

One Hundred Years Journey, A View of Schoenstatt

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Upon thinking about the one hundred years' history of the Covenant of Love, the fundamental question emerges: How is Schoenstatt founded anew when we complete a century of history? We want to found Schoenstatt anew following the motto that accompanied the celebration for the first fifty years of history: "Faithful to the origin, found anew." We want to do it going back to the origin, to the beginning of our Covenant history, to the roots, to what is fundamental, to the simplest and purest form that was germinating from the beginning. To found anew, respecting the principles, the bases, which were the bases of the first covenant. Faithful to Father Kentenich, to what God did in him. Through it, without wanting to take it all in, I am going to mention some perceptions, routes for reflection, open questions, a look at the life which permits us to think on what it means for each one of us that Schoenstatt completes its one hundred years of history. Pope Francis, when he was Cardinal Bergoglio, said to the Movements: "How sad when a movement or an institution becomes ill and instead of being shepherds for the community, they become 'hairdressers for sheep' and they spend all their time in conferences 'dressing up their soul!' Be careful! Be careful with the elite groups. The elites close themselves up in the bubble, lose their missionary horizon, lose the motivation, and lose the courage. Institutions and Movements have to provide the legacy. You will ask me: 'Father, where?' In the street, in the street. There where the life of this city is taking place. As bishop, I ask you: Please, do not keep the legacy in the china cabinet to show it off to visitors. Take it to the street, seek missionary horizons, 'risk it' daily, may this legacy – which we have received so gratuitously – be the leaven for this city." These words of Pope Francis, then Cardinal Bergoglio, pronounced sometime ago, have a special power today. Yes, we want to take our charism out of the china cabinet, we do not want to live being hairdressers to sheep, that is not our mission. We want to form ourselves so that we may go out and share what we have received. We want to open the doors and offer to the Church, to the world, that legacy we have received so gratuitously. We are profoundly grateful for our history, for all the life that has come forth from the source of the Shrine. We are awed always anew. God is faithful; Mary is always loyal. We have received many gifts and blessings and we are happy. To reach one hundred years is an occasion for each one of us to ask ourselves how is the Schoenstatt we are living. Perhaps the passing of the years has filled the old dreams and desires with dust. Is the Schoenstatt we are living young, youthful? Is it a joyful Schoenstatt that permeates all the spheres of our life? Do we live the radicalism of the Covenant even to its ultimate consequences? Are we faithful children to all that Father Kentenich left us as his legacy? This reflection has helped me return to the origin, to renew myself in my love for Schoenstatt, to not

let me remain in the structure and in forms. Father Kentenich did not want to found an International Movement. He simply said 'yes' to God and Mary, and the rest came in addition; that is how life in God usually is, when we give Him everything and hold back nothing, God gives us the unexpected.

First reflection: a look at our Father and Founder

Schoenstatt cannot be understood without Father Kentenich. Schoenstatt was born from his heart as Father and prophet; it breaks through in his personal history, it emerges in his soul. He experienced in his own flesh how Mary was capable of healing and forming a new man from clay. Not from recipes or from programmed asceticism, but from the life of each one, from personal history, that is how God acts. That is how He did it with Father Kentenich, and with him, everything started. God bursts into history and makes use of a favorite instrument, of a man with abilities and defects – a man very much of God, in love with Christ, passionate for Mary– a man already wounded from the crib. The healing power of love ultimately healed him. But his wound was always a source of life and a road to sanctity– the cause of his pain and motive for hope. How important our wounds are! He was the child of a single mother. His father never embraced him. Mathias Joseph Koep never acknowledged him as his son and also never married his mother. Thus Joseph felt rejected from childhood; it is so many peoples' experience in this life. On many occasions, there are children with living fathers who never feel loved by them. Father Kentenich experienced this rejection, abandonment and loneliness. The years of loneliness in an orphanage marked him forever. His honor, his reputation, his name... all in doubt. The loneliness of a very rational man, without attachments, closed within himself, with the heart trapped behind a wall. Often the heart goes another way and the head wants to understand the reasons. In him – was very clear – the separation between faith and life, between ideas and the heart, between dreams and the incarnate reality. A distant God, a brutal God, a God detached from man. An idea of a God that was not able to penetrate all the fibers of the heart. Father was able to walk to the brink of the abyss, to the brink of insanity. He reached the extreme and God stopped him there. Where does the change begin? The break and the unity. The wound and the life that comes forth from the same hurt. That wound from whence hope comes forth. The wound that causes so much pain and that sometimes one feels like covering up, hiding it, denying it. Father Kentenich came to affirm that no one, no human being, had an influence on his own education during his infancy and adolescence. That is a hard affirmation. The heart understands how deep the wound in his soul is. Nobody, only Mary, only the Virgin from that first consecration, had an influence on him. That is a terrible affirmation, hard, moving. What inner loneliness! And he did not fall into desperation, although, as he himself confesses, he was at the point of going insane. How much like the man of today! How real his wound! A man with no roots, who does not see his faith incarnate, embodied, who does not see God in his own life. A man alone, with his pain, uncommunicative, trapped in his abandonment. A wounded man and divided within himself.

How and when did his wound begin to heal? The consecration to Mary of a nine-year old child is the key point. That moment of Katharina's surrender is the first

opening crack. We owe it to her that Mary would take Joseph's education seriously. It is an act that could almost have passed unnoticed, hidden with the passing of the years in his memories. That is how Schoenstatt began in his own heart. The first Covenant was pronounced with timidity, filled with fear, almost without knowing it... his own mother, Katharina Kentenich. She did it with great sadness and in silence, broken by the pain, impotence, at the door of an orphanage. This humble and brave woman took the first step without knowing it. She backed down, she stood aside, and let Mary be on the first level. She, who loved her son so much and who was able to renounce so many things for him, became the first link in a long chain. Katharina loved Mary and trusted her. Surely she had already showed the face of Mary to little Joseph and pointed to her as his mother from a very early age. At that moment, she felt destitute, totally incapable of continuing to care for Joseph daily. Schoenstatt begins in this way, with the renunciation of a mother whom we seldom remember and thank. There are so many mothers today who renounce being with their children so they can live in Spain and earn enough money for their future education. I think about so many immigrant mothers who leave their children in their home countries, because they cannot support them here nor take care of them. The renunciation generates life, although it may bring along much pain for both parts. Sometimes we think not, that renunciation is only pain, absence, a loss, and lack of completeness that has no meaning. In God's plan, everything falls into place, although on earth it may be difficult to understand his desires. Renunciation is a source of life in the heart of God, Mary's renunciation to take care of Jesus, the renunciation of Jesus on the Cross to save mankind. The renunciation of so many saints throughout the history of the Church. It is the renunciation done in the heart of God, with humility, in obedience, the one that gives life, the one that is fertile. The Father receives the life of a mother who is capable of renouncing it for love. She receives life in that same renunciation. Katharina renounces herself, her plans, and her own path to happiness, of self-realization as a person. That self-realization which now seems sacred for the whole world. Today, many people seek themselves, trying to fulfill themselves, of finding the best place to unfold their talents and abilities. They complain when they do not find their life's employment, or the house, or the country, when their dreams are not fulfilled and they do not understand that renunciation can be of value. Nevertheless, Katharina, a woman also wounded and rejected by her son's father, is capable of renouncing for love, of placing herself on a second level. She is a strong woman who learns to live in loneliness so that her son may have an education and can make his way. She surrenders that which she loves most and thus learns to love in silence, in solitude, often at a distance. She learns to educate on her knees, like so many other mothers when they feel helpless at the hour of educating their children. We are plunging ourselves into the wound of Father Kentenich's love. In that moment, Mary cared for that deep wound. Katharina also takes care of it by her renunciation, being close by. Schoenstatt is born from the humility of a renunciation, from the silence of a renunciation, from the oblivion of that woman who gave life to a poor child named Joseph Kentenich. Schoenstatt begins in the solitude of knowing how to renounce what we love most for love, with meaning. Schoenstatt begins with a renunciation and with an act of faithful surrender to Mary. Katharina entrusts her son, Joseph, to Mary. She seals the first Covenant and Mary accepts that exchange of hearts. She places in her powerful Mother's hands the destiny of an abandoned child. Katharina did not know what she could do, and she trusted in

