

IMPULSE

02 | 2023

for Daily Living



For you!



Sekretariat Father Joseph Kentenich

For You!

"I'll do anything for you!" Maybe someone has said this to you before? A word that feels really good when you hear it. A word that expresses goodwill, kindness, love. Such a thing is said only by someone who is willing to go to great lengths for another person, as can be the case, for example, in the relationship between a parent and a child, with good friends, with a happily married couple.

There is *One* who promises these words to all of us, to each and every person: For you I do everything! – It is Christ, our Redeemer. Every year during the Lenten and Easter seasons we remember his words in a special way, words which he put into practice:

"Greater love has no one than this, the one who lays down his life for his friends." (Job, 15,13)

The answer?

The offer stands: For you! It's now up to us! Which answer is given is up to each person's freedom. The late Pope Benedict XVI was once asked by a journalist: What does God really want from us? And his answer was:

"That we become lovers, for then we are his images. For he is ... love, and he wants us to be creatures who are like him and who thereby become like him out of the freedom of their own loving ..." This is a great task which usually has to be implemented in quite inconspicuous situations of everyday life. For example, someone tells, "I still remember as a teenager not being able to understand why my mother regularly dusted every object in our house every fortnight. I once asked her, "Why are you doing that? You'd much rather be reading right now." "True," she answered, "but I do it for Jesus." That made me stop and think ... I understood something very important for my life – namely, what it means to align everything in life, no matter how banal, with a relationship of love. Love transforms everything."



Those who know they are blessed by the *"for you"* that God promises us also feel inwardly stimulated,

almost urged, to respond to this gift, and to pass it on to others.

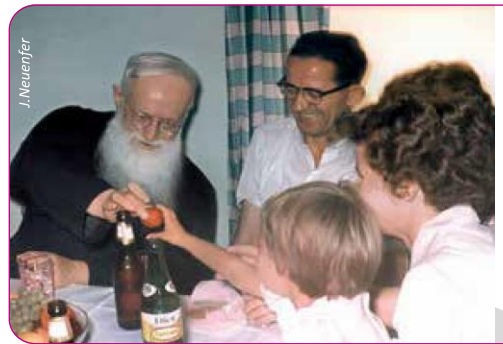
Father Kentenich was also such a person. One of the priests who were imprisoned with him in the Dachau concentration camp tells about him: "That ... I must say, during the time in the entry block and later he always cared for us and took care like a father and mother all in one. Every day during this time he brought me all kinds of good things and the best and tastiest things that he was sent, so that not only I, but also four priests from my dorm had plenty to eat. He brought medicine for my fever. Against the tormenting thirst he brought me beer. Every open or secret wish he read in my eyes. Beyond that – all that he gave me and many others spiritually! This spiritual care on the part of Father Kentenich was the greatest gift of grace that we received in Dachau. (*Poieiss, Prisoner of the Gestapo, 1949*)

Very practical in everyday life

A married couple once described very concretely how this "for you"

can look in normal, daily life together:

"So, one person always tries to put away his dirty laundry right away, when he knows that it bothers the other person. Or, there's always a chilled beer in the refrigerator. Or the car is always filled up with gas. Or there's always a post-it note with a greeting stuck to it. In a movie, a man put it this way: "For you, I'm ready to become a better person." And so it is with us in our love for God and for Mary. They want the best for us, a life in fullness. And they are happy when we do our part! When we make an effort to come closer and closer to the idea of a successful life. Mary wants to be our educator in this."



Words of Father Kentenich as impulses for our lives:

- *No matter how small a good deed is, if it is done out of love for God, it is great.*
- *The more real love we give one another, the more we prepare one another for faith in God's true love for us.*

We ask ourselves: *To whom could I be such a "For you!" today?*

Sr. M. Resia Käppeler



Testimonies

This is how I experienced Father Kentenich Testimony of Sister M. Adele Gertsen

In 1960, I joined the community of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary. I was in Schoenstatt when Father Kentenich came back from the USA on that Christmas Eve in 1965. However, my first contact with him was a brief telephone call when he was still in Rome waiting for permission to return home to Schoenstatt. We longed for that day! During that phone call, I could only introduce myself very briefly. I experienced that Father Kentenich's reaction to my few words was unbelievably accurate, although he couldn't have known anything about me. This increased my expectations concerning his return home to Schoenstatt.

