

IMPULSES

3/2018

for Daily Living

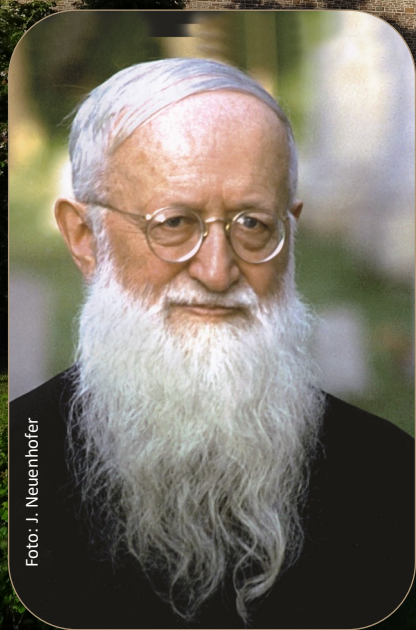


Foto: J. Neuenhofer

*50th Anniversary of the
Death Day of
Father Joseph Kentenich*



Secretariat Father Joseph Kentenich

50 Years Ago

The last hour in the life of Father Kentenich

It was Sunday morning, the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. The bells on Mount Schoenstatt, sounding an invitation to pray the *Angelus*, was fading away. Sisters of Mary came to the Adoration Church from all sides. Fourteen weeks had passed since the consecration of the church on Trinity Sunday. Today Father Kentenich would celebrate Holy Mass here for the first time. ...

He had left his apartment a few minutes after 6:00 am. The sisters who met him did not notice anything special. ...

The car stopped at the east entrance of the church. Father Kentenich stepped out and silently walked up the stairs to the forecourt. He stopped at the fountain for a moment, looking meditatively at the streaming water.



Father Kentenich gave special importance to the Adoration Church in the framework of his foundation. It was the fulfillment of a promise made by the founder at a time of greatest danger to the Work at the beginning of World War II. It is a monument of thanks for the Triune God's triumphal reign of grace and the obvious protection of the Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen, and Victress of Schoenstatt; but it is even more so a gift of divine love and mercy. In faith, Father Kentenich was convinced that the consecration and dedication of the Adoration Church to the Triune God was a new inbreak of grace and a new beginning for Schoenstatt, for the Church, for the world. At the beginning of this new epoch, he saw the Adoration Church as a divine seal and symbol for the multifaceted Work and its mission.

In the sacristy, Father Weigand, a priest of the Schoenstatt Fathers' community was waiting to serve him at holy Mass. He was joined by a Yugoslav Carmelite priest. A Sister of Mary served as sacristan.

Father Kentenich quietly greeted those present, and with interest asked the priest whether he was well rested after his vacation. Then he put on the liturgical vestments. He did so meditatively, carefully. Punctually at 6:15 a.m. he walked to the altar.

After more than fifty-eight years as priest, Father Kentenich began his last Holy Mass at the same spot where his coffin would be placed a few hours later.

The Mass texts for the fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost became the song for the hour of his death. The readings also reveal their full significance on the background of later events. ...” Let us do good as long as we still have time.” ... It was almost 7:00 am. The closing song resounded from the church.

Going Home

Returning to the sacristy, Father Kentenich removed the priestly vestments. He invited both priests for his midday meal. On the vesting table, there were rosaries which he blessed. He did so very devoutly. Then he placed both hands on the vesting table and remained in this position for about a minute. Those who were present had the impression that he was saying his prayers of thanksgiving.

Suddenly Father Kentenich leaned forward on the table, but he still supported himself a little with his hands. The two priests tried to hold him, but the collapsing body became too heavy for them to hold, so they gradually placed him on the floor. Father Kentenich seemed to be unconscious. For about three minutes his breathing was still regular. Two more breaths followed at larger intervals; then all was quiet. It was 7:07 am. Father Weigand anointed him.

The hurriedly summoned doctor could only determine death. Father Kentenich had returned home. So silent, so simple and self-evident, and without any personal pretension, but also completely coming, as his life was, from God and directed to him, so also his death. To the very last, he

thought of others, raised his hands in blessing, served his mission. He never saw it as something small because it was God’s mandate for him. And God was his all. Sudden death could not surprise him unprepared. He always saw all events directed to one goal: Homeward to the Father leads the way!

In his message for the Day of Catholics in Essen, he had (one week earlier) said that the meaning of world history was the call home and the return home of the elect to the Father through Christ and Mary in the Holy Spirit. His death was like an Amen spoken by God to the divine mandate and divine message of his life.

(Cf. Memorial to the Home-Going of Father Kentenich)



The Person of Father Kentenich and the Circumstances of his Home-Going

This year the Schoenstatt Movement commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of Father Kentenich's death. Unexpected for many, he returned home to the Heavenly Father on September 15, 1968. This memorial day invites us to look at the circumstances of his home-going and their symbolic meaning.