Mary. She abandons herself. She places his life in her hands, and she trusts blindly that everything will work out well. And that is how it is. When Joseph looks back, he sees in this act of consecration the first Covenant. He sees in that faithful surrender the beginning of everything. There he became a child of Mary forever. In a not so conscious form. In a simple and humble form. But that first Covenant changed his life forever.

At this time in which we celebrate and are grateful, I believe Schoenstatt invites us to be capable of living off-center (decentralized). Katharina's renunciation makes us ask ourselves if we are capable of renouncing, of placing ourselves on the second level, of being joyful because others can make their way and find their way to happiness, while we remain hidden on a second level. Mary appears as a model, not only as a way. She placed herself in second place and accepted the condition of servant, bringing his words to life: "Let it be done unto me according to your word." She withdrew, she let Jesus become flesh in her life and would change forever her path, her destiny, the route of her steps, her own life plans. It is about being capable of denying ourselves in order to be able to affirm others. When I think about Schoenstatt, I think that it should always come forth anew in this way. From the humility of the renunciation. This maxim is fundamental so that Schoenstatt may be renewed in our heart. How, if we do not aspire to give life to others? When we like first place and we seek power, we are not being faithful to this beginning. When we want to be taken into account and valued for the giving of one's self, we do not understand how the first Schoenstatt seed was sown. We can easily fall into the temptation of ranks and positions, of success and efficiency. Schoenstatt lends itself so that each Schoenstatter feels as founder and believes that everything begins anew with him. We all run the risk of forgetting Katharina Kentenich. "Without the winepress, there is no wine," prayed Father Kentenich. "If the grain of wheat which falls to the earth does not die, it remains alone," Jesus tells us. To deny ourselves only has meaning if it is so that others may have life in abundance. It is the meaning of all renunciation. A death to give life. That there may be more life in others, a true life and complete. Our way of abundance passes through the way of abundance of those whom we love. **Do we value renunciation? Do we understand that it can be a source of life and fruitfulness? What do we renounce for love?**

The truth is that on thinking of our Founder, I think of the luck we have. We have a wounded Founder. He is not perfect. He does not come from an ideal family, as perhaps some saints and as perhaps we would have wanted. He did not have a family with a father and mother who loved each other and with perfect children who loved each other. He was a man without roots, without strong human attachments, with worthy family experiences to be remembered, without brothers and sisters. He did not have beautiful memories of his infancy, nor photos, nor places filled with fantasy. There was, indeed, a lot of solitude, hardness, austerity, and poverty. Father Kentenich had a deep wound of indifference and loneliness, as ours always are. To the point that it was hard for him to speak of this even at the end of his life. Even to the point that in Schoenstatt it was a taboo topic. To that point it was a profound wound, a deep wound, a limiting weakness. In reality, it made him unfit for what is most evident in a man, which is to be in relationship and to create attachments. Furthermore,

he remained marked by an era in which personal attachments were not seen as good. A wound which led him to a lack of inner unity that was so strong and that at some moment he says that he was on the brink of insanity, that division between faith and life, between the Almighty God and the God of his heart, incarnate, who had something to do with him, between the human and the divine, between ideas and life. If one would think about that moment, before 1912, in searching for the adequate person to found a Movement with the characteristics of Schoenstatt, we would never have chosen Father Kentenich. In fact, the first voting to accept him into the diaconate was negative because they did not know the interior life of Father Kentenich. God allowed him to be accepted in the second round of voting. God chose Father Kentenich so that from him would emerge a Movement which would help and give an answer to many of the wounds he himself had, a Movement of attachments, a home to grow roots. So many things that he himself lacked and precisely God used him for it. Why did he stress the wound so much? Because God uses us with our wound, not in spite of it. Just as Katharina's renunciation was a source of life, and our renunciation is a source of life, also our wound can be a source of life as it was in Father Kentenich. The wound at the open side of Christ is a source of life. Our own wound, when we accept it and kiss it, God uses it and it is a source of life. Through this there is a first key for understanding Schoenstatt. Schoenstatt is called to found itself anew from this reality that seems to me so important. God does not deny our wound when He wants to give life from our own YES. He does not build on a soul without sin, except in the case of Mary. No, God accepts us as we are and is not ashamed of our wound. On the contrary, He makes use of it. We often think that God only loves our virtues and takes advantage only of what we do good, those talents he has placed in our soul. If we sing well, he will use us so that others may fall in love with Him, thanks to our voice. If we are geniuses in computerization, He will use this very practical talent to evangelize in this way. But it is hard for us to understand that God would want to use our limitations, our weakness, that wound we want to forget, to give life in abundance to others.