His Homecoming on Christmas Eve 1965

It remains an unforgettable experience for me. Father Kentenich was picked up at the airport in Frankfurt. After arriving in Schoenstatt, he first went to the Original Shrine, knelt in the front at the Communion rail and prayed silently. Finally, he said something briefly to greet those present. Then he went into the auditorium of our "Marienschule". The school was filled with people from the Schoenstatt Movement. I could only marvel at how quickly the news of the founder's return had spread. It hadn't been until the morning of that day that we heard

the news. Many people left their homes on this Christmas Eve to witness the celebration of Father's return home: Many priests were present, families, and members of all Schoenstatt communities. The auditorium was virtually overflowing.

I was deeply moved by the fact that I was able to see Father Kentenich alive. I had only known him from a photo. I was filled with reverence for the founder and felt a great distance from him. When he entered the hall, many hands stretched out to greet him. I was reserved. At this moment, I just wanted to look.

Then several welcoming speeches were given. Great joy filled everyone when he finally took the lectern himself. Right at the beginning he said that there was a lot to say in this hour. Looking back on the past, he could "stay on earth" with us or "go up to heaven" and look at past history from above. He decided to take us "up to the stars," as he said, to contemplate with us God's guidance during the past years. We experienced being one big family, gathered around the father and founder.

Personal Conversation

In April 1966, I began a five-month training period together with the group of young sisters who joined the

community at the same time as I did. We never missed an opportunity to see and hear the founder. We were especially very excited to have a personal conversation with him. Finally, it became possible, but each one could only take about five minutes each. What can you discuss in five minutes?! I thought of a few things, but the time was actually too short for that.

Finally, things turned out quite differently. Father Kentenich took the time to get to know me completely. He was interested in everything, asked about my family, about the story of my vocation, how I was doing in the sisters' community. The way he listened was unique. At the end of the conversation, I was simply happy and filled with joy. This is how it was with my co-sisters. He immediately won our trust. We could have told him anything and asked him anything. Our initial inhibitions or fears simply no longer existed.

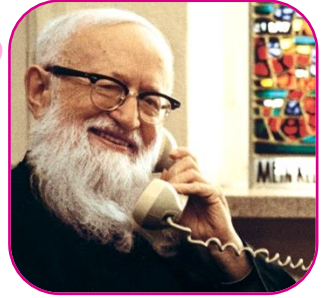
I jotted down notes of the conversation and all subsequent encounters with him. At the end of the first conversation, I wrote, "Could it have been more beautiful?" Several times we also went to confession with Father Kentenich. We experienced him as very kind; grateful for the trust we had placed in him. He was very reverent in dealing with us young sisters. Very quickly he knew each one of us. From our side, we were anxious that he should know everything about us, especially our weak sides. One usually likes to hide them. But he gave us the experience that he affirmed us even

with our weak points and believed in the good in us. We wanted to see Father Kentenich again and again, at least to see him, even if no conversation was possible. What did the encounters with Father Kentenich bring me?

They remain unforgettable to me. For me, the radiance of his closeness to God was unforgettable. This closeness to God spoke from his whole being. If Father Kentenich, who is only a human being, radiates such goodness, how good God must be; that was my conclusion. From then on, it became easier for me to believe in a God, a Father who loves us to the extent that we can hardly imagine. Before, I had more of an idea of a just God who rewards and punishes as I deserved. God now became very concrete. He is not an idea, but a real person. He is not far away from us, but very close. So, Father Kentenich gave me a new idea of God. The new thing was that I realized that I didn't have to earn God's love. God loves me, he loves every person without any prior performance. That is, he loves me not because I am good and well-behaved, but because he is good. This is what I experienced in Father Kentenich.



He Helps



In Illness

My daughter was ill with a bladder infection for a long time. She was given various medications and antibiotics, but nothing helped. During a further examination it turned out that she had bloody tears in her bladder. Therefore, the doctor considered inserting an artificial bladder. In our great distress, we turned to Father Kentenich. He was supposed to make sure that the inflammation would pass and that an operation could be prevented. My daughter was then examined again by a specialist. Fortunately, he was able to determine that the bladder was no longer inflamed and that there were no more tears in it. In the meantime, my daughter is completely symptom-free. She says she feels better than before. We are overwhelmed by the help we have experienced through Father Kentenich. Out of gratitude we share this wonderful answer to prayer.

