

WE EXPERIENCED A CENACLE ATMOSPHERE THROUGH A DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES AND EVENTS. THIS WAS A GRACE-FILLED EVENT...

KONFERENZ 2014

The experience: a Cenacle Atmosphere, a Moment of Grace
The Message of the Conference 2014

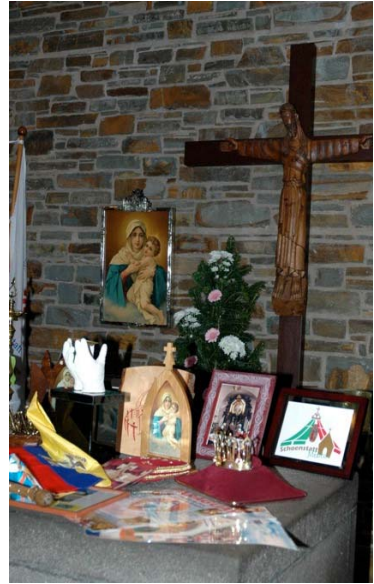


It is hard for us to leave this cenacle. Just like at the first cenacle, the birth of the Church, 89 leaders of the Schoenstatt Movement from 32 countries and five continents left the original shrine on Saturday 7th of February like missionary disciples of the Father taking with them the message of the Conference 2014. This was more than just an idea but a taste of what awaits us in the year of grace 2014. In the final document it is stated: The diversity of languages and backgrounds present here allow us to experience a cenacle atmosphere. This moment of grace allows us to discover what the God of life is expecting from the Schoenstatt Family during the centenary celebration of Schoenstatt's founding.

There had been a great longing for this Conference 2014 to take place, that it becomes a cenacle, one family, brothers and sisters united in our Father and in one mission, where

everyone feels at home. During the work, texts from Kantenich Father accompanied us daily with reference to: his vision for the future (1967), the divine character of the Work - a sign for the future (1966), indissoluble solidarity (1966), and his last words to the Family (1968).

Just as many participants mentioned in their evaluation sheet the first preparation steps "surpassed all expectations" including those of the preparatory team. These could be heard time and again with great astonishment and feeling: "This was more than just a planning conference for 2014, it was an historical hour for our International Schoenstatt Family, an hour of unity, who are ready and willing to walk together and spread the covenant of love to all corners of the world." "In the first one hundred years of Schoenstatt each community had to find and develop itself and this meant that it was not always possible to walk together", commented Fr.



Alexandre Awi de Melo, from Brazil, in his homily at one of the Masses. *"In the next one hundred years we need to walk together or we will not be able walk any more! We either remain one Family or we will not be anything! Separating us means separation from the Father! A "divided" founder will never be recognized nor canonized. Let us unite - not only in spirit but also by fortifying our federal structures in order to make our father and founder alive within the church and world of today! In order accomplish the mission of Schoenstatt over the next one hundred years, we do not need much similar to the apostles in the Gospel, symbolically speaking: the guiding staff representing our Father's guiding presence, the mantle as a symbol for the covenant of love with our Blessed Mother in the shrine, and a pair of sandals for our missionary activists - our*



heroes. This will only be possible if we remain one united family! This is why we are all here from many different countries, many different communities to experience this historical hour because no-one can accomplish the mission on their own."



On the whole, a great openness on the part of most of the participants developed, enriched by the experiences and opinions of others, an openness that grew on a day to day basis.

There were "conversions", of people who arrived with a set concept, and that were touched by the grace of this week where our MTA wanted to channel the many experiences and ideas into an experience of being family, of being united, of walking together and becoming mutually enriched in the struggle to fulfil our mission in the different apostolic fields. In these fields there are open doors for grace and it is here that our MTA wants to work from the shrine to

create a covenant culture.

We now return home as a Schoenstatt Family, a summarisation given by Fr. Heinrich Walter, Chairman of the International Schoenstatt Presidium, at the final commissioning Mass.

VOICE AND VOTE FOR LIFE
- SCHOENSTATT IS LEAD
BY THE CURRENTS OF THE
LIFE

In 1966 Fr. Kentenich stated that because the covenant of love of the 18th of October was a process of life, then everything that develops in and around Schoenstatt must develop from a current of life, and be supported by it. What we are really experiencing during this conference is what has very much been on the minds of the preparation team, that life has a voice and a vote. The genuine life

stream that has developed over the last 100 years was a development from the covenant of love in the original shrine.

The chosen method was therefore a process, where the conduction of the conference was developed by the moderators in connection with the contributions previously received from the different countries. Group work interwoven with plenary sessions, helped the democratic process to arrive at common opinions and decisions.

Together we looked for the fruits of our covenant of love at a national level. Most of the pin boards around the entrance hall in the Father Kentenich House could not contain all the posters which every country had brought along



to display their fruits - the pastoral, educational, social, apostolic and cultural fruits of the covenant of love - truly a work of art. Even right up until the end of the conference, people and groups were looking at these posters, meditating and interacting ...

Our common discovery was, "with great joy and gratitude... that the essence of our being, of our Family is the covenant of love with Mary", as stated in the final document: "This quiet act of faith of Fr. Kantenich with a small group of sodalists is still alive within us, just as fresh as it ever was during the founding moment in the original shrine on 18 October 1914. We were surprised to discover that our deep faith in the reality of the covenant of love with the Blessed

Mother is what moves and inspires us globally." This is what we will celebrate in 2014. It was impressive to see the strength of votes which each one placed individually on the pin board either under the title: *Covenant of Love or Something else.*

It was a unanimous vote for the covenