

Impulses for Daily Living

01-2010

***Christ, the Goal -
Christ, the Source of Strength***



***A glance at
Father Kentenich
In the Year for Priests***

News from the SECRETARIATE

FATHER JOSEPH KENTENICH

Founder of the International Schoenstatt Movement

Christ, the Goal – Christ the Source of Strength”

A Glance at Father Kentenich in the Year for Priests

What is my goal?

A decisive question for the life of each person. Whoever has a high goal before his eyes finds meaning in his life.

Father Kentenich said, “A high goal lets you bear all drudgery of life.” He explained to his listeners in a talk that one great goal for each Christian consists in becoming Christ. What did he mean? We should resemble the image of man that God has placed before our eyes as a unique model through the incarnation of his Son:

“To be Christ, to become Christ, to go through the world as Christians! Naturally, we want to go through the world as images of Christ, but also in a mysterious way as Christ.”

To become similar to Christ, to be ever more closely united with him, to think and act like Christ – a goal by which Father Kentenich was gripped. This is all the more because as a priest he followed Christ more faithfully.

He placed his whole life as priest in the service of Christ. He was convinced: “There is no other priesthood except that in Jesus Christ.”

Thus he lived in deep community with HIM, the eternal High Priest. During the days of darkness when he was incarcerated in the bunker of the Gestapo in Coblenz, in a life-threatening situation, he expressed his faithfulness to Christ in a prayer directed to the Virgin Mary:

“Do you want my work: *Adsum!*
Do you want the slow wasting away of all my mental powers: *Adsum!*
Do you want my death: *Adsum!*
Only see to it that all whom you have entrusted to me will love our Lord and learn to live and die for him.”

(*CF. Rite of Priestly Ordination:
Adsum - Here I am*)



Union with Christ the Crucified was his source of strength in the time of his incarceration. When he was transferred to the Coblenz prison a short while later, he secretly celebrated daily holy Mass there. One of the prison guards smuggled all he needed for saying Mass into his cell. Not only in prison but all through life Father Kentenich esteemed holy Mass as the most precious source of light and strength for each day. It was for him the hour of a unique union with Christ, the preeminent climax of the day. Those who par-

ticipated in his Mass noticed clearly his concentration on the essential of the holy action. God was with him, and he was with God.

That he placed high value on holy Mass became also evident when he liked to postpone important decision to the next morning, after holy Mass. When he traveled he often fasted for a long time to be able to say holy Mass at his destination. (*At that time fasting was required from midnight on.*)

Words of Father Kentenich about the mystery of holy Mass – Impulses for our life

“The main ideas of holy Mass are the Offertory, Consecration, and Communion.

At the Offertory, bread and wine are presented. But these are only representative gifts. When the priest offers bread and wine we should, as it were, place ourselves on the paten and think and say: Just as bread and wine are offered, I myself am ...a sacrifice with which God can do as he pleases.

I have said that the gifts at the Offertory represent me. Now we have Consecration. What is transformed? Bread and wine. And if these gifts represent me then I am also transformed ... You must imagine what that means: When the priest lifts up the host, it is not simply bread and wine. I must think that the priest, as it were, lifts

up in his hands all the faithful who participate in holy Mass, and they are transformed...You must imagine, now the body of Christ is consecrated; now we are drawn into this mysterious body. Now no longer I live, but the body of Jesus Christ. I must live in such a way that Christ is taking on form in me. And my daily work must be penetrated by this recognition and carrying out what is mysteriously taking place in holy Consecration: I am incorporated into the mysterious body of Christ. The spirit of Christ must speak from my work, my actions, my willing and feeling.



The third main part is Holy Communion. They will say that it is the highest and ultimate union with Christ. The sacramental presence of Christ lasts only a few minutes. But what may make me happy is that I am again incorporated into him, that nothing can separate me from him."

(From: To Remain in His Love; chosen texts about the Eucharist from Joseph Kentenich; published by Peter Wolf)



What does holy Mass mean for me personally?

TESTIMONIES



"What did I see in this priest who was a total stranger for me? His love for the Mother of God was what attracted me irresistibly to him. Cicero said, 'To love or not to love the same things is a sign of true friendship.' This aphorism became true in me. I admired his unwavering faith: He loved the Church, he loved the community. He preserved hope in the face of hopelessness. I never heard him complain about his long time of suffering. I never heard him accuse somebody. His love was unlimited. I admired his fortitude

in all situations of life – also the most difficult. He really was the strong person who 'rests in the Lord' and who could say:

Only in God is my soul at rest; from him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation; I shall not be disturbed at all.’ (Ps 62:2f.)”
(Cardinal Raúl Silva Henríquez, Chile, who got to know Father Kentenich in Rome after the exile)



“Many priests from all over Europe were in Dachau, also very scholarly persons. And we all had to pass a test, a test of maturity. Nobody passed the test as well as Father Kentenich. We were not prepared to be heroes. He was a hero. We were small, he was great ... If you are honest then you must say: In Dachau we have seen a priest who was really great. We have learned from Father Kentenich how we should and must live as priests. When packages were allowed, he always shared with the poorest ... He always gave half of his bread ration to the priest who shared his locker. The bread rations were never enough for us. Some forgot most primitive civility during the great time of famine. Father Kentenich never forgot his human nobility. He always had the sun and joy in his eyes and a kind word for others.”