B. F., August 2022

After a hip operation with unfortunately many problems that followed, I prayed the novena for the intercession of Father Kentenich. I also prayed the rosary often. I was heard. I am back home and happy. Thank you for the wonderful help.

G. H., November 2

Searching for a Job

A few years before my anticipated retirement, I became unemployed. Financially, it was necessary to find a new job. I applied very intensively for jobs being offered. In our family we remembered the story of a Sister of Mary from the poor early days of their community. During that time, Father Kentenich had also taken care of the economic needs. On one of his trips abroad, he had sent several large packages of modern shoes, which were scarce in Germany in those times of need. Germany was in short supply and the shoes could be sold at a profit. Now, we felt that we were in a similar economic emergency. We asked Father Kentenich to also take responsibility for our financial situation. After just six weeks, I received a promise for a new job. We thank Father Kentenich.

O. P., November 2022

Regarding Births

With all our hearts, we thank Father Kentenich and the Blessed Mother. Our daughter, 38 years old, was expecting her first baby. In spite of the baby's breech presentation, she gave

birth to a healthy baby girl who was born without difficulty. We trusted in the novena asking for Father Kentenich's intercession. This gave all of us serenity and tranquility. The young parents allowed themselves to be led in this delicate situation and let the birth come to them so that at the right time the right decisions were made so that neither mother nor child were in danger. Even during the days that followed, we were able to feel the closeness and help of Father Kentenich and give thanks for this great intercessor.

E. H., January 2022

During the birth of my daughter's *first* child, there were many complications. Things had become very critical for mother and child. With the *second* child she also had a high-risk pregnancy. A natural birth was out of the question. In addition, the child was transverse. Several people prayed with me for the baby, among others to the Blessed Mother and Father Kentenich. One or two days before the cesarean section, the baby turned its head downward, but was not stable in the pelvis. But the cesarean section was easier because of this. The little one was born healthy. However, the uterus had not contracted. To make matters worse, my daughter has a blood clotting disorder. There was a risk that this could happen with the second birth. However, except for circulatory problems, my daughter is doing well so far. We are extremely grateful.

X., October 2022

Concerning A Bus Driver's License

A young cab driver talked to me about his career aspiration to become a bus driver. During this cab ride, he seemed a little depressed. We came to talk about it and he told me that on Sunday he had studied for his written driving test. But he just couldn't master it. The exam was already to be on Tuesday. I promised him my prayers and called on Father Kentenich to intervene. He should help the young man to overcome his fear and to be able to answer the necessary questions. The next day we had another trip. Beaming with joy, he told us that everything had gone well and that he had passed the written exam. He thanked me. I gladly pass on the thanks to Father Kentenich, who once again proved to be a good intercessor!

A. B., October 2022

Concerning School Problems

When I was 14 years old, Father helped me a lot in school. I had very poor grades in 7th grade, and my mother scolded me. My grandmother gave me the booklet that said how Father Kentenich helped others. I prayed to him. My grades improved so much that if I had not fallen ill, I would have gotten an A in biology. But since I was sick and missed a lot of things, it became a B. I am very grateful for that.

R. S., October 2022

Father Joseph Kentenich

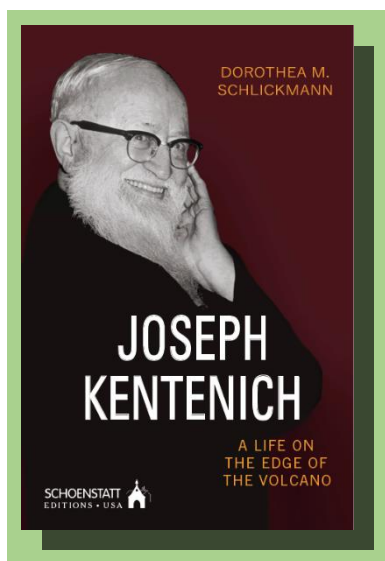
- Founder of the International Schoenstatt Movement -

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 bears the inscription *Dilexit ecclesiam - He loved the church.*

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:

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*A Life at the Edge of
the Volcano*

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*Translated from the German
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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.