

IMPULSES for Daily Living

04/2016



Secretariat Father Joseph Kentenich



Islands of Mercy

A little boy had the idea to write his mother a bill for everything he had helped her with recently: I went shopping three times - \$ 4.00; washed dishes twice - \$ 2.00, etc. The mother did not pay the bill, but also wrote a bill: I watched many hours at your bed when you when you were feverish; I prepared your meals so and so often; I did the laundry for you ... After each item she wrote: Nothing, and the total was still "Nothing". Love does not calculate but gives superabundantly as much as the other person needs.

The Father God gives this kind of "justice" to his children: Infinite giving of love – as much as the individual needs to satisfy his hunger for love. This is the secret of his mercy. The modern world is in need of this kind of devotion because the longing for love is very great.

Again and again, God as the merciful father is on the way to human beings. In our time, men from all over the world experience this at the place of grace, Schönstatt, and in the many Schönstatt shrines the world over.

"In his peace, the tortured heart becomes quiet."

Father Kentenich said about this little shrine that has become the place of Mary's special activity: "Our

shrine is the cathedral of love at the present time. The suffering of modern man shall be broken at its walls; love for God and for souls live within it in a unique way. Even the most tortured heart becomes calm in its peace because it is with father and mother ... From here truth and peace and love shall come to the poor injured world."



Many people experience in themselves the truth of these words. A woman who had experienced herself as an unwanted child from childhood on and still today has many problems because of it, heard about childhood before God the first time in Schönstatt, and she experienced in the shrine that God loved her personally. She said: "That was for me liberation after many years; God has given me personal value that does not come from my parents and that they could not give to me."

The Hour of Woman

Frank Schirrmacher made an interesting observation in his study "Minimum": If a family functions, it

is due to the woman; women see to it that nobody is short-changed. Women have always something more to give even if nothing is left materially. “And always when resources evaporate and existential justice is necessary, the hour of woman has come,” Schirmacher wrote. What he unveiled, you can experience in the Schönstatt shrine on a different level: Seemingly “the hour of woman”, of the Mother of God, has come by mediating the Father God as the kind and philanthropic one. It is striking how people, especially those who no longer know anything about the faith, relate positively to her. Attachment to her helps to develop confidence in the kind God who is good to us, no matter, how good or miserable we are.

“The Mother of God approaches the world with her love”

Father Kentenich summarized how he perceived the activity of the Mother of God in the Schönstatt shrines. That is especially true for people in distressful situations. They often do not understand why God is not helping them, is not removing their suffering, is not sending the necessary means of subsistence. The nearness of the Mother of God reaches also into such conditions. The words of Father Kentenich about the shrine as the “cathedral of love” for our time where “even the most tortured heart becomes calm in

its peace because it is with father and mother” is literally experiential.

A woman wrote: “I had the desire to reappraise the abortion. Somebody should be there and listen. I found the solution yesterday morning when I woke up: I will go to the shrine. The Mother of God is waiting for me as the therapist. She always has time, and both her ears are open, and especially her heart.”

How much experience of the nearness of the Mother of God in the shrine is contained in such a testimony. And how much human and supernatural help is the prerequisite before such an experience is effective.

Islands of Mercy

Dear Brothers and Sisters, how much I desire that the places where Church is visible ... will become islands of mercy in the ocean of indifference,” Pope Francis wrote in his message for Lent in 2015.

The Schönstatt shrines are also such islands of mercy. The nearness of the merciful Father God becomes tangible here; his mercy is ‘grounded’ here through the shrine, through the person of the Mother of God. She alone knows how many people – believers and seeming unbelievers – flee to her in their spiritual distress. The experience of the personal love of the Mother of God is a source of strength not only to be

delivered from degrading conditions without protection. From the little, inconspicuous shrine as “cathedral of love” islands of love stretch like a net of islands of love all over the world so that the mercy of God is brought into daily life.

All of us are invited to find an asylum in this “island of mercy”.

The merciful love of God experiential – in the Covenant with Mary

“Instead of showing his mercy alone and directly, the living God created the Mother of God, and through this mother he shows his mercy to the world.”