(A Polish priest who was in the concentration camp of Dachau with Father Kentenich)



“A striking personality (in the concentration camp in Dachau) impressed me very deeply. He was Father Kentenich who had a brief meditation for his confreres who at that time each evening were already in bed. I felt immediately attracted to him and chose him as my Father Confessor. I cannot remember whether there was another priest among us who had his kind of radiance. He was quiet and modest, immersed in God... I also built my inner life on faith in Divine Providence and love for Mary during my imprisonment. I never felt God’s nearness as much as at that time of great distress. Father Kentenich modeled it for me. External events of camp life could not shake him.

(A priest who was with Father Kentenich in the concentration camp of Dachau.)

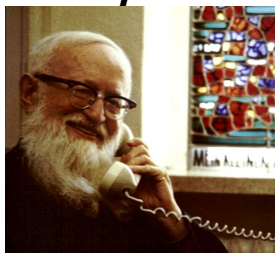


“At the time when I was the sacristan in the Original Shrine, I often had the opportunity to watch Father Kentenich after holy Mass. His presence in the sacristy always brought about a fine atmosphere that demanded reverence. He vested and unvested quietly and reflectively. If the shrine

was not yet free for his holy Mass, then he waited quietly. We felt that he was occupied with God and the Divine. Sometimes other priests were present, but nobody dared to address him at these moments. After holy Mass he often knelt on the kneeler at the window towards the shrine and said his thanksgiving. Instinctively a natural shyness required of us to leave him alone with God and to not disturb the atmosphere with our presence.”
(A Schoenstatt Sister of Mary, Sacristan)



He helps



New Place of employment

I am divorced and have two daughters. Four years ago, after a short period of unemployment, I was employed as educator in a daycare center. The workplace was fifty kilometers from home. I had to leave early in the morning and returned home late in the evening. When we had parent-teacher conferences, I usually stayed in the kindergarten over night. I usually did not see my girls in the morning because I had to leave so early. There was so much to do in the evening, and I often did not have the nerves and the strength to be available for my daughters. I was sad about it; the girls were 13 and 14 years old. It was a bad time.

At that time I came back to Schoenstatt, and I am happy and grateful about it. Many prayers and sacrifices helped me to find a good workplace nearby. Before I left my place of employment, there were many hurts. I asked Father Kentenich ardently to help me; otherwise it would not work with the new workplace. All problems were resolved. My fear that I would suffer financially was unfounded. Father Kentenich and the Mother of God are daily my faithful helpers. At their side I will succeed on my way of life. Thank you!

E.S., October 2008



A Family Problem was solved

My grandmother gave me a novena about Father Kentenich and a prayer to him. The prayer helped me in a difficult family situation. My father had quarreled with his brother. However, the uncle invited all to Germany for

his 50th birthday. My father said that he would not travel for so many miles, especially because he was out of sorts with him. I wanted this war climate to stop in our family and started to pray from the booklet of my grandmother. Shortly afterwards my father surprisingly agreed to travel to the birthday celebration. According to my father's plan, all should take place within two days: journey, celebration, return home. When we were at my uncle's, my father changed his mind and we stayed three more days there in a wonderfully family-like atmosphere. I want to encourage others to address Father Kentenich and help with my letter that he will be canonized soon.

J.E., Age 18, Poland, August 2009



Calm and Confidence

In Mid-November 2008 the doctor was unsure about a test result. At first I was shocked. A few days later I found at my place at table a little saying from Father Kentenich, "One of the most important reasons why we should not be anxious consists in this: We should give the good God an opportunity to do something." I became very calm and was able to pass on my calm to my family. We went to the burial place of Father Kentenich. I said the novena "Sheltered in God", but also thanked for each day, for the beautiful years that I had experienced. I had to wait for two months until I found out after surgery that I did not have cancer. My relatives and friends who knew about it said that I had received special strength to remain serene and calm during the time of uncertainty. Thank you, Father Kentenich.

E.S., February 2009



I Overcame Illness

Although I, at age 36, had a grave, rare cancer, I was spared chemotherapy and radiation. Contrary to expectation medication that helps only in a few cases was effective for me. Today I am free of tumors. That is a miracle for all of us. I thank Father Kentenich and our dear Mother of God for their great help. I will continue to ask them for their protection.

A.K., December 2008



Father Joseph Kentenich

the founder of the international Schoenstatt movement—was born in Gymnich near Cologne/Germany in 1885, and died in the Church of the Blessed Trinity on Mount Schoenstatt immediately after celebrating holy Mass there. He is also laid to rest in this church. His sarcophagus bears the inscription: *Dilexit ecclesiam* – He loved the Church. Thousands of people visit his resting place, trusting in his intercessory power before God. To many people the world over he offers orientation about life out of faith.

The Father Joseph Kentenich Secretariat

serves the process of Father Kentenich's canonization. Please, report prayer intentions to our secretariat that you entrust to his intercession, as well as answers to prayers for which you want to thank him. If you want your report about help received to be published and to serve the process of beatification, it must be dated, signed, and give the address of the writer. We promise confidentiality about reports. They are published only if the wish is expressed. We see to it that the writer remains anonymous.

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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.

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