeakable.

The horrific events of that day did more than just tear innocent people from their families and friends. Many felt helpless or angry or both. A new era of conflict followed in Afghanistan, Iraq and beyond. The so-called "war on terror" affected air travel, national security and public life the world over. Everyone felt more vulnerable, as we recognised that no one is immune to fanatics who do not care whom they kill. As the Book of Ecclesiasticus declares today, "Remember the last things… dissolution and death," for these must surely come, even to you (cf. Sir 27:33-28:9).

A quarter century later, we have made little progress. War in the Middle East, hatred for the Christian West, insecurity at home, all are more common not less. The conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan and elsewhere may have very different histories, but they all demonstrate Ben Sirach's observation, "Resentment and anger, these things pollute us… unforgiving and vengeance resist God's mercy." How are we to regain reverence for life after the twentieth and bloodiest of centuries, in which more people were killed in war or civil strife than in all our previous history? How can we recover hope when our new century began with a 9-11? Are we doomed forever to wage unholy wars in the name of race or religion, of ideology or interest?

In today's Gospel, Peter asks Jesus, "Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?" (Mt 18:21-35). Living together in a kind of religious community, the Twelve Apostles had plenty of occasions to forgive each other (or not). Living in a world hostile to their beliefs, there were plenty of enemies to pardon also. But we all know how hard it is to forgive our loved ones, let alone strangers or foes. It is hard enough to forgive them once, let alone repeatedly. We are wounded. We nurse the grudge. Maybe we get a temporary energy out of hating. So, we bring out our cause of resentment for regular



veneration. Meanwhile evidence accumulates, as every little thing the offender does becomes further proof of their wickedness. Even their mannerisms annoy us. We attribute all sorts of dark motives. It is so hard to resist the waves of anger and temptation to retaliate. Even harder to swallow our pride and make some tentative gestures towards reconciliation.

Peter thought he was being generous in offering to forgive his mates as many as seven times. Rabbinical teachers of the time said we only need forgive the same offense or same offender three times. So, Peter was more than doubling what could reasonably be expected. But Jesus responds, “Not 7 times but 77 times, indeed 7 times 70 times!” In other words, forgive completely, forgive endlessly, as God forgives.

It was a challenging answer. It sounds impossible. But Jesus knows the human soul. He knows how the alternative—being unforgiving or niggardly in mercy—is lethal for the soul and quite possibly for the body. Hatred fuels an endless cycle of revenge or else enervates the hater. Resentment eats us up. We see this in nations that nurse ancient hatreds. We see it closer to home in our own communities, families, selves.

Our world today is in desperate need of Jesus’ alternative. More than justice-by-hitting-back. More than peace-based-on-fear. More than live-and-let-live. Our world needs mercy, the justice of God’s kingdom. That grace of reconciliation comes only from the crucified God, from the One who says from the Cross, “Forgive them Father, they don’t know what they are doing.” (Lk 23:34) While ever we count another as our enemy, we are in their power, indeed the Devil’s power. In the end, as Abraham Lincoln observed, the only way to conquer enemies is to turn them into friends. And only the Prince of Peace can show us how to “put away the sword” (Jn 18:11).

Consecrated life is one of the ways Christ shows us. St John Paul II described it as a “living memorial of Jesus’ way of living and acting”: a way by which the features of Christ—poor, chaste, obedient and forgiving—are made known to the world. (John Paul II, *Vita consecrata: Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation on Consecrated Life* (1996) 22.)
For the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, this imitation of Christ has always had a particularly Marian dimension. Mary receives Christ uniquely and totally, bearing the God-man in her womb so that He might be brought to all people—as at the Visitation when she brought Him in the monstrance of her body to her cousin Elizabeth. As at the Nativity when she brought Him forth for the adoration of angels and saints, shepherds and king. As at the Presentation and the Finding when she brought Him to the priests and worshippers. As at the wedding-feast in Cana, when she identified Him as the man of miracles. As at the Cross when she joined His self-offering for the salvation of the world. As Mary, again and again, carries her Son to others, so incarnating and sharing Him with others is the Schoenstatt Marian calling.