Father Kentenich's loneliness, which in itself is something terrible, becomes the key to understand how Schoenstatt emerged. God used his loneliness to make him the father of a family. He used that silence, that depth of his interior life, that garden rich in depth, so that a new charism would germinate there. He used the clay of his history, to germinate a work of art. His lack of a father was fundamental for awakening in him the desire to give what he had not received, a profound and authentic paternity (fatherhood). The wound, the rupture, become a bridge, a way of sanctity. I think that Schoenstatt is founded anew in us when we assume this truth in us, that without our wound, God cannot give life to others. Because the wound becomes a portal of entry, so that God may enter and so that others may come near. Because our wound makes us humble and more merciful and makes us judge the reality from a position of smallness and not from pride. Enough of formulating personal ideals which are not ours, but taken from the lives of the saints or created while looking at an ideal which is so far from us that perhaps it will never belong to us. Ideals, which break us up inside because they continuously remind us of the disproportion between what we desire and what we are. Let us start from our own wound, from our life just as it is, from our smallness which dreams of heights. That is how Father Kentenich did it. Let us understand that from that wound, from the

depth of our pain, from that history of which we are so often ashamed, that is from where God begins to carve out the true masterpiece which he wants to make of us. That wound of which perhaps we might never dare to speak of in public – as would happen to Father Kentenich – is our source of life and our way of salvation. Let us accept our history, if we are able to love our own flesh, with which God will work wonders. Let us think that it is possible for God to do impossible things. He can do everything well, starting with our poverty. That is how God did it with Mary, from her smallness. Thus he has always done it again with the saints. That is how He did it with Father Kentenich. To live thus will make us more merciful, more human, more humble, more joyful because we will not have to defend ourselves against anyone. In Schoenstatt, sometimes we value more the talents and we center on the capabilities. The one who speaks well, the one who has a marvelous life, the one who writes incredibly, the one who gives marvelous testimonies, the one who sings like the angels, the one who is a good group leader, the one who has read many books about Schoenstatt and knows how to expound on them, etc. We are attracted by perfection; we cannot help it. Original attractiveness seems that it will be more fruitful, and we spurn the one who does not know as much, the one who is not distinguished, the one who seems to not have so many talents, the one who is clumsy, the one who is very wounded. In his life, Father Kentenich surrounded himself by wounded persons. I think that to found anew starts by being open, by building on the lives of those God has entrusted to us, with the free rowers we have, without looking for the non-existent perfection. It consists in our being happy with the clay, even if it is not perfect, pure and brilliant. If we do not do it, we will not be faithful to the origin of our sacred history. We do not look for efficiency; we do not pretend that everything turns out well, to be perfect coordinators of events. We do not want to be selective, looking only for the elite to lead the masses. Because that was not the way that Jesus followed in his life. Jesus surrounded himself by sinners and people who were rejected, wounded, sick. We dream of having an open and merciful heart like that of Christ. A heart that looks at man as he is looked at by Jesus, as Mary looks at him, as Father Kentenich looked at him.

Father Kentenich arrives at this Covenant of Love in 1914 with great depth. There is something very beautiful and it is a part of our legacy, in that imperfection of his history, God gave Father Kentenich something that is a treasure, that was the depth of his soul. Father Kentenich dug into his soul, into his loneliness. Sometimes we are lacking that. Upon digging deeply in his soul, in his solitude, in his reticence, in his surrounding wall, he permitted – in his relationship to Mary – that Schoenstatt would emerge. Schoenstatt emerged in the depth of Father's heart before seeing the light for men. Schoenstatt does not come forth from great events or activities. On the contrary, it is born in the silence of the depth of a soul, in the profundity of a heart. If Father had remained on the surface, there would not have been sufficient depth for the world of Schoenstatt to come forth. There are people who believe they belong to Schoenstatt only because they go to events and participate in activities. But that Schoenstatt that they live is superficial and can quickly disappear when setbacks and deceptions emerge. There is no depth. Schoenstatt has not taken root in the depths of the heart. We are Father's heirs according to the measure in which there is depth in our soul, according to the measure in which the Covenant of Love has captured all the fibers of our

heart. The world of Schoenstatt germinated in that interior ocean of Father Kentenich, in that interior garden. It germinated there. Therefore, he could then take it out, because he already had it. Because it had already occurred in him and later he added all that he already had lived. The first Covenant of Love had already happened for him, and he had matured with the passing of time. In those difficult and hard years of his youth, Schoenstatt germinated in his heart, and the only thing he did later was to find channels for that source that came out of him, which was already in him. Mary healed Father Kentenich's indifference and the love that emerged from the healing gave life to many.

His paternity and his maternity. Schoenstatt is born from a paternity. God acted through his paternity. Father Kentenich began to take out from within what he never thought he had. Mary converted Father Kentenich's life into a source of life for others. Without having had a father, he learned to be a father and mother at the same time, when God gave him spiritual children. Thus his wound was healed, giving himself, surrendering himself, dying for others. It was a very human and close paternity. If there is something we need in Schoenstatt, it is fathers and mothers, human and close— fathers and mothers who direct us and plunge us into the heart of God. The boys found that security in Father. They trusted Father Kentenich, they looked for him, they admired him, and they loved him. In him they found a place where they could set down roots. They rooted themselves in him with all the risks that attachments always have— the risk of dependency, deception, exclusiveness, and the risk of becoming an inordinate attachment. It did not matter. Schoenstatt emerges from a confidence cultivated on a daily basis through surrender. Thus he healed his abandonment, being a father. Thus, in giving a home to others, he found a home. Suddenly, everything fell into place. His wound made him experience the tear in man of those lonely and in need of young men. He was capable of placing himself in the place of the other, of understanding, of empathizing and knowing how much need for rootedness there is in man. He was capable of giving to each one what had saved him: the face of Mary. But it was the attachment to his person that led them to Mary—the human bond that God made use of to lead them to the heart of God: “God wants to attract us with human bonds. Therefore He secures that we allow ourselves to be attached through childlike love, conjugal, paternal. He permits us to become attached to children, parents and spouses. But God casts that bond upwards and does not rest until everything is bound to Him”[1]. Attachments heal us and root us in God. Although they sometimes frighten us. Because we fear they may become inordinate. Who can say that all their connections and attachments are in perfect order! Only Mary. The rest of us carry the wound of loneliness in our soul. And we become attached in order to understand and to love and to always be able to reach for the highest, unto God. Father's paternity was also a maternity. He was father and mother. Those young boys were in need of a mother. It was not enough for them to have a father who would listen to them and would show them broad horizons. No, they needed a mother who would be attentive to their most basic daily needs, to what was most essential. For that reason, we are also called to show the mercy of that paternity and maternity among men. We are children and fathers and mothers. That makes us brothers and sisters, truthfully. It makes us family. Today there are many orphans with living fathers and mothers. To found Schoenstatt anew goes through learning to be better children and better fathers and mothers.

It goes through being a home where others can set down roots, with the risk of what it supposes for both parts. Schoenstatt is that home, where many will set down roots and breathe a supernatural atmosphere. A space, where there is no concern for the personal needs of each person is not a home, where we are accepted only if we are useful and then forgotten, where we are given more attention when we serve, where we contribute something. Schoenstatt is a home if we are able to be ourselves, if we can show ourselves precisely as we are outside the Shrine, if we are not rejected and do not live in competition with the others, comparing ourselves continuously. Schoenstatt is a home when anyone can find his/her place and can feel loved, at home, without fears. Schoenstatt is a home if there are mothers who embrace and are personally concerned for each one. Schoenstatt is faithful to its mission if we educate so that there may be fathers who show the way and give security. Thus and only thus, will we be better brothers and sisters. Only when we feel as brothers and sisters, do we see ourselves as equal and only seek to be the first, we compete, we want to shine, have power, be the favorites, the chosen, the most loved, the only ones who do things right. We compete for a place almost without knowing it. And you cannot build in this way. If the brothers and sisters do not learn to be children and father and mothers, they will not be able to mature as brothers and sisters. They will not feel free. They will not find their place. They will not have the peace of the one who knows that he gives what he can give and not what he does not have.

