

IMPULSES

1/2018

# *for Daily Living*

*One*

*who walks*

*with me*

Foto: Fotolia



Secretariat Father Joseph Kantenich

# *Father Kentenich - One Who Walks With me*

## *Challenged and led*

He actually should have been somewhat resentful! Too much had happened that had obstructed, blocked, hindered his way, had rejected him. Too much had happened that did not fit into the plan of his life. There were obstacles for him from birth for becoming a priest. His origin – he had never experienced his father, and his single

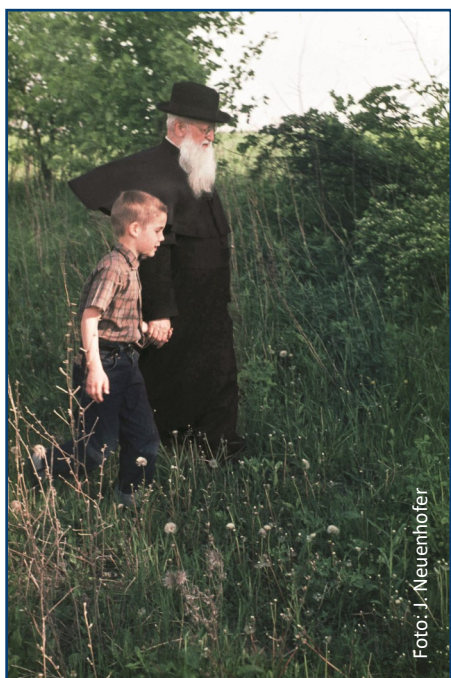


Foto: J. Neuenhofer

mother always had financial concerns. He suffered from severe tuberculosis as a student: They could have sent him away. Then a relentless crisis of faith distressed him; it dragged on until the time of ordination. Nobody could answer his many questions. That also could have become the end of his priestly vocation to which he was attached in spite of his honest searching. In fact, before his perpetual profession, the

provincial counselors voiced their doubts about his vocation. He was wrongly evaluated and rejected. That meant that he could not be ordained to the priesthood. When his superior, Father Kolb, told him the decision of the provincial council and asked him what he thought about it, he said laconically and “answered dryly”: “God’s dispensation!” - Did he not have to say more about it? Father Kolb, confused by this answer, asked him: “What will you now do?” Pragmatically, soberly, without theatricals, almost emotionless he replied: “Finish high school!” Did it not tear him interiorly apart?! How was it possible after he had lived for this goal of his life for many years, which was now destroyed with one blow? Did he not comprehend the severity of the news?

## *Contrary to much opposition*

But Joseph Kentenich walked on, accepted God’s mysterious dispensations, did not resist, did not rebel but surrendered to the divine fatherly hands of God, almost blindly: “God’s dispensation!” He did not look for an imagined guilty party, for human backgrounds. He did not stop there, simply walked on past all human imperfection. It was the same when he was not allowed to study at the university, which actually had been his dream. They thought that it might be harmful for him. Because of his weak health, he was engaged as a teacher of German and Latin, which he had not imagined. Then he was appointed as spiritual director for future priests in the minor seminary in Schoenstatt when he would have preferred to take care of “hardened sinners”, working outside in a parish.



He simply followed the distinctive dispensations and guidance of God. – What would have happened if he would not have done that? If he would have said “no”? If he would have refused? The Schoenstatt movement would not have come into existence.

Father Kentenich – one who walks with me, who motivates and strengthens others to walk God’s ways although they may be inscrutable.

### ***One who does not let others walk alone.***

But also one who walks with us. A young student who met Father Kentenich for the first time at the place of his exile, Milwaukee, wrote in her diary: “How do you acquire such love of neighbor?” He was affectionate with every one, he was interested in everything, he listened for hours and it seemed that every detail concerning the visitor was important to him. - Because experiencing him was so different, his love for fellow human beings was very genuine, unconditional and faithful the question popped up: “How do you acquire such love for neighbor?”