After Father Kentenich had returned to the sacristy when he had celebrated his first holy Mass in the Adoration Church, he suddenly collapsed. The two priests who assisted him and the sacristan laid him on the floor of the sacristy, the present-day Founder Chapel, where he died within a very short time.

It was the second time in his life Father Kentenich laid on the floor of a church. At the ordination ceremony,

the candidates lie on the ground as an expression of perfect surrender to the one for whom they want to work: Jesus Christ. Now at the end of his priestly life Father Kentenich again lay on the floor. In this way, emphasis was placed around his priestly ministry. Father Kentenich was uniquely completely surrendered to the eternal High Priest and his heavenly Mother Mary. He was detached from all earthly possessions and all earthly attachments, and completely surrendered to the will of the Heavenly Father. He passed on everything earthly to supernature. He lived obedience, constantly asking what the will of God was and by being ready to respond to it, even if it was difficult.

While Father Kentenich lay face-down at the ordination liturgy, he looked upward when he died. His glance went heavenward. This is an expression of the fact that he was a totally natural-supernatural person. He was firmly grounded in the reality of facts as well as in the heart of the heavenly Father. He combined natural and supernatural thinking in an organic way and thus showed us the ideal of the new person in the new community for a secularized world.

For Father Kentenich, the Adoration Church was the "extended Original Shrine". Lying on the floor he was, as it were, placed into the foundation of the Original Shrine and permanently connected with it. He became part of the eternalized



foundation of Schoenstatt.

Father Kentenich died in the Adoration Church that is dedicated to the Blessed Trinity. Time and again Father Kentenich pointed out that the covenant of love with the Mother of God is an expression, means, and protection of the covenant of love with the Triune God. Everything comes from him and returns to him. The Mother of God does not keep anyone for herself but leads everyone to the Triune God.

Father Kentenich died on a Sunday. It is the day of the week that points to the resurrection of Christ – a little Easter. September 15 is the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows – a Marian feast that is interiorly connected with the Feast of the Exultation of the Cross. Christ and Mary! All through his life Father Kentenich proclaimed the two-in-oneness of the Divine Son and his Mother. He was convinced that it is the task of the Mother of God to be at the side of the Savior as permanent associate and permanent helper for the work of salvation. That was the central basic statement of his Mariology. Exultation of the cross and resurrection, cross and victory! Father Kentenich was ready to go his personal way of the cross and his mission in all challenges because he was convinced that these would glorify God and the Mother of God.

When Father Kentenich returned home, the sisters of the then west province (Koblenz-Metternich) had gathered to crown, together with him, the image of Mary, the Mother of God,

To give a crown to Mary was one of Father Kentenich's greatest joys. He

always took time for that. Especially in times of helplessness and powerlessness he encouraged people to give a crown to the Blessed Mother because he trusted in her intercession. Such a crowning was for him a visible expression of the covenant of love. Just as the covenant of love is mutual, the crowning is mutual. Father Kentenich was convinced that crowning the Mother of God is not without an answer. Now he was supposed to give her many crowns. Instead she gave him the crown of eternal life.

If we consider the circumstances it seems that the Heavenly Father and the Mother of God wanted to place a special mark on his life and to confirm his teaching.

Father Bernd Biberger



He Helps

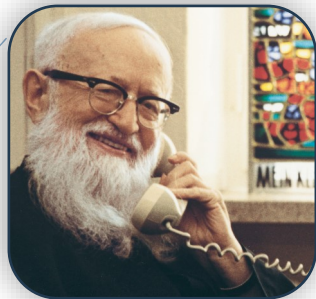
IN SERIOUS ILLNESS

A pilgrim from Chile asked me to pray for her cousin's infant son of who needed heart surgery so that he could begin breathing on his own when the breathing supports would be removed. I entrusted this need to Father Kentenich. The infant boy, Ismael, struggled much but in the end could breathe on his own. The family is grateful for the support of prayers, and I thank Father Kentenich for helping Ismael.

N., Waukesha, WI

As a family we are very grateful for the healing of two siblings on the intercession of the Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen, and Victress of Schoenstatt and Father Kentenich. Last year, on the Saturday before Pentecost, our eleven-year-old girl unfortunately fell on the back of her head when she was playing. Because of the feastday, the care in the hospital was limited. She was transferred to the university hospital only on Tuesday after Pentecost. She was diagnosed with a complicated skull fracture. The whole family was deeply affected and prayed constantly that the brain damage would not be permanent. At the same time, her older sister suffered severe shock due to this accident, and so she also had to be hospitalized. Together, we kept praying to Our Lady and to Father Kentenich for the recovery of the girls. After several months of treatment, we may say that both are well now and go to school. We ask you to publish this so that others will be encouraged to seek help in great need through confident prayers.

J. & A. E., February 2017



CAR REPAIR

We were having problems with the remote control for my wife's car. Basically, it had gone bad and was giving us problems because suddenly the car alarm would activate and was difficult to shut off. We were told that it would cost approximately \$200.00 to be replaced. We mentioned it to a son-in-law who buys and sells automobiles for a company. He asked us to bring the car to his place of employment because he knew a person who made such repairs. The item was replaced, and we were not charged anything. We received a new remote for the car free of charge. Thank you, Father Kentenich, for your help.