And this Marian pattern also speaks to us about Gospel mercy. Mothers must forgive, again and again, from the time their little one gives them morning sickness, the pains of childbirth, the sleepless nights. Through many more occasions of anxiety and demands, mothers must forgive our disobedience, ingratitude, neglect. And as they must be merciful if they are to keep loving and nurturing their young, so mothers teach us mercy, even before we have words for it, even before we know it incarnate in Jesus, the Divine Pity. As we grow in faith and virtue, we learn to forgive, to reconcile, to make strangers our neighbours, make neighbours our brothers and sisters. The life of the Schoenstatt Sisters summons us to such mercy, in caring for the needy, teaching the ignorant, mending divisions, evangelizing those far from God.

In 1994, St John Paul II told the Schoenstatt Sisters that their Marian path was one of complete availability for the Church's mission. Like Mary, he said, they are called to receive God's gifts and then share them with others. In their pastoral work with young people and families, in promoting devotion to the Mother Thrice Admirable (Queen and Victress of Schoenstatt), in the myriad ways they serve Church and society, the mission of the sisters is to permeate the realities of this world with the Spirit of Christ. John Paul the Great encapsulated this task by recalling the prayer of Fr Kentenich during his imprisonment in Dachau: "Let us walk through life like You" Blessed Mother, "and make our times ready for Christ!"

As Jesus is Mercy, Mary is Mother of Mercy. She had to forgive her Son for His neglect of her when going about His Father's business. She had to forgive the angel, her God and her Son for asking things of her that must have seemed impossible. She had to forgive the persecutors of her Son and herself, the two Herods, Pilate, the religious authorities. She had to forgive the apostles for abandoning her Son when He and she most needed them, when she was left almost alone at the Cross. And forgive them this Mother of Mercy did, as there she was, surrounded by the apostles, praying for the Spirit of Pentecost.

For a century now Mary has been forming you, dear sisters, to walk through life like her, and so preparing our times for Christ. May she continue to do so. And may she form all of us, your friends, so we might bring the merciful face of her Son, our Redeemer, to a world desperately needing His love.
Happy birthday centenarians. Ad multos annos!



5 Diamond Jubilee of Sisters Myrna, M. Janette and M. Margrid.

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On 29th September, the feast of the Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Sisters Myrna, M Janette and M Margrid celebrated their diamond jubilee as Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary. Fr. Kentenich himself was the one who accepted their promises of loyalty and obedience in Germany in 1966. The sisters wish was to have Mass in the Shrine and so the renewal of their promises took place following the 7am Mass in the Shrine with Fr. Pawel OP as the officiating priest.

The Sisters at Mulgoa celebrated with the three sisters throughout the day. Not only did we remember the three sisters but also Sr. M Georgina and Sr. Mary Agnes, who were part of the group who were sent to Australia in 1967 by Fr. Kentenich. This memorable occasion was an opportunity to give thanks to God, the Blessed Mother and our founder as well as the sisters themselves for their loyalty over 60 years.

We were also grateful that Sr. M Isabell, our provincial, was able to still be with us for breakfast. Later in the morning Sr. M Isabell travelled to Schoenstatt Germany to attend the official celebrations of the 100 years since the Foundation of the Sisters' community (Oct 1-3) and following this, the General Congress of the Sisters' Family, which takes place every four years.

Let us give thanks to our Jubilarians who have served our province, both here in Australia but also in the Philippines during these 60 years. Age does not permit the sisters to do too much active work now, but their apostolate of prayer and presence is much appreciated. Thank you Sisters Myrna, M Janette and M Margrid.