Beyond that the student asked herself: “May I entrust myself to him?” Yes, she could. She experienced it. Obviously, this person was especially close to God, and he wanted nothing but to lead all who came to him to GOD. In a letter that she wrote to her parents she said: “Mother, one can really recognize the will of God” – although being mere man. She had learned that meanwhile from and through Father Kentenich. From where did she get this certainty? At the end of her incisive encounter with the founder of

Schoenstatt she wrote in her diary like a conclusion to what she had experienced: “He is authentic!”

### ***His invitation continues***

The dead who are with God are not simply “gone”, separated from us, inaccessibly distant. No, they are *present* in a different manner – *present* for all for whom God had called them, *present* for all who seek their help.

From heaven Father Kentenich also walks with me through life, through fire and water, if I ask him! He really is one to whom God has given the grace to carry thousands of persons in his heart not only as long as he was alive, but still today – to walk with them and accompany them and their destiny.

He is one who in a fatherly way takes our hand and is inviting us.

He is one who is a gifted educator who counsels us with psychological ability, going with us, leading us higher – with the inscrutable deep faith that had captured him and that he tested for himself. His invitation is valid.

*Sr. M. Doria Schlickmann*

***“In his omnipotence, God will find ways to lead me where he wants me to be. I need only enough light to see the next step.”***

J. Kentenich

# Only God

(Part 3)

*Parts 1 and 2 told of the founding history of Schoenstatt. When building up his work, it was important for Father Kentenich to recognize and fulfill the will of God.*

Thus he allowed himself to be led from event to event. The features of his foundation became ever clearer. New communities were formed: In 1919, the “Apostolic Federation”, a leader community of priests and lay people, developed from the “Marian Congregation”. One year later the “Apostolic League” whose members belonged to all circles of society was established. The Federation and the League formed the “Apostolic Movement of Schoenstatt”. The first workshop for women took place in 1921, and in 1926 Father Kentenich founded the community of the Sisters: “The Institute of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary”.

The work continued to grow. It was a constant growth of responsibility and also a greater work load for the founder. Meanwhile he had become completely free for the movement and conducted many courses, workshops and retreats for priests and theologians, academics, for men and women in Schoenstatt and all parts of Germany. Thousands streamed to him to get orientation and a diagnosis of the situation of the time. He showed them principles for education adjusted to the new time; they asked for advice and direction, became his followers, allowed themselves to be formed and educated by him. With great reverence and empathy, but also with firm hands, he responded to each and all who came to him,

seeking and asking. With sovereign calm and clarity he could show the relationship between theory and praxis, between doctrine and life, between this world and the world beyond, between God and his creation. Looking back at his time as a theologian, one priest wrote:

“We found Schoenstatt. We traveled to the Rhine; we met Father Kentenich, saw him and listened to him in the shadow of the shrine. It was always the same experience: Nobody could tell us something greater, brighter, nobody could tell us anything newer even if it was praised as something very new, current and modern. What we heard somewhere else, Father Kentenich had already grasped and formed in some way. He spoke to us from a new shore where he was completely at home. But he was also completely near us, like a bridge that has two bridgeheads, but is only one bridge, leading people who entrust themselves to him securely from shore to shore, above dark gorges and torrential streams.”

The twenties show clearly: The Mother of God has accepted the magnanimous offer of October 18, 1914; the “pact” between heaven and earth was realized. From this the founder drew the security and courage for all his actions. He was convinced: The Mother of God holds the reins in her hands and he executed God’s mandate that he carried in himself. He only had to serve her who wants to give something great to the Church in a decisive time, not least of all through Schoenstatt. Her intention became all the time clearer: She wants to form new, vivacious, mission-conscious

Christians and Christian communities, a quick-witted troop that not only will resist the attack of modern mass mentality that is detached from God, but will become a sign leading to the future. Penetrated by this confident conviction, the founder coined the well-known prophetic words in 1929: "In the shadow of this shrine, the destiny of the Church will be essentially co-determined for centuries."



