

IMPULSE

#4 | 2023

*For Daily Living*



*Moments of Joy*



Secretariat Father Joseph Kentenich

# Moments of Joy

"How nice that you're here! I'm glad to see you again!" Who doesn't like to hear these or similar words from others? A sentence like this immediately conveys a pleasant atmosphere and makes you feel welcome. These few words resonate with appreciation and human warmth; you feel personally addressed and are inclined to return this greeting just as positively. "It gives me so much joy to see you!" With these words, Pope Francis greeted the many thousands of young people at the beginning of the Vigil on the evening of August 5, 2023 at World Youth Day in Lisbon. "Thank you," said the Holy Father, "for having come, for having come a long way, and thank you for being here!"

Following the Gospel passage about the encounter of the Mother of God with Elizabeth, which has shaped the motto of World Youth Day "She arose and went with haste" (Lk 1:39), Pope Francis gives a catechesis on joy. I invite you to take a closer look at a few sentences from this catechesis and apply them to your own everyday life.

Pope Francis first poses the question: "Why does Mary get up and rush to her cousin? Sure, she has just found out that her cousin is pregnant, but so is she. So why does she go when no one has asked her? ... Mary goes because she loves, and 'he who loves flies, runs with joy' (*Imitation of Christ, III:5*). That is what love does to us."

Then the Holy Father declares, "... the

joy is not for yourself, it should be something ... Joy is missionary! ... And so I bring this joy to others. But this joy that we have was brought to us by others ... When we look back, we all have people who have been a ray of hope in our lives: Parents, grandparents, friends, priests, religious, catechists ... Teachers ... They are like the roots of our joy."

***Let's take up this suggestion and ask ourselves:***

- ***Who are some of the bright spots in my life?***
- ***What experiences come to mind that have spontaneously triggered joy in me?***
- ***What moments of joy have shaped my life to this day?***

Alongside time and knowledge, joy is one of the three things that increase when we share it with others. The well-known proverb also points this out to us: Shared joy is double joy.

"The joy is not in the closed library - even if you have to study! - but lies elsewhere. It is not kept under lock and key. Joy must be sought, it must be discovered, rediscovered." (*Pope Francis, 05.08.2023, Lisbon*)

• Let us undertake this journey of discovery, let us search alone or with family, with good friends or acquaintances for the moments of joy that have remained in our memories, that help us in sad situations to look forward and move on.

Father Kentenich was a pronounced Apostle of joy. He cultivated and valued joy very much and was keen to inspire others to create an atmosphere of joy.

He once said:

"A person with a joyful attitude has the key to people's hearts in his pocket. It is his living divining rod that discovers the deep, mysterious source of the other person's soul and allows it to flow. He works not only through being, but also through his word, through his language, through his actions. So where I can spread joy, where I can spread a little bit of sunshine, I should reach out, because it is a great deed that I am accomplishing!" (*Father Kentenich, How we experienced him, page 63*)

And elsewhere he reminds us that joy is a gift of the Holy Spirit. "Only if the Holy Spirit with his seven gifts gives our inner being heroic faith in Divine Providence can we expect to have a constant divine smile on our lips, even when the whole world abandons us, when people throw stones at us." (*ibid., page 64*)

How great the longing for joy can be

even in the greatest catastrophe, and to persevere and carry on, was recently featured in a report on the forest fires in Hawaii and Maui. There was immediate solidarity among the islanders. Now everyone is pitching in, cooking in makeshift camps, cleaning up, singing and planning things to boost tourism again. Everyone is doing things they may never have done before, but everyone agrees: we can do it! In the midst of this seemingly hopeless situation, one of the islanders looks ahead and says: "We have to feel joy again! What inner strength must lie behind such a statement!"

Such extreme situations are a particular challenge, but sometimes we find it difficult to retain our joy even in normal everyday life. It needs a reminder, a little push to seek out the moments of joy to look for and capture them.



### *Impulses for everyday life*

*Perhaps the following childlike thinking can help us to search and discover joy.*

- *Look, Grandma, the sun, says the granddaughter, and draws attention to something that adults often don't notice.*
- *It is raining cats and dogs, but she realizes that it doesn't bother her because the sun is shining in her heart.*
- *I simply pass on what I would like to have myself... a smile.*

My wish for the coming months is that you succeed in discovering and cherishing many moments of joy and capture them.

*Sr. Gisela-Maria Mues*



## Testimonies

### *This is how I experienced Father Kentenich*

*Testimony of Otmar Armbrust,  
Schoenstatt Men's Federation*

A few days after his return from his 14-year exile, Fr. Kentenich gave two talks on December 29 and 30, 1965, to our Young Men's Federation meeting in the Marienau lecture hall in Schoenstatt. The content was the mission and the task of the Young Men's Federation. We, participants only knew the founder from word. He had been in exile in Milwaukee/USA for the past 14 years. We were therefore all very excited about this meeting with him. We experienced the meeting as very relaxed and cordial.