Father J. Kentenich

Father Kentenich’s personal way led him via a deep union with Mary to God whom he experienced as the merciful Father and therefore was able to proclaim him credibly.

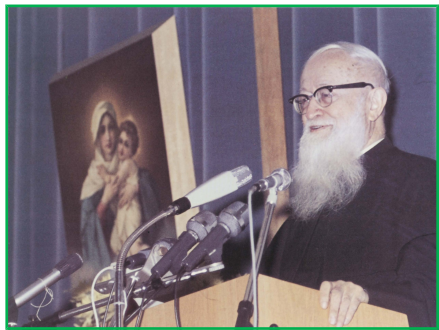
Some Testimonies:

Consecration to Mary

If you want to ask for the life secret of Father Kentenich, you come to Mary. The founder of Schönstatt

confessed: “She is the soul of my soul.”

Joseph Kentenich’s consecration to Mary at age eight and a half in the orphanage in Oberhausen is the central experience of divine guidance in his childhood and youth. At that time – on April 12, 1894 – his mother, Katharine Kentenich, consecrated the child to the Mother of God with the petition: “Be his mother! Fulfill mother duties in my stead!” Joseph Kentenich made this consecration his own and often spoke of “my” consecration to



Mary. This consecration shaped his life and work. The spirituality of Schönstatt is germinally hidden and contained in this historic event as in a seed.

“Whatever was realized through me. whatever was realized through you has come into existence through our dear Mother Thrice Admirable of Schönstatt ... She personally formed and shaped me since I was nine years old.”

J. Kentenich

Unconditional Love

“Father Kentenich embodied in a glorious way and manner the person and mission of Mary; when he talked of her you noticed his nearness to her and communion with her. Everybody sensed that a covenant of love united both, that he owed everything to her and that he loved her unconditionally.”

P. Esteban Uriburu

Never separated from her

You will never notice how deeply and intimately I love the mother of God ... because I never do anything away from her.”

J. Kentenich

“Near Father Kentenich I learned that ‘impossible’ did not exist for him. He always trusted in the power and kindness of the Mother of God without limitation, and he believed in the reality of the covenant of love. That was the secret of his life.”

P. Günther M. Boll

I was with the Mother of God

During a conference for theology students ... the participants experienced on the Feast of the Annunciation of Mary the following: They tried to reach Father Kentenich by telephone. But he did not seem to be in his room at the usual time. All attempts throughout the day failed. They asked people from his surrounding, but nobody knew where he was. Finally in the evening he an-

swered the telephone. When he was asked where he had been all day, he at first gave a humorous and eluding answer. Finally he said: “I was with the Mother of God. Today is her feastday!”

He had chosen solitude to spend the day with her alone.

Advice from Father Kentenich

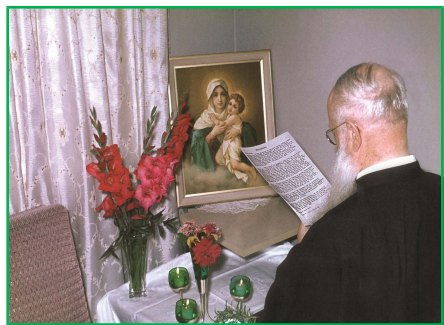
“Keep your place in the heart of the Mother of God. At any rate, that’s where you belong. There you find calm, security and confidence in victory in all situations and in any case. Do something good when you have an opportunity, and see in everything a kind fatherly hand that guides and leads your fate according to a plan of love. Think always of the simple truth: ‘God is father, God is love, everything he does is good.’ If you adhere to that you will master life and will be a source of blessings for many.”

Then we are friends

A priest told about a visit in Milwaukee that became for him a key event. The topic of a conversation was his relationship to the Mother of God. He told Father Kentenich that as a seminarian he had little contact with the Mother of God, but through a personal experience in the chapel of the seminary she became a “you” for him. “After I had told that to Father Kentenich he visibly and at length took that in; then he turned to

me and said: “If you love the Mother of God then we are friends.”