Second reflection: a look at the way prepared by the hand of God

Schoenstatt is a work of God. It is the fruitfulness of God's bursting in. If one looks at these one hundred years of journey, one sees that we are children of Providence. Throughout all of these years, Schoenstatt could have disappeared. During World War I, during World War II, during the exile, with the death of Fr. Kentenich since the death of a founder always brings dispersion and difficulty. It seems to be that God wants us to continue existing. What joy there is for the life which has emerged during these years! What joy there is for the number of hidden miracles during this time! What joy there is for the so many people who live from that source and continuously return to it! How faithful God is! The first thing that emerges in Schoenstatt is practical faith in Divine Providence. Father interprets voices, discovers open doors, sometimes only cracks. He made the most difficult decision of his life one hundred years ago. He made it fearing he might be mistaken. In the depth of his garden, in dialogue with Mary, he senses that God is asking him to take a leap of faith. He sees that He wants him to ask Mary to establish herself in that small chapel. And he took that step with those young men who trusted him, who believed because he believed. It is usually that way in life. We believe in others who have believed before we have believed. He wanted to give to others the inner world he had within himself, he wanted to give it to all men. That is what we are celebrating. Father Kentenich's first YES to Mary, Mary's first YES to Father Kentenich and to the group of boys. Just as the Annunciation was Mary's first YES to God. That first YES, which was a bold step, of abandonment, of surrender, of generosity.

To found Schoenstatt anew has to do with seeking the God of life. It is the calling of practical faith in Divine Providence. Before the Covenant of Love, Father already lived from practical faith applied to life. He learned to discover God in his life. That is what faith consists of, in learning to look at life, the soul, the times, and see God there where He remains hidden. That is how Father always did it. From the beginning, he knew how to see the open doors and did not remain barricaded with closed doors. In errors and human injustices. His father did not want to acknowledge him, they did not let him be a Jesuit because he was the son of a single mother, his mother could not educate him because of a lack of economic resources. They are circumstances, which can be isolated facts or points connected in a way made with God. They can be insurmountable barriers or springboards showing us new goals. His mother took him to a boarding school, placed him in the hands of Mary, they allowed him to be ordained after a negative first vote, they placed him as spiritual director of the boys in Schoenstatt in an unexpected way. They are the apparently unconnected points, which from today's view have meaning. God used his limitations. That is how He reached the heart of Father. His wound was his entry point. He was alone, no one influenced his education. Without attachments. Very intellectual, without his wound, perhaps Mary might not have ever entered. God conforms to each one and has a personal journey with each one. It says a lot about how Schoenstatt is. From the inside toward the outside. From life to theory. God and us collaborating in the plan of salvation. Father arrived at the Covenant of Love with Mary by means of that wound that marked his soul, through the souls of the boys, through the position as spiritual director that he came upon through Divine Providence, through the many closed doors and others which were open. Through a lawyer, Bartolo Longo and the city of Pompei, a place of pilgrimage. Through a terrible war which opened up as a great opportunity of beginning a way of sanctity. Father has an intuition and gives a leap of faith. God bursts forth. Mary gave a leap of faith at the Annunciation and believed in the Father God. I think that to found Schoenstatt anew consists in looking at life with the eyes of God; believing and trusting and leaving it all to follow God, there where He is going. It consists in not putting life into a box and trying to make it as we wish, trying to make everything fall into place. It is not about repeating things exactly as Father did them. Sometimes it is the temptation of being faithful to Father. To repeat his talks, to do the same. Rather, it consists in having his gaze, that bold and profound look, that gaze, which always rested in the heart of God. It is a creative fidelity, always new, always faithful to the origin. Yes, it is about looking as he looked, respecting the originality, the desire of the soul, the desire for God. To see as God sees.

The Covenant of Love was a bursting forth from God, a divine initiative. God took seriously the desire of Father Kentenich and of those boys. There was a voice of God behind his thoughts. Father did not invent it, but he doubted. And if they were airs of grandeur? Nobody assured him anything, no one said: "This is what God wants." There was no apparition, nor any miracle, nor anything extraordinary. Those miracles, which we so often expect. No, everything was hidden in the hearts of the boys and in his own heart. How could the unjust war be a sign of something that God wanted? Could God speak behind something so bad, so unjust, so terrible? Neither did Father want to impose his desire. No, he wanted the process to come from the boys, not something imposed on them, but something that would emerge from life. He would

fear making a mistake. With infinite respect for the life of each one of them. Later on he would say that it was the most difficult decision of his life. An enormous leap of faith. But he already knew Mary, he trusted Her, his Covenant had been sealed a long time ago, when he was only nine years old and Mary had rescued him from his loneliness, from abandonment, from oblivion. Then came the bold petition to ask her to establish herself in that chapel and to work miracles of grace there. He had the vision of a prophet. He thought that that insignificant act could convert the chapel into a Tabor, into a place of pilgrimage for Germany, perhaps even further beyond. What a clear vision, so pure, so bold, so prophetic! He saw what no one saw at that moment, not even the boys. Today it seems easy to see the creative resultant, the fruits and miracles worked in the Shrine. At that moment, much faith was needed. Father dreamt that what had happened in his heart would begin to happen in the hearts of the sodalists. Father plunged himself through a small crack, the smallest, he believed. He saw what others could not see. Like Mary before the Angel. Let it be done, he would say in his heart of a child. And Mary did all the rest. There had been many closed doors in his life. And he had been capable of seeing the crack. How do we see our life? Do we know how to see the crack behind the closed door? Do we know how to understand the negatives, the failures as opportunities, which present themselves to us or do we only lament when things do not turn out as we wished? That is how Schoenstatt began. With many closed doors, one or another door open and a crack. To found Schoenstatt anew, we would have to have prophetic vision, capable of interpreting the signs and seeing the cracks. To see beyond the appearance of the moment, to allow ourselves to be questioned formally by the world, by the Church. Not living enclosed in a bubble, but seeking signs, which will open the horizon and allow us to dream about a new world. Mary and the sodalists exchanged hearts in the midst of a war. Precisely before separating, exactly before it seemed that that small sodality that had begun so fearfully would disappear, precisely there the Covenant bound them to this place that became a home, that rooted them and gave them an identity. The attachment, always the attachments. To the places, to the heart of Mary. They brought Mary their crosses earned in the battles, their efforts to be saints on the frontline of the war. They would go to Schoenstatt when they could to rest in Father Kentenich, to come to the Shrine and tell Mary they loved Her and gave her all their efforts. That Covenant between Mary and each one of them was their strength in the war, it is what kept them standing. It was a motive of hope, it was a light in the midst of the darkness.