#### **He greeted everyone personally**

Fr. Kentenich greeted each of us personally. He also wrote words of encouragement to several of those present in their personal "Heavenwards" prayer book (a collection of Schoenstatt prayers). And he blessed some engagement rings. During his lectures, he did not sit at the table, as was customary in the Young Men's Association, but stood freely and upright in front of our federation community. That

impressed us very much. Some of us also had the great joy that one or the other would pick up, with his car, Father Kentenich at the Training Center at Mount Schoenstatt or bring him back to the mountain. I was 25 years old at the time.

#### **I still remember well how Father Kentenich laughed**

After a talk, some of the brothers and I stood around the staircase on the first floor of Marienau with Father and told jokes. I still remember very well how Father laughed. This laughter was different from other people's laughter; it was completely carefree and spontaneous. Father simply laughed and was happy about it. I thought, only an inwardly free person can laugh like that.

#### **He understood my concern**

I "tapped" Father with my finger, he turned to me and asked me: "Yes, please?". He put his hand on my left shoulder. I replied:

'Father, I ask for your blessing for my bride and for me! Because I was engaged. 'Yes,' he said, 'I will gladly do that', and turned back to the other brothers.

Understandably, I was very surprised and left deeply impressed. I had the feeling that Father Kentenich understood me and my concern not only my words, but also the concern for my future that I associated with this request. At the same time, I felt a sense of closeness, deep security and understanding.

### **The encounter gave me strength for my life**

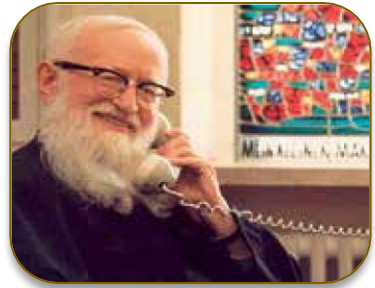
Even today (2023), as an 83-year-old, I like to think back to this encounter with Schoenstatt's founder. Over the years, this concrete encounter gave me a lot of strength and confidence in my life, not only for my family and for my job, but also in all aspects of my life. I am still very grateful for this today and still benefit from it.



Photo: Archive Männerbund  
Meeting of members of the Men's Federation  
with Fr. Kentenich at the end of April 1967

*Otmar Armbrust  
has been a member of  
the Schoenstatt Men's  
Federation since  
1980. Before that  
since 1958/59 to the  
Schoenstatt Young  
Men's Federation.*

# He helps He Helps



## IN ILLNESS

On August 20, 2022 I experienced pain in the middle of my back which worsened. I was admitted to the VA Hospital in Milwaukee, WI on August 30 where 5 days later, a bone scan revealed stage four cancer with a PSA count of 484. The cancer soon spread throughout my entire body; I was given about 10 months to live. The doctors began a special cancer therapy program to aggressively attack my cancer cells, which included radiation treatments for 5 days, chemo every three weeks, and stomach shots to boost my immune system. After a month of therapy, I began to pray a novena to Father Joseph Kentenich whom I knew from my years of assisting him in the rectory of Holy Cross Parish where I lived from 1955-1958. I knew him to be a blessed man.

On February 17, 2023, I was again admitted to the hospital, this time with pneumonia and again given the last rites by Fr. Leon Martin, a

Pallotine priest. A week later, on February 26, the doctor came to see me and told me that I was in remission, my cancer was being killed by my immune system, and I was going to live. I was happy and surprised to hear such good news! When I was discharged from the hospital, I immediately began a novena of thanksgiving to Father Kentenich. My PSA count is now normal and my bone scan and contrast CT scan show no cancer anywhere in my body.

My heartfelt thanks to Father Kentenich for his intercession and the prayers of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary when I made pilgrimages to the Schoenstatt Shrine in Milwaukee. I composed a special prayer of thanksgiving that we would sing each time I visited the shrine.

*D. R, WI. – Sept. 2023*

## FINANCIAL EMERGENCY

My nephew's business had major financial problems, so he was facing

bankruptcy and probably had to sell everything. It all seemed hopeless. In this great concern, my sister and I began a novena to Father Kentenich. On the fifth day of the second novena, we received the good news - that a solution had been found to prevent the sale. We are extremely grateful to Father Kentenich and agree that this answer to prayer should be published.

