

IMPULSE

2|2022

for Daily Living



Light in the Dark



Secretariat Father Joseph Kentenich

Light in the Dark

"We are living in difficult times!" This is what we heard again and again in recent weeks during conversations. Yes, it's true! The challenges and conflicts seem to pile up. There's the pandemic, which we haven't really gotten a handle on yet, with the different opinions about the right countermeasures. Suddenly, there are armed conflicts in Europe again, which are causing great concern. There are scandals in our Church that raise many questions and provoke various reactions, from media attacks to several resignations.



"Difficulties are tasks!"

That's what Father Kentenich liked to say. We believe God has chosen us to live today precisely at this time. Therefore, Christ's words truly apply to us today: "You are the light of the world!" (*Mt 5:14*). To be a light in the manifold darkness of our time – that is indeed a challenge! At the same time, Christ sets before us a wonderfully beautiful goal. From the experience of our human powerlessness, especially during the last months, we also know: We, too, can be *light* for our world only in HIM, who is the light of the world.

Our current paschal penitential season reminds us of the great struggle of Christ against the darkness of evil. He endures rejection, slander, hatred, betrayal, fear, physical abuse up to the death on the cross. He overcomes all this not by force of arms, but only by the power of love. It's stronger than evil, stronger than darkness. From the cross shines the light of love, forgiveness, peace. Christ gives us this light. He gives it to his Church which he loves and of which he says: "The powers of the underworld will not overcome it." (*Mt 16:18*)

We Christians may live from this hope. We know that the Church is a Church of sinners in which there is much failure and sin and guilt. But there is also holiness, the love and

the light of Jesus Christ. We experience disappointments in the Church. Father Kentenich also had to experience this. After returning

home from long years of exile imposed on him by the Church, he wrote on a card with a photo of his arrival: "Love overcomes all." And for his tomb he requested the inscription: *Dilexit Ecclesiam* – He loved the Church.

We Christians especially should see the hostile conflicts of our world as a call to contribute to a culture of mutual respect and appreciation. If we wish for peace in the world, it would certainly be important to give witness to the spirit of forgiveness. There should be no place for public attacks against each other. Leaving the Church cannot be a solution. The redemptive act of Christ, his suffering, his death, and his resurrection are the incomparably great signs of his love for us and for every single human being. In these difficult times, rather than turning away from Christ and his Church, it is time to demonstrate an even deeper turning to him.

In the Dachau concentration camp, at a time when the Church was also was also subject to great hostility, the founder of Schoenstatt gave witness of his belief in the divine power within the mystical Body of Christ, in a meditation he wrote on the 14th Station of the Cross.

Addressing Jesus Christ, he prayed:

The stone on your tomb will cover you for only a short time; then you will rise victoriously from the dead.

You ascend as victor from the grave and jubilantly open to us the gates of heaven.

In your Church you want to go forth blessing the nations in order to extend your kingdom with your Bride, the Queen of Heaven, and to draw them in the Holy Spirit to the Father.

Whenever your Mystical Body is despised, condemned to die and considered dead, the power of God breaks through and victoriously creates a new earth.

FATHER KENTENICH'S SUGGESTIONS FOR PEACE:

"Where it is a matter of relationship with others, we are to be first of all miracles of mildness and patience."

Testimony

Father Kentenich as a Pastor

How did he do pastoral care? . On his 25th anniversary as a priest, he said: "During those first years with the students, I allowed a great deal warmth of heart come alive in me.

Father Kentenich was a priest with a heart. He sought the hearts of the people and addressed them. He sought the personal closeness to the people, in a reverent distance from his own life, from the uniqueness of others, their problems, their abilities, and also their faults and weaknesses. He wanted, as he had announced before the foundation, to make himself available above all with his heart.

Behind this warmth of heart is the image of a personally loving, priestly father. He wanted to develop the image of the father in the pastor. He knew himself to be a father who understands, who leads, who is there, who also educates and who faithfully accompanies the individual in faithfulness. The individual ought to be inwardly at home, able to become inwardly mature and grow. The individual ought to be able to find and realize one's life's task. In individual conversations and talks he unfolded repeatedly that the mass man today must be overcome by Christian personalities. This left its mark on him: He approached the individual with reverence, with attention, and with love.