The Covenant of Love is always first, it is the beginning, it is what is important. Without the Covenant of Love, there is no Schoenstatt. The structure, the general statutes, the organization chart with which we explain Schoenstatt, the different communities and vocations, are more irrelevant. They are important, of course, because they are the channels of life that comes forth from the same source, the Covenant with Mary. Schoenstatt started from a story of love between a child and Mary. It is one of the keys. God comes to the encounter amidst the life of each one of them. God is capable of converting joys, difficulties, wounds, mistakes, unfortunate circumstances on the roads to reach the heart of man. And the great gift was Mary. She saved Father Kentenich. He did not come to Her through prayer, nor from readings, rather it was Mary who came into his life and heart and filled air into what was closed. She opened the closed heart and made him a father to hundreds. It is the great miracle.

He, who was alone, who had no strong attachments, he who did not know how to enter into a relationship with anyone because no one had shown him, he was capable of being father and mother to a family. Mary made it possible in the Covenant of Love. Father felt deeply loved. She felt deeply loved by Father. She was the love of his life. That is how it happens to each one. Schoenstatt came forth in this way, from a YES, from a first Covenant of Love. Father's first Covenant in the orphanage, the first Covenant of the sodalists in 1914.

First came forth life, water, fire and then, as Father Kentenich would say, it is only about plunging into the source, digging, and later, when water comes forth from the depths, we make channels. That is what he did and that is what we have to do. We like norms, statutes, to name everything, to decide what fits and what does not fit, what corresponds according to the history and what remains on the outside. Often, we Schoenstatters are administrators of the truth. We put up fences, iron gates, iron bars. We dig channels so that the little water we have is not lost. We want to have it all controlled because it gives us security, because we are obsessed with the bishops understanding us and accepting us. And we leave life aside. The channel ends up being more important than the life itself, the forms more than the spirit. We passionately distinguish between Federation, Institute, League Membership, League, pilgrims. So that it may be clear to everyone where they are. To avoid confusion. The name may end up being more important than the person, than the life itself. Each one on his own side, without thinking that we are all one and the same, children of the same father, heirs to the same sacred history. We are concerned with knowing who gives the most orders, who has the most power, who has more information, who makes the most decisions. Perhaps not all have these categories, that is the truth, but they exist in Schoenstatt, and it is our temptation. It happens everywhere, also in other Movements and in parishes. It is the most human temptation, the one that definitely makes us weaker. We have accentuated so much what makes us different, that it is so hard for us to find what unites us. To re-found Schoenstatt has to go through experiencing power as service and build unity from humility and renunciation. That is how God thought of us. Mary unites us in one and the same Covenant. There we are all children and brothers and sisters and that gives us peace. How are we building unity? How do we live practical faith in Divine Providence in our own life?

We are a Marian Movement. Feminine in our form of acting. The feminine soul is patient, is capable of embracing life, take care of life, germinate it, accompany it. Takes care of the processes, which are slow. Schoenstatt always demands patience. It is not a Movement that is so efficient. Schoenstatt shows us how to start up dialogue with God and with the men who are seeking together what God wants. Practical faith is community faith, it has a great deal of dialogue. Not only do I decide with God, but we decide with God. Consensus, to talk things over. We are a family, and we move slowly like any other family. A decision taken in an instance is not evidence that it was made in all places and in the same form. A convinced Schoenstatter knows that Schoenstatt can begin with him anywhere and makes it known always. "Mens fundatoris" is a mistaken and complex concept. It is conceived as faithfulness to what Father thought. In agreement with that interpretation, we come closer to the reality. The mind of the Founder is then the inheritance of all Schoenstatt. Together we discover the way. Father

Kentenich said and wrote many things. It is normal that a phrase of Father Kentenich, taken out of context, can support found positions. Who sets himself up as a representative of Father? Who can interpret his will in these moments? The Family. All on the way through consensus. The richness of consensus. The beauty of listening and learning from each other. It is a gift so that we may learn to hand over and thus allow ourselves to complement one another. A lot of humility is needed and also to leave aside all selfishness. We have to learn to listen to each other and to take each other seriously, mutually. The truth is that this form of acting can stop us on occasion. Perhaps we are not called to efficiency that is the truth. We need to have the patience of a mother. That is how Schoenstatt is, a patient charism. Educate in patience and in the capacity to capture and take care of life delicately. Everything is slow, calm, in pauses, in the rhythm of life that grows from the inside toward the outside. It is true, authentic, solid, firm, faithful, permanent. Undoubtedly, they are precious traits. But one has to know how to live it peacefully. In communion, united, respecting. Without the fear of not having power, of not being taken into account. Without the fear of living with the differences. Accepting that the wheat grows along with the discord. Knowing that one has to learn to obey in order to be a bit more like children. Although it is true that it is hard for us to obey, to give in to, and to renounce. We think that others sometimes do not respect our originality and we rebel. It is necessary to grow in humility. That is the great challenge. To learn to work together, to complement each other. Helping each other to seek the truth and to **find** the way.

In Schoenstatt, there are many spheres of power. We can all have some control, some decision. There are many projects and dreams. We can all find our place. But sometimes we see our place from the point of view of power. Because the fact of giving an opinion is already power. To have information is to have power. There are other charisms more hierarchical and vertical, where one instance decides and the others obey and carry out. In Schoenstatt, horizontalness and working in common predominates, consensus. All have responsibilities. We can all be asked our opinion and our opinion is always important and is taken into account. The fact of being informed on what happens is already power. That they ask for our opinion and count on it is already power. The fear that something is imposed on us from the outside is fear of losing one's freedom. Because we are free, and we shout out that we want to be respected. Therefore we defend ourselves from what comes from the outside, from other communities, from other countries. Perhaps we lack humility. Power without humility becomes dictatorial; it seeks to impose its own truth. That power does not listen, does not take into account what is different. Our power is Mary's power that serves as a slave. It is that of Christ, which becomes one among many, that goes like a lamb to the slaughter, who dies alone on the Cross, abandoned. Love is never imposed, is only proposed, offered, gives of itself. Service in Schoenstatt is our power, the power of love. We cannot forget that. Always from humility and always knowing that our time will come, our moment. The day will come when they will no longer question us, when we are no longer useful. At that moment, we will have to accept with humility that it is not our hour. We placed our stone, now others place theirs. We build in faithfulness, each with one another. But what is most beautiful is that as in Schoenstatt, efficiency is not the premium. We will always be important; we will always be of value, because

for God, we are the most valuable and the most loved. He has inscribed our names forever into his soul. Our personal ideal, our life, his dream, our dream.