*L. A. - July 2023*

### **YOUNG TALENT**

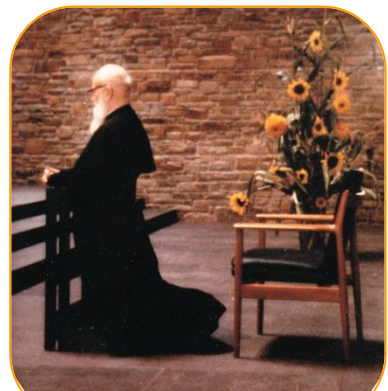
My niece has been married to a physically disabled man for several years and her wish for a child has remained unfulfilled until now. Last year, she asked for a special blessing on Assumption Day after a church service and soon afterwards she became pregnant. On the one hand, her relatives were happy, but the concern remained: would the child be disabled? I repeatedly entrusted this concern to Father Kentenich, and the family also prayed a lot. There were some upsets during the pregnancy, but it always went well and eventually the little one was born. F. was born by caesarean section. She had to spend the first few days in intensive care, where the young parents visited her every day to keep in touch with her. After a week of training for mother and child, the little one was allowed to go home and, in the meantime, she has put on weight and is healthy. Many thanks to heaven for

all this, especially to Father Kentenich for his intercession.

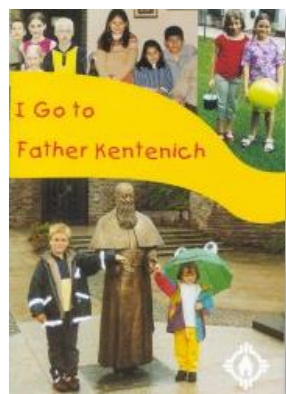
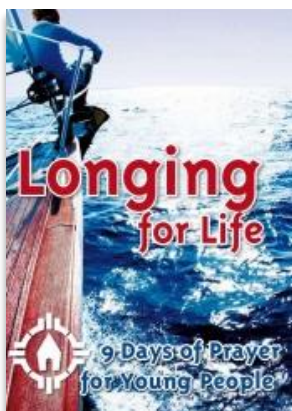
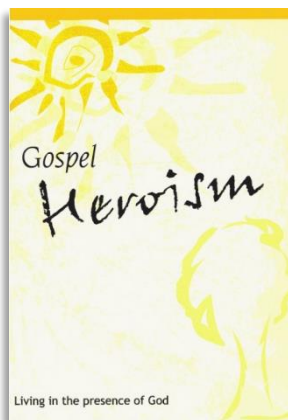
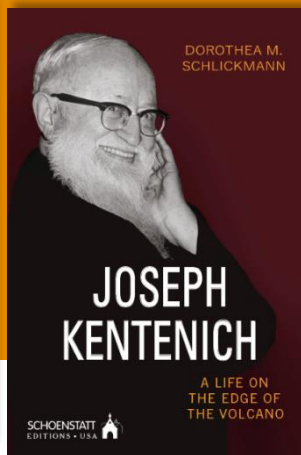
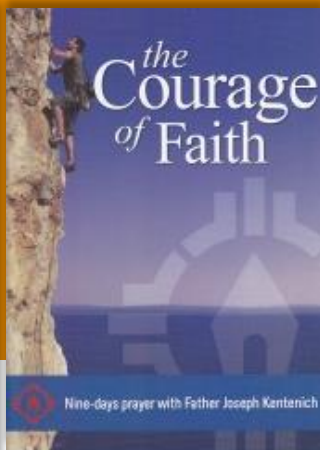
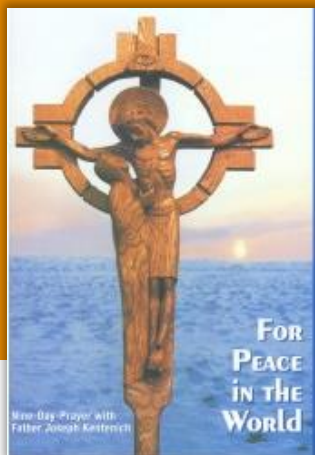
### **HEALING OF BODY AND SOUL**

After a fall, I suffered several fractures (pelvis, elbow, collarbone) and was completely disabled for weeks. Even during the five weeks of rehab, progress was slow. I lost confidence in myself and my body and was filled with fear. This caused even more physical symptoms of illness, because a body cannot heal if the soul is sick. Father Kentenich was no stranger to me and the Blessed Mother has accompanied me since I was a child. So, I turned to him and prayed several nine-day novenas. Just praying brought me peace, calm and confidence. In the long term, my soul began to heal ... and so did my body. There are still minor difficulties, but with the help of the Blessed Mother I have regained confidence in life. I thank Father Kentenich and the Blessed Mother from the bottom of my heart for this. They should and will accompany and protect me for the rest of my life. I agree to the publication of these prayers.

*L. B. - July 2023.*



## Request our publications:



*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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