A second point of view:

As a priest, Father Kentenich was a man of God. He lived in and with

God; otherwise he couldn't have worked as he did. He noticed that people today are afraid of experiencing God. Where is God? And there he developed a profound pedagogy through practical faith in providence. It's necessary for us to go in search of God's traces and discover him in everyday life; to become aware that he is there, he sees me, he knows about everything, he is somehow behind everything, even behind suffering.

In a prayer, Father Kentenich once wrote: "Every suffering is a greeting from you, God, that lends wings to our soul." And how often does suffering touch us? He once said something like this: "If a mosquito bites you, you should ask: Dear God, what are you trying to tell me now?" In other words: Discover God's guidance behind all the things; allow ourselves to be addressed by God. That's what he wanted to strongly develop, the faith in providence in us, so that we can, as it were, enter into dialogue with God again and again.

He was once asked how he survived Dachau, this murderous concentration camp. His answer was: "I talked to God from morning till night." For him, God was a reality that's there in the signs, which we all accept as *coincidental* or consider as fate.

When I talked to him during my first personal conversation in Würzburg, I told him some things that seemed

inconceivable. I told him some things I couldn't understand as coming from God's guidance. Then he said we should always remember: "God's will, therefore be still!" And that's part of the incomprehensibilities, where I don't know why something is like that.

How many suffer from this and ask again and again: Why, why? Father Kentenich's answer as a man of God was: "God's will! Therefore be still!" This he also always practiced even in his greatest difficulties and problems: That he said to himself, "I don't understand why this has hit me now, or why things have turned out differently than I had planned, but God is behind it. God's will – so be still!

During a second conversation I told him about some of the obstacles I had and what annoyed me, because things had turned out differently than I thought. There in the middle of the conversation he said: "It's nice how the good Lord has guided you." My first response was: "Not nice at all!" And he repeated: "It's beautiful how the good Lord has led you." Father Kentenich simply wanted to make it clear to me: God is behind this. Behind it is his love and his guidance. I may entrust myself to God's guidance in life.

Father Kentenich was a man of God, whose perspective came entirely from faith, from God. This is his method of pastoral care. That's why it's also a fundamental task for us priests to reconnect people with God and also to reconcile them with God's guidance, which they often cannot



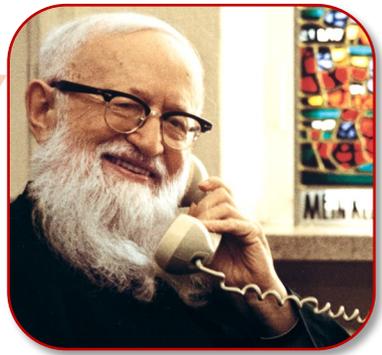
comprehend. But also the beautiful events we want to gratefully accept.

So the founder of Schoenstatt was a priestly father, a man of God, and he was a guide leading to the Blessed Mother. This was the pastoral care of Father Kentenich. At the founding of Schoenstatt, which took place as a covenant of love with Mary, we grasp with faith the mission of the Blessed Mother for our lives and for the renewal of the Church. And this covenant of love with Mary, he developed in all directions. Mary, he often said, is the real pastoral helper that a priest needs. The Blessed Mother must be called in. And he himself was convinced: If I can secure for people a good, loving relationship with the Blessed Mother, then for the most part I have already fulfilled my task.

Personally, I have often passed on this advice, even to parents when their children have left home: Give them a relationship with Mary, with the Blessed Mother! Then someone will go with the children, even if their work takes them to America or somewhere else. The Blessed Mother as a pastoral helper, as a mother, should be with them.

(Excerpt from a talk of Father George Frank)

He Helps



ON THE JOB

I could only have done my work with delinquents for over forty years with the help of the power of Father Kentenich's prayer. His theology, his trust in St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary show me the way. This path helps many people to avoid going to prison. I accompany the delinquents for about two to five years or even longer. In the process, they learn to live permanently free of punishment, to take on new tasks in various professions and to persevere. Some form partnerships and families that last longer than before.

D.L., December 2021

IN FAMILY CONCERNS

In July 2021, our son obtained his doctorate with the highest grade, and then he had a wonderful celebration with all of us. Recently, he was offered a good position and accepted it. He will be able to start on January 1, 2022. The workplace is some distance away. So he had to look for an apartment, which he found last week. Our concern was also that he would find a caring partner. He was alone and had experienced several disappointments. He had another disappointment behind him and was very depressed, but with the help of our dear God and the Blessed Mother through the intercession of Father

Kentenich, he has now found a dear wife with whom he is very happy. We are infinitely grateful that so many wonderful things have worked out for the good, and we say thank you to God, to the dear Mother of God and Father Kentenich: Heartfelt thanks. Also our other son has also passed some tests wonderfully. After deep depression, he has regained joy, strength, and courage to live. He has also met a lovely Christian girl as a gift.