*Meeting with young men in the Twenties*

### ***God's ways***

God's works always bear the sign of the cross, thus also the work of Father Kentenich. His way of life became a way of the cross to the same degree in which the cross was raised above Schoenstatt. God tested his obedience, but above all his readiness to surrender all, especially his own will. Will the one who is called turn away and go his own ways when difficulties come? He saw the approaching storm coming upon the Church through National Socialism. Therefore he wanted to lead as many people as possible under the protection mantle of the Mother of Grace in Schoenstatt. For instance, in 1934 he announced a "Marian Year of the People". Many people got to know Schoenstatt; the picture of grace of the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt came to many places; parishes dedicated themselves to the

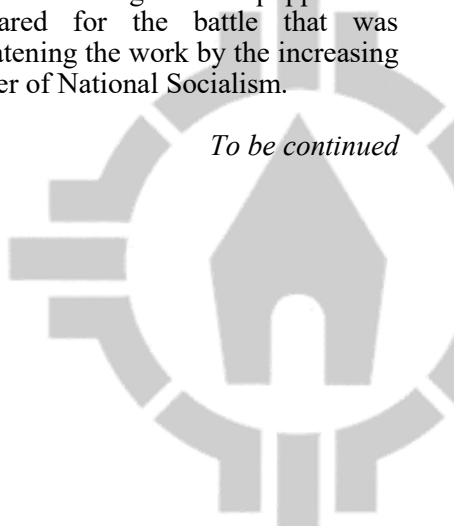
Mother Thrice Admirable. A consecration stream broke forth.

However, by increasingly becoming better known, Schoenstatt experienced severest suspicion that could strike a man of God. There was talk of the "special ideas" of Schoenstatt. The accusations always revolved about the specific Marian devotion in some way. They imagined heresies, and they wanted to make sure they were known as such. After critical examination, Church authorities could find no evidence of heresies. But still today, such accusations flare up, nourished by misunderstandings, mistrust and false assumptions.

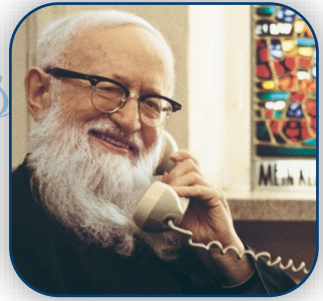
With great calm and certainty, Father Kentenich continued to walk the way he recognized as the correct way. He saw the accusations as God's hand pointing to the task of seeing to it that his foundation would become ever more aware of its spiritual base: the truths of faith that are consistently transferred into life, and that attach ever more to the center of life: the covenant of love with the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt and her shrine. Thus Schoenstatt was more and more fortified by its innermost source of strength and equipped and prepared for the battle that was threatening the work by the increasing power of National Socialism.

A. K.

*To be continued*



# He Helps



## ***In PC problems – turn to Father Kantenich***

In my great distress I prayed to Father Kantenich and he answered my prayer.

In the beginning of the year I was diligently working on my PC, getting the mandatory reports about the past year at least started and preparing for some events ahead. In the midst of all of this work my PC broke down in such a way that I could not get anywhere anymore. All my diligent work was gone as I did not make a backup copy. I was desperate because my last backup was about 6 months ago and I was about to leave the country for two weeks.

At the repair section of the store where I had purchased the PC 1½ years ago I was told that most likely nothing can be done about the files any more as the PC seemed severely damaged. I was also told that nothing could be done within the next 3 to 4 days. I was one of 40 people who had come that day with PC problems.