Third reflection: a look at our way of sanctity

Our life is a constant aspiration for sanctity. But, how is our way of sanctity? What is our originality? Is it original? What happened in the heart of Father at a given moment is a gift for us. His way of sanctity is ours. He had experienced in himself the mercy of God, the closeness of his love, the maternal love of Mary. It is a Covenant sanctity. There was nothing extraordinary in his way, there were no extraordinary signs, no prior theories, no prefabricated structure, there was no paved way each one had to conform to. Schoenstatt started from life, from circumstances, which were apparently gray areas, including errors and aspects, which were not so holy. Schoenstatt's way of sanctity started from a miracle hidden in the heart of Father, from an invisible miracle: Mary remained forever in that chapel and converted it into a Shrine. Earlier She had converted the heart of Father into her own dwelling, into a true shrine. Mary used the audacity of a man and some boys who wanted to be saints in their own small lives and who in the midst of a war dreamed about changing the world through Her. Because everyone, when we want to be saints, it is because we desire to change this world in which we live. We do not pretend to flee the world. We do not want to go back in time. We want to love it in its grandeur and in its weakness. That is how we want to be saints, loving our life, giving our all in generosity, surrendering ourselves joyfully so that our world can be a better world, more human, more of God. In reality, we are not original in what we pretend. Sanctity is a universal way. But we are original in the concrete way through which we advance, the same way traveled by our Father.

Our way of sanctity seeks our life to be a home in which Mary can dwell and in which many others may rest and travel. Our way of sanctity allows for Mary to bring out the best in ourselves in order to give it with humility. In order to love more each day. God and Mary collaborating with man. Our form of coming close to Mary is original. Father Kentenich got close to Mary through his own experience and thus began his own way. Throughout his life, he scrutinized God, and God scrutinized him. Together, with Mary, they brought Schoenstatt forth and they showed us a way to sanctity. It should always be this way. We should find Schoenstatt from our heart, in our personal and unique history, in the depth and silence of our soul. Mary wants to stay forever there, she wants to dwell, she wants to educate us as a Mother. Our sanctity is at risk in taking care of our vision. We want to be capable of seeing God guiding our daily life, hidden in the daily experience. We want to learn to see each circumstance as a favorable occasion for becoming holier. Each fall, each failure, each injustice, each cross are challenges to love more, to give more, to be saints. It is the audacity to take leaps of faith when everything is not so secure, when we walk in darkness with very little light. It is the YES given from our personal poverty, without any longer dreaming of the highest, without conforming to fulfilling norms. It is concrete sanctity in which we find our original form for becoming saints, our style for loving God and mankind, our concrete way, our name engraved in our soul and in the heart of Christ. Today's circumstances are different, there is no war; we have other limitations and other gifts. Schoenstatt's great gift is that Mary gives us the God of life in the

Shrine of our own history. It is a way of sanctity that consists in learning to love from daily life, simply, in what is most human. She can, although it may seem for us at times impossible, renew our hearts, and not only that, but to make our hearts a shrine for others. She is capable of making a marvelous adventure from the routine, from the dull life, and from each day's difficulties. And as always, this entire way from the inside to the outside, from life to ideas. What took place at the Incarnation was repeated in the Shrine. God and man were united through Mary, because of her YES. In the Shrine, our life is united to God and God comes to our life. The YES is mutual and forever. Our YES in the Covenant is united to Mary's YES. And thus begins an original way of sanctity, a proper form for being a saint in daily life.

Aspiring for sanctity in Schoenstatt does not have many norms. Therefore some become bewildered. It is centered on love because that is how Christ is. In the cultivation of the spirit, in generosity, in magnanimity and in aspiring for the highest ideals. It is a way of sanctity where each day we can dream more and give more. There aren't so many already made channels, so many clear norms. There is no life-plan traced out exactly for everyone. This is, perhaps, something that at times is hard for us. Because we seek minimums, securities, certainties and we ask ourselves while restless: "What do I have to do? How should I go? What do I choose?" We ask the priests, our friends, the Sisters, we seek clear answers, precise, exact. We want, perhaps, for others to make decisions for us and release us from the responsibility. But Mary in the Shrine seeks to form free men, autonomous, capable of making decisions, faithful to the truth of their lives. The key of Schoenstatt is that we can freely aspire for more, from our own originality, at the time God has for us, speaking in the soul with Mary, telling her of our dares and challenges, our fears, our life with its limitations. In this way we find our personal style, that name written in our heart and in the heart of Christ, that hidden strength in our history which only with the eyes of God we can find and give. We ask Mary to repeat in us what she did in Father Kentenich. We ask her to give to the God of our life, to the God who goes out to the encounter of each day. That she give us her bold spirit, her capacity of giving what she received as a gift. We ask her that she never allow us to remain with the minimum, fulfilling, approving, struggling, going astray, going through life on tiptoes. What is sometimes hard for us with Schoenstatt is its excessive laxity in apparently lacking norms. That is the most precious attribute it has because it calls each one of us to join the journey with Mary and with God and to give the best of ourselves. It calls us to be saints, without fussiness, without having to hold on to minimums, without pretending only to sin no more. It invites us to give – if we do not give it ourself – which no one else will give, because we are unique. What is most our own, our talents and weaknesses, our own wounds, our truth. And in this way use the circumstances as possibilities for becoming saints and give until it hurts, always give it all, without fear. For that, it is true, we have to go to the Shrine, lead an intense life of prayer and look at our life with the eyes of God. Implore Mary, ask others who walk along with us for help, allow us to complement and counsel each day, supplicate that Christ etches his traits into our soul and thus ask that Schoenstatt becomes life in us and that we come to be a living shrine in the midst of the world, a home which shelters many.

Aspiring for sanctity is deepened in the Blank Check and Inscriptio. Schoenstatt leads us to grow inwardly. Sanctity does not consist in doing more things, in having an apostolic life filled with activities, but to always have a more beautiful interior garden, a deeper ocean, a life more anchored in God. Sanctity is living anchored in God, abandoned into his Father hands. A life full of God is always fruitful, always apostolic. Father Kentenich, in that time of loneliness in his infancy and adolescence, dug deep into his soul. Time, silence, loneliness, allowed him to deepen in his heart. Mary came there to stay. There, germinating in his soul, was the world of Schoenstatt. Thanks to the depth of his ocean, Mary deposited her most valuable treasure there. With the passing of time, the Covenant of Love sealed when he was nine years of age enriched. In surrender, in generosity. Therefore our way of sanctity consists in that, slowly, the traits of Christ, the traits of Mary, their same sentiments, become incarnate in our life. It is about trusting, of abandoning ourselves into the hands of a merciful Father, into the hands of Mary. It is the mystery of Schoenstatt. Our life in the hands of God. Without setting up barriers or brakes, without pretending to do our will, but only the will of God.