T. G., November 21

IN HEALTH CONCERNS

In March 1999, when, during the preliminary examination of cataract surgery a tumor was found in my right eye. The tumor was diagnosed by a resident as melanoma (black cancer). The head physician (supposedly an expert in this field) confirmed the diagnosis. The eye was to be removed. But they wanted to observe the tumor to know how fast it was growing. So I had to go in ever shorter intervals to the often painful examinations.

After each examination, which was performed by the head physician, I asked him whether he could have made a mistake. But the answer was always: "It is a melanoma." I was

devastated and had no more hope. Then I got to know a good woman (a Schoenstatter), with whom I organize assistance for Romania, who advised me to go to Schoenstatt. In May 1999, after long persuasion, I went to Schoenstatt with a bus of pilgrims. We were accommodated in the Pilgrims House near the Original Shrine. I was very much impressed. When we visited the Adoration Church and the tomb of Father Kentenich, everyone went to the sarcophagus, put a hand on it and prayed. As almost the last to go in, I also placed my right hand on the sarcophagus and asked Father for help. For quite some time I kept my right hand on my eye.

After two weeks another examination was due. I was quite upset about what the doctor said. He couldn't look at me when he said, "We have to apologize to you. We were wrong. It is not a melanoma, but a nevus (birthmark)."

Today, I can't describe how I felt at the time, but one thing was immediately clear to me: Father Kentenich had helped! Since that time, I have venerated him; I have said novenas and I also venerate the Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen, and Victress of Schoenstatt. *R.S., June 2021*

NO LITIGATION

Father Kentenich helped me with a matter that was causing me a lot of bellyache. The issue was a private order from a foreign company, which at first had made a good impression. After a quick shipment from the place of manufacture, the shipment did not move in Germany. I received the

answer by e-mail that the delivery would take place in the next few days. It was tricky because I had to be present on the day of delivery to immediately check the delivery and to refuse acceptance in the event of a complaint, so that the shipping insurance would take effect. But no delivery person called to name the day of delivery. Since it was a large device and I had paid a lot of money in advance I felt queasy. Then came the day when I came home and found the delivery. It was lying in the driveway opposite the front door with obvious damage. Horrified, I took photos and tried to call the contact address. For hours I reached no one. Then I was told to document everything and send in the photos. I asked again and again and was put off. Finally, I feared that I was dealing with a dubious company. I wrote that I wanted the money back immediately. At the same time, I asked Father Kentenich for help. In the meantime, I was very depressed. What's in store for me if I want the money back? But then the problem was solved without a lawyer. On the phone I learned that many employees were missing in the company due to Corona, but soon the competent people would handle my case and arrange for a replacement delivery. This is how it happened. The new delivery was fine. It was like a stone from my heart that no litigation became necessary. Father Kentenich has often taken care in a fatherly way, and this time was no exception. I am very grateful to him.

G. L., November 2021

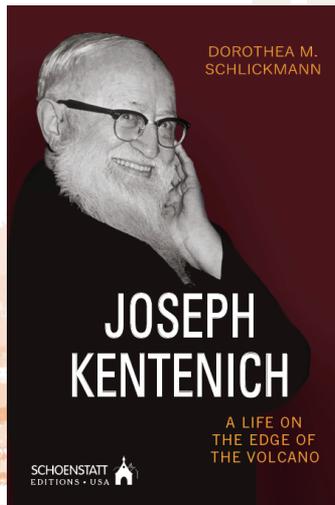
Father Joseph Kentenich

- Founder of the International Schoenstatt Movement -

was born on November 16, 1885, in Gymnich near Cologne and died on September 15, 1968, in the Trinity Church of Berg Schoenstatt, immediately after the celebration of the Holy Mass. He is also buried in this church. His sarcophagus

The **Secretariat Father Josef Kentenich** distributes information about Father Kentenich, to those who are acquainted with Schoenstatt' spirituality and pray on his intercession. You will be able to find more information and novenas from Fr. Kentenich in our centers.

Request the publication:



A Life at the Edge of the Volcano

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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.