There was nothing more I could do than to turn to Father Kantenich. I told him how difficult it would be without my files that I had worked on throughout the past six months. When I received a phone call the next day telling me that the backup of my files was ready to be picked up I knew Fr. Kantenich made it. My files are with me now as safe as they can be. I thanked him with all my heart and made at once two resolutions:

To turn in prayer to Father Kantenich in whatever need there'll be. In his life time he never knew anything about the new technology but he seems capable and his intercession is powerful. I made a second resolution: to back up my files regularly in the safest way possible. Thank you, Father Kantenich for having been at my side.

*M.T. Australia, January 18, 2018*

## ***Conversion***

Two days after putting Father Kantenich in charge of getting my son back to the sacraments, my son brought up the topic of confession. We talked about his fears and he promised he would see a priest the following week.

*C.B., Stevens Point, WI*

## ***Health and Insurance***

My wife and I want to give testimony to the most recent help which we have received through the intercession of Father Kantenich. Since 2010, my wife had to undergo several major surgeries. From 2011 to 2016 she did quite well. She began experiencing pain in her lower back and in both legs early in 2017. She tried several procedures, but nothing helped. On September 15<sup>th</sup>, the day of Father Kantenich's home going, we had a special consultation with her neurosurgeon; we felt confident.

Surgery was scheduled for December 20, 2017. On December 15<sup>th</sup> we received a call from the doctor's office that the insurance company did not approve the procedure. We stormed heaven for Father Kentenich's intercession to solve this problem. The surgeon himself called the insurance company on December 18<sup>th</sup>, and within 20 minutes, the surgery was approved. The surgery lasted 4 ½ hours. My wife is recuperating from the surgery and is walking relatively free of pain throughout the house.

*C.C., La Feria, TX*

### ***Employment***

My Schoenstatt group leader asked us at a recent group meeting to implore Father Kentenich's intercession for a job interview on that day (September 15, 2017) for an ideal job. I prayed ardently to Father Kentenich asking for this to be granted. It was granted - and what a special blessing – on the anniversary of Father Kentenich's passing.

*N.N., Brookfield, WI*

### ***Buying a house***

Thank you, Father Kentenich! I never thought that I would be buying a house with the amount of money I make, yet that is exactly what is happening. I first looked at my cousin's house. I did not have the money needed, and on my present income did not apply for a loan. Thanks to Father Kentenich's intercession, my brother agreed to lend me the money I needed. I had entrusted this intention to Father Kentenich.

*C.W., Monroe, MI*

### ***In sickness and for the restoration of faith***

A "miracle" has happened in my life. I have encountered God's love. It healed me; that is my most beautiful Christmas gift. I am fifty years old, and my life was shadowed by suffering. I had six psychiatric breakdowns, and the severest breakdown happened in 2007. I thought my life had ended. I often had thoughts of suicide. During these difficult times I prayed much to Father Kentenich. My relationship with the Mother of God was split, perhaps because my own mother had rejected me. She was not able to love me. But Father Kentenich led me to the Mother of God. Now I am an ardent devotee of the Mother Thrice Admirable. I am simply grateful. Three times I had written to Schoenstatt asking for prayers. I am grateful for your prayers. I also asked for prayers for my colleague, and I also pray for him now as before. He also had bad experiences. He had turned away from God. Now he is again praying although he still experiences bad times.

A. S., December 2016



**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.***

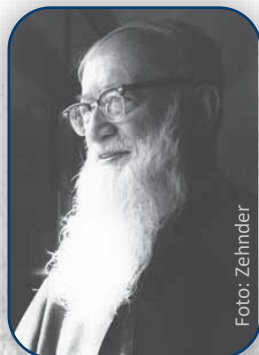
Thousands visit his tomb trusting in his intercession before God. There are increasingly more people around the world who spread his spirituality and ask his intercession.

**September 15, 1968 – September 15, 2018**

**50th anniversary of Father Kentenich's death a**

## **Kentenich-Year**

**You will find more information about this at brief at:**  
**[schoenstatt.de](http://schoenstatt.de)**



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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.