6 Vale Sr. M. Louisa

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Sr. M. Louisa was called home to eternal life on 7th October, the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. Her funeral Mass was held at Mount Schoenstatt on 12th October. The following is the Eulogy for Sr. M. Louisa.



Sr. M. Louisa was a woman of prayer, rooted in God and faithful to her calling to those privileged to know her. She is one of the first sisters to be called home at the beginning of our new century as Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary.

Sr. M. Louisa was born on 25 January 1931 as the eldest of five children. Her youngest sister, Renata, is with us in spirit today. When I told her of Sr. M Louisa death, she told me that Sr. M. Louisa, being the eldest, was like a mother to her. She was a great support throughout her life, even if her sister was far away in Australia.

Until the outbreak of World War II, she lived happily with her family. Her mother was a convert and, together with her father, they provided the foundation for her religious upbringing. During the war, however, she was separated from her family and placed with a foster family, who had a deep faith and thus further nurtured her spiritual growth. It was during her time with this family that she received her First Holy Communion, an experience she later described as “very profound”.

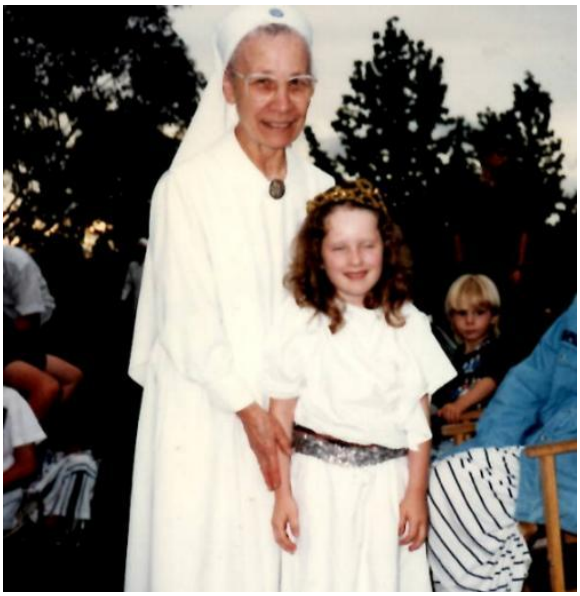
Although Sr. M. Louisa’s death was not unexpected, it came suddenly. For several years she suffered from leukaemia and required regular blood transfusions. In June of last year, following a hospital stay, she moved happily into a nursing home where she could receive a level of care we were no longer able to provide. Her outgoing and sociable nature enabled her to feel at home wherever she was. She could not speak highly enough of the nursing home and its staff; in her eyes, everything was simply wonderful. It is at this point that I would like to express the thanks of Sr. Isabell, our provincial who is at present attending a General Congress of our family in Germany, as well as all of our Sisters, to the nursing staff at OLOC Rooty Hill. We are truly grateful for the love and care that was provided for Sr. M Louisa over the last sixteen months. Sister’s attitude at being in the Nursing home was very characteristic of her positive and grateful spirit. She had a wonderful sense of humour, a gift that brought lightness, joy, and encouragement to all whom she met.

In recent months, however, she spoke more frequently of “going home.” In the last couple of weeks, she was brought to the hospital three times. After the last visit, she asked the nursing staff to prepare her “blue dress.”

Sr. M. Louisa encountered Schoenstatt as a young teenager and became active in the Schoenstatt Youth. She later belonged to the Women’s Union for five years before entering our community on 4 February 1956. (This branch of our Schoenstatt Family is not yet in Australia) Her intention was to serve in the missions. Although she had originally been destined for Africa, she was not granted a visa and so, instead, together with another course sister – Sr. M Loretta whom many of you knew - she arrived in Australia on 3 November 1960. She spoke her final “yes” to our

community on 27 January 1965 in the then Central House in Ashfield, Sydney. In later years, she often expressed profound gratitude that God had led her to Schoenstatt.