*From: “Vaterblicke”, Josef Neuenhofer,
Schönstattverlag*



IN ILLNESS

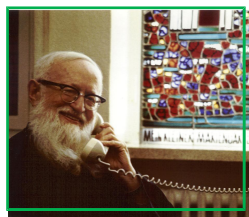
On February 23, 2015 I had to undergo the fourth complicated back surgery. I had already fourteen Titan spine devices; because two of them broke and the pain was unbearable, another surgery had to be performed. With many friends and acquaintances, even on the international level, I prayed several novenas to Father Kentenich with the petition to intercede the miracle that the surgery would not have to be performed. Our ardent prayer was answered in a different way and manner. At the surgery that lasted about ten hours, the neurosurgeon wanted to implant the device at the top of the spine to strengthen it. To be able to do that, he would have to shut down one lung. A lung specialist who had been called as advisor recommended against the procedure because he thought I would not survive. The doctor had to operate with only twelve devices. Because they had been broken, a stronger, especially imported (Cobalt Chrome) that was difficult to work with had to be used. After the successful surgery the doctor explained the procedure to me as well as the seriousness of the situation. He told me that I would have to wear a surgical corset true to size for the rest of my life. Contrary to earlier surgeries, I

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recovered surprisingly quickly and could be

transferred to rehab after ten days. The process of healing continued to go well and I was without pain. Three weeks later I could return home. I could do little tasks. From then on I could do fruitful apostolic work ... My friends and acquaintances are surprised about this striking recovery that is generally seen as a “miracle”. I am convinced that the recovery took place on the intercession of Father Kentenich and I hope that publishing it will be a contribution for his beatification.

E. R., South Africa, April 2016



My way with Father Kentenich began sixty years ago. I could experience him personally and experience his guidance concretely. He became my companion on my long way of life. Today I want to report how I have experienced his help during the past fourteen months. My sacral bone had two spontaneous cracks. Treatment in the hospital and rehab lasted fourteen months. I had to sit in a wheelchair and I had to learn walking again. In rehab I was not allowed to do that on my own. A nurse had to be with me all the time. Some times friends came and walked with me. Then I returned to

my apartment on the second floor. The treatment was more relaxed. I had great difficulties with walking. I found out that a ski accident had caused the fracture of the sacral bone and the ligaments of the knee had become weak. Walking, also with cane and walker, was difficult. Appropriate therapy helped so that now I can walk again with walking aid. It is a very positive experience that I may drive a car again just as before, even long distances. I found help for all that was necessary. I live with Father Kentenich and I thank him daily for being my companion and help.

M.P., April 2016

PROFESSIONAL

Last summer our daughter passed her exam as licensed educator with high marks. Unfortunately she could not find employment in spite of constant applications. I implored the Mother of God and Father Kentenich again and again for help. Now my prayers were answered. On March 15, my daughter received a position – at first temporary. She is happy that she finally may work in her profession. Perhaps the position will become permanent. I had promised the Mother of God and Father Kentenich to come to Schoenstatt and give thanks. I did so very joyfully last Sunday. My husband and my girl friend accompanied me. It is always wonderful to pray in the Original Shrine. I felt the love and

grace from the Mother of God. With deep inner peace and filled with gratitude I went home. You may publish this answer to prayers to encourage others to walk the way of prayers.

F. T., March 2016

IN LIFE AND IN DEATH

Since 2002 I had to take care of my husband who had Alzheimer's. The early years were relatively easy. But gradually more help and nursing care became necessary. I was afraid that soon I would not be able to take care of him. I took refuge in praying to the Mother of God and to Father Kentenich. I prayed for strength to be able to take care of my husband and not have to entrust him to the hands of strangers in a strange environment. When it became very difficult that in spite of help from my daughter and social services I almost could not continue, God called him, surprising all of us. I was filled with gratitude then already that God on the intercession of mighty intercessors fulfilled my wish. May these lines be a contribution for the beatification of Father Kentenich. For me he is a "saint" for a long time already.

S. S., March 2016

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*Whenever this pamphlet directly or indirectly states that
Father Kentenich is a “saint” it is always the expression of private opinion.
The decision of the Church is in no way
anticipated.*

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