We need to learn to trust. To not be suspicious of God nor of men. The pedagogy of confidence is fundamental for walking secure. When it seems that everything becomes complicated in life, the only thing left for us is to trust and hope. Often we mistrust God and men. We are suspicious of people, we judge the facts and interpret the intentions. We become judges of life and thus do not believe. We are suspicious of those who fail us, we see ulterior motives, we suspect and do not believe them in their truth. Attachments can only be built from confidence. Only in an atmosphere in which confidence rules, can we give ourselves without fear, joyful and in peace. We also mistrust the power of God; we do not believe He can make us happy; we do not believe He can come to change our hearts. God walks at our side on the cross and in difficulties, in our joys and in our challenges. That is how God wants us, deeply anchored, firm, confident. He wants us to be confident children. It would be impossible to understand this abandonment without speaking of spiritual infancy. It is central in Schoenstatt. To live as children implies trusting in a Father with capital letters who takes care of us and guides us. God does not leave us, He does not abandon us. We abandon ourselves in order to not always have the helm of the boat in our hands. Our life is in his hands. We sign a Blank Check in which God can write our history. We give Him our heart so that he can inscribe it forever in his own heart. Our contribution in this way of sanctity is small, miniscule, but always fundamental. We are unique and irreplaceable. What we do not do, no one else will do. God needs us. Therefore, even if we feel our mission is small, let us not doubt. We know that God builds with our daily and small YES. We are building for the next one hundred years, even if we are not here to celebrate the next 150-year Jubilee. While some feel they are carving rocks, we are working with God on our own small rock that is different for all the others. We dream about building cathedrals. That is what is important. Our simple contribution to the Treasury of Grace, our serious and daily surrender, our awareness of being docile instruments, like children in the palm of God's hand.

The originality and the ideals. Schoenstatt emerges respecting the originality, in the first place, of that group of boys. Father Kentenich did not want to put them into a box, he did not

want to impose general norms on them, he acted personally with each one of them, and he knew how to listen to the cries of their souls and channeled the life. Throughout the years, those channels increased because he always followed the same maxim: that each one finds his place; that is what is important. And when the place did not exist, it was then created. Thus the organizational chart grew throughout the years, the Schoenstatt tree, sometimes so complicated, so varied and rich. It has to do with a home, like a forest, where everyone has his place. That is our richness, the respect for the originality, for diversity, for differences. It cannot be said that someone does not fit in Schoenstatt. There is room for everyone, and we cannot impose so many norms and channels so that some remain on the outside. There is always a place for everyone. Following Father Kentenich's maxim, following his spirit, acting according to the so called "mens fundatoris," the spirit of the Founder, if that place does not exist, we will have to create it. Schoenstatt is not a rigid piece of furniture, formed and already finished. It is a dynamic Work, in movement, always growing. Perhaps some day there will be communities, which will have to disappear, because they no longer have vocations, and perhaps there may be others which will emerge in the shadow of the Shrine. Why are we surprised? The great Schoenstatt Family will continue growing. Perhaps some communities will have to change their name, their form, their outline. It does not matter. Always first was the life and then the form, the concrete name. Originality is life. It is true that to educate according to the originality of each one is possible, but much more difficult and harder than to do it in another way, with molds. To educate this way demands time, patience, art. To educate according to molds is easier because the mold is applied and the final product is obtained, that which is expected. The one who does not fit into the mold remains outside and that is that. Nevertheless, to respect the originality is a long and arduous process; it is a risk between freedom and education, not an easy way. It is not so simple to respect times and differences. The danger, in that way, is to lose the perspective of the goal, it is not looking toward where we are going and becoming sad upon seeing the unfinished process, the failures in the growth at the present.

Another danger that exists in respecting the originality is that upon stressing so much what is, what is different, unity is in danger. Originality has always been sacred in Schoenstatt. One's own place, the original form of expressing one's own. Each one has his own Schoenstatt in his heart. Each one could do this same analysis on Schoenstatt and come to different highlights. The original is God's and to respect it is a great and sacred mission. Paternity and Maternity in Schoenstatt try to take care of the originality of each one. The danger is to want to impose a form of looking at things, a unique way of living the Covenant. The danger is to put into a straitjacket, to restrict, to limit. There are phrases, which kill life and depart from the ideal dreamed by Father Kentenich: "This is not Schoenstatt," "This form of acting and praying is not Schoenstatt." There is the danger of putting life into a straitjacket. The danger of thinking that each one has the truth in its totality, without understanding that we all build Schoenstatt. We contribute our originality; we enhance it by being faithful to ourselves. But we do not possess all Schoenstatt is and can be. That makes us more humble and more in need of complementation. For that reason, the temptation that always exists is that of placing channels to the water, which bursts from the source of life. For fear of overflowing, that the water be lost, we want to limit it, to protect the orthodoxy in order to guarantee the charism. Therefore

the statutes, the norms and the outlines, also being necessary, run the risk of putting the life into a straitjacket and not always respecting the originality of each one. Additionally there is another danger that the unity can be lost by accentuating the diversity so much. Unity is an essential part of our charism. We know it; there where our strength resides is also our weakness. It is always that way in life. There where we have a mission, to build a united Church, a family, we are tempted and proven. Mary is always the Queen of unity. Schoenstatt very much stresses the difference, the original, that which is its own which runs the risk of avoiding that which unites us, that which makes us one body in Christ, that which makes us alike. We are children of one same Mother, united to Her in a Covenant. We are children of one and the same Father and Founder and we repeat within ourselves: "Cor unum in Patre," one heart in the Father. In him we remain united, and he, from on high, opens up new horizons for us. But our danger is that we stop looking with respect and that we seek that we be respected in our originality. The danger is to reject what is different when we live it as a threat. We separate while trying to accentuate, above everything else, our beauty and we keep from seeing the beauty of others.

The pedagogy of freedom is something central in Schoenstatt. Therefore it is so important to be free in our spirituality. Many people stress that they are in Schoenstatt because they always felt free here. It is true, but that is not freedom exactly, rather it is respect. In Schoenstatt there are no deadlines, there is no pressure to advance, they do not demand if we do not want them to demand, if you are absent they do not call you obsessively. Sometimes it may seem like a lack of interest, but it is not that. Mary simply, like a good Mother, waits patiently, she waits. She does not want everything immediately and in accord to a determined form. And we are Mary's children. Father Kentenich always said that he wanted free rowers. And he invited us to self-educate ourselves. We want to grow, not because it is imposed on us, but because the heart asks for it. Father always spoke about the danger of religious massification. The danger of imitating the forms of others, of those who seem to us to be more saintly and do things like the masses, in order not to sing out of tune. It is not about doing things through imitation, but conviction. Freedom is sacred. But with authentic liberty, that liberty which implies commitment and responsibility. In Schoenstatt, when one advances more freely, one is committed more. Freedom is commitment. And since the peaks we desire are so high, the desire to give more is awakened, always more. The soul swells, the heart grows larger. It is true that some ask us priests to tell them what they have to do, what road to take, which decision is correct. That is not the way. In Schoenstatt, each one takes steps freely, when he sees that God asks him to take certain steps. He deepens and advances when Mary whispers it in his heart. If we do not advance, if we do not commit ourselves more, likewise we are free to continue journeying along with those who have advanced. That is freedom. That is free commitment and not massification.