Sr. M. Louisa possessed a special gift for relating to children and also to animals. One of the responses we received following the announcement of her homegoing, gives an idea of the latter: “I remember her very well … She had a love for animals, as well as children. I discovered for the first time the activity of the resident Bowerbird, who collects blue things to impress the female species. Sister described her experiment, of removing all the blue items from the nest; then the next day, blue items appeared, again.” I heard from one of the neighbours that she would ride her bike to their little farm and handle the little piglets, much to the concern of mother pig and enjoy the horses on the property. If we sisters had any difficulty with any of God’s creatures, Sr. M Louisa was the one we called upon to help us, whether it be a bird, a bat, a mouse, or a kangaroo. She simply had a knack with animals.



But even more so with children. She interacted naturally with them, and they, in turn, responded readily to her warmth and kindness. Recognising this gift, the community sent her to Western Australia in January 1961 to assist in our newly established kindergarten there. Since she had no formal training in childcare, after a year she returned to NSW, where, in a kindergarten run by another community, she gained training and practical experience. Returning to Western Australia in 1964, she managed our kindergarten there for almost twenty years. She was much loved by the children, and her work was greatly appreciated by their parents. It was through her apostolate with the parents, that she played an important role in the formation of the first Schoenstatt Mothers’ and Family Groups in Western Australia.

In 1982, Sr. M. Louisa was transferred to the Provincial House in New South Wales – by this time now in Mulgoa. Here she primarily assisted with household responsibilities. However, at the same time, she was once again able to use her gift with children by teaching catechetics in state schools. She continued this work throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The response that I quoted earlier further reads: “Sr M. Louisa introduced me to her catechist class at the local public school. She inspired me to do this work when I returned home following my time at Mulgoa.”



One of Sister’s greatest joys was assisting with children's programmes at family and mothers’ weekends, as well as at other formation events within the Schoenstatt Movement. The children enjoyed being with Sr. M. Louisa so much so that it was often difficult to persuade them to return to their parents.



For the past twenty to twenty-five years, until her move to the nursing home, Sr. M. Louisa was truly a pilgrim sister at our Consors Patris Shrine, here in Mulgoa.

She was rarely seen without a rosary in her hands, whether in the house chapel long before morning prayer or later at the Shrine. Therefore, it seems especially providential that Sr. M. Louisa was called home to God on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. She would pray at least three rosaries a day and often more, including the many intentions entrusted to her.

As she prayed in and around the Shrine, she always had a ready smile and a welcoming word for visitors. This is the way that many people remember her. Visitors often shared their struggles and concerns with her and asked for her prayers. Young couples frequently came seeking Our Lady's intercession for the gift of a child or assistance in finding work. They would often return to tell Sr. M. Louisa how their prayers had been answered. The arrival of a newborn child brought her particular joy. She was truly a "Shrine Apostle."

Here are a couple of other echoes from those who encountered Sr. Louisa at the Shrine:

"Sr Louisa was the first smiling face I met at Schoenstatt, I'll never forget our talks."

"She was such a beautiful person. I always felt so loved by her. She was such a great part of my life as a member of the Schoenstatt Family."

"Every time I came there, she was always there with that beautiful gentle smile and welcoming me into the Shrine."



Sr. M. Louisa entered our community at a very difficult time during our father's exile. Her course group therefore saw their mission in being a sacrifice of love through which the Heavenly Father's plans should become clear, especially regarding an understanding of our father's charism. Sr. M Louisa always kept close contact with her course sisters, even during the time she was in Rooty Hill.

It is with sadness but also deep gratitude that we farewell Sr. M Louisa this morning. I would like to finish with words from Sr. M Isabell:
May her fidelity, her prayerfulness, and her joyful spirit accompany us and inspire us as we embrace the future with courage and hope. While we shall miss her, we remain grateful for the blessing of her life and for all that she has given to our community. May she now rest in peace.

7 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
  NOTE: There will be **NO Zoom gathering on 18th October**.

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

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 movtoffice@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.

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