C.C., TX

In great distress we turned to the Mother of God and Father Kentenich. My husband had open heart surgery on March 1. It lasted six hours. He was attached to the life-support machine and received a new heart valve. The other one was repaired. Last week he returned home from rehab. We thank our dear Mother of God and Father Kentenich for their help. We give thanks every day.

A. H., April 2017

RETURN TO THE CHURCH

For two years, I prayed to Father Kentenich for a young man. He had left the Church and became addicted to drugs.

Now he has returned to the Church. He went to confession and is attending holy Mass. He stopped taking drugs. This is a great victory through the intercession of Father Kentenich.

D.D., WI

EMPLOYMENT

For a year and a half, I was very worried about losing my job or being unable to work full-time. Significant changes were made in our company. My hours of work were eventually to be reduced; that would have led to great financial losses. Through intensive prayers and petitions, I was wonderfully helped through the intercession of the Mother of God and Father Kentenich. I may continue to work in the company full-time. I am very grateful for this and will pray daily for the canonization of Father Kentenich.

K. H., October 2017

I could again experience help from Father Kentenich. My son had applied for a new workplace that would be near his residence. He had to drive almost 100 km to his present workplace. There were many applicants for the new position. I prayed to the Mother of God and to Father Kentenich that my son would be accepted. On Christmas Eve when all of us were together he told us that he was hired. It was his most beautiful Christmas gift. I promised Father Kentenich to make this public and want to thank him again with all my heart.

H. R., January 2018

HELP ON THE ROAD

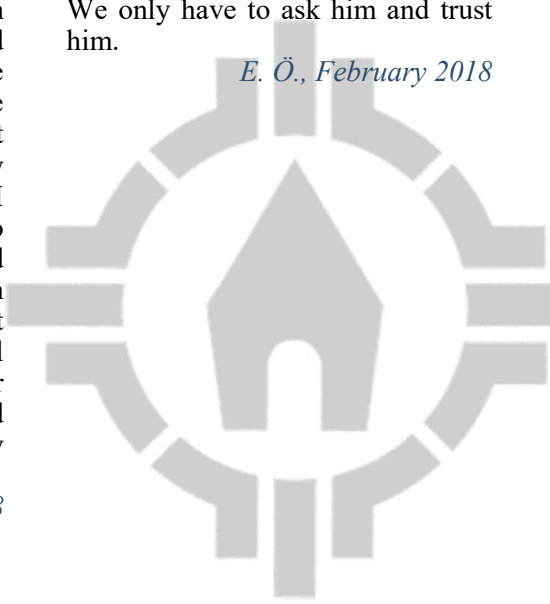
I had to drive somebody to a doctor's appointment in a large city. Thanks to good directions we found our way there, but the return trip proved to be difficult. We prayed to Father Kentenich for help ... We stopped to ask someone who was an off-duty cab driver and thus found our way.

R. M. D., MN

IN FINANCIAL DISTRESS

My son was very concerned. It seemed that he had invested in real estate in financial distress. There came cancellation after cancellation. All possibilities were exhausted. Weeks passed. I prayed to Father Kentenich and asked for a solution. I promised to write an answer to petitions if he would help. Surprisingly, without notice a complete contract was sent by an investor who some weeks earlier had turned him down. A weight dropped from my heart. I am convinced that Father Kentenich reveals his effectiveness even more during his jubilee year (50 years after his going home to eternity). We only have to ask him and trust him.

E. Ö., February 2018



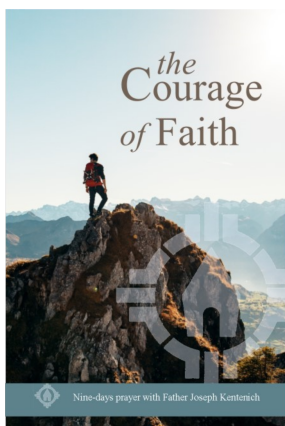
Father Joseph Kentenich

- Founder of the International Schoenstatt Movement -

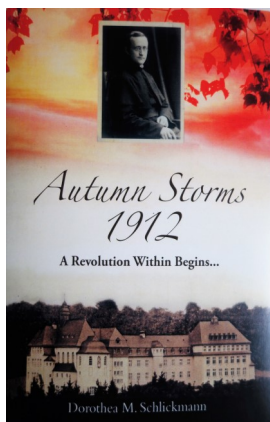
*was born on November 16, 1885, in Gymnich near Cologne and died on September 15, 1968, in the Trinity Church of Berg Schoenstatt, immediately after the celebration of the Holy Mass. He is also buried in this church. His sarcophagus bears the inscription **Dilexit ecclesiam - He loved the church.***

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 for the newest publications:



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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.