Father Kentenich knew how to always educate from the perspective of freedom and for freedom. He knew how to respect the processes and the originality of each one. When he arrived in Schoenstatt and was named spiritual director for the young seminarians, he could see their wounds, their limitations. He saw that they were similar to the ones he had had. He would

also meet other youths with different histories. He would attempt to teach them to look within themselves, to be themselves and from there, go out and meet Christ. From their own hearts, just as each one is and to seek God in this way. He did not impose norms and molds on them. But the atmosphere was not easy because the education of the era was of molds and norms. How to make the way a personal one? How to place them in Mary's hands so that she could do in each one of them what she had done with him? She could bring out the best in each one of them, what was their own, their personal gift. He used the tactic of loving them, of being close to them, of listening to them. Love heals and brings out the best in each one, we know that. He, wounded in love, became a wounded healer. He healed and at the same time he healed himself, healed his wound of love. What a mystery! Once again it was his profound gaze that achieved seeing possibility behind something objectively bad: the war. He read the souls of the boys, their desires, their fears, their limitations, the panic and the loneliness, their need for spreading their wings, their profound and shameful desire to be saints. He was capable of reading the souls. He had the certainty that in Mary the way that had to be followed could be found. In his ocean, he saw the answer: Mary's love brings us out from the depths, raises us up and makes us believe. Father was attentive to life and understood what was incomprehensible. He was father and prophet. The great challenge was to be saints and to give life in the midst of the war. It is necessary for us to dare to go out of mediocrity in order to be able to advance. Mary, in a small place in Germany, in an abandoned chapel, was going to change their life and our own lives. Father believed that starting with that small group of boys, the history of the Church in Germany and beyond could change.

Schoenstatt comes forth from the attachment to a place, a small chapel, and the attachment to a Father, to a man in love with Mary. He had a flame in his heart because what he transmitted, first he had lived, in the depth of his soul, in his intimacy with Mary. He had experienced an immense thirst and the water that satiated him, the lack and the gift, the wound and the cure, the desire and the gift. That was the key. And gave him, for sure, at a time, a vision to see his history as a sacred history and to accept it peacefully. And that same history he lived, is the history of Schoenstatt. It is something proper to our charism. We attach ourselves to a place, to a land of Mary, to a Shrine, to a person, to a man of God, to a prophet who saw heaven in the midst of death. And there we set forth roots, we rooted ourselves, we make of that place, of that heart, a home that calms our thirst. Local and human attachments are essential for growth. The places help us to set forth roots, to make a home from the place where we are. Human attachments remind us of what is essential, that what is human elevates us unto heaven, opens the doors of heaven for us, unites us to God. God uses human bonds to attract us to his heart. Therefore we attach ourselves to each other as brothers and sisters, as children, as fathers, as mothers. How important human love is in order to grow into God's love! How important are the secondary causes, which lead us to the primary Cause! That is how God acts, through what is human. Without attaching ourselves to one another, it is difficult to go higher. Even if our flesh is in pain and the heart ends up broken and wounded, it is worth it, it saves our life. Love always hurts. A child of Schoenstatt is a passionate person, in love with life, with what is human, with what is everyday. He is not a man with extraordinary visions, because normally we do not have them. But he is a man who does see the extraordinary in what is

routine, in what is everyday, in what does not call for attention. He knows that his life is not more heroic when he does spectacular things, worthy to be mentioned. In the Shrine, imperceptible, hidden and simple miracles happen. It is an everyday sanctity, ordinary, around the house. Perhaps our miracles are much too simple and not even today do they help to canonize Father Kentenich. But what is certain is that nothing of what is human is indifferent for a child of the Shrine. Ideas and life unite in him, faith and love. Everything is united because Mary gives us this balance and unity. We call it "to be organic." We do not separate our life of faith from our family, from work, from our life of leisure, from our hobbies and our joys. God is in everything, and if He is not there where we are, it means something is not right. The child of the Shrine knows how to see God in everything that happens, in all that he experiences and has. God is interested in our entire life, in all we do and suffer. Our successes and failures. The virtues we are known for and also those sins, which separate us from Him and men. We offer it all to the Treasury of Grace, as a daily offering because our lives are interwoven. All the good we do is good for everyone. All the bad we do is an absence of good. Therefore we offer it all to Mary in the Shrine. She takes it all and spreads her graces on all those who come on pilgrimage to her home each day.

Father Kentenich became a master of attachments. Undoubtedly, this is Mary's greatest miracle. A wounded man in his attachments who is healed by Mary. She reached into the lowest layers of his soul. She did not remain in his mind, in his ideas, in his desires, but reached the deepest part of his interior garden, even to the subconscious. For those who came later and knew Father, he was the great instrument who used Mary with them. That is how he has been throughout the long history of Schoenstatt and will continue so. We are all here because someone, another Father Kentenich, another human face passionate for God and Mary, spoke to us about a little chapel, about a holy place, magical, and invited us to see, to look, to walk. The need for a home, for roots, to find repose in what we are and have, in what we dream, is what made us one day to approach, to place ourselves in range, to begin a path. The origin was in the attachments. We always make use of human faces, which raise us up to the highest. For many, Father Kentenich's fatherhood was the way God used to save them. For each one of them, that face has a name, a personal history. It is that person who awakened envy in them, the envy to want to live that way, with joy, with passion, one's own life. Mary uses docile instruments, human instruments, free, authentic, passionate. Sometimes, it is true, she arrives directly, but it is not usual. It was this way with Father Kentenich. Perhaps with some person, or in some moment of our life, it is this way. But what is more proper to Schoenstatt is that she uses us as instruments if we are docile and allow ourselves to be used. She uses us to be fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, friends. To love the life of another right where they are. To serve the other from where he is, not from my idea or project, not from my own desires, but from his, from what he expects. To help the other be who God dreamed he would be. Without putting him in a box, without taking advantage of his talents to then forget him. The human way is the one that leads us to the depth of the heart of God. Human love brings us the love of God. The human, upon attaching himself to people with whom he journeys, upon allowing himself to touch and be touched by others, sharing life, dreams, wounds, is part of our originality. Those human attachments are what secure the attachment to God. To found

Schoenstatt anew is to learn to attach ourselves with joy and freedom. It consists in not leaving the human to search for the divine. We want to attach ourselves and leave our life in shreds, for love. Those human attachments are the rungs, which bring us close to God. We need each other, we do not journey separated from one another, we journey as a family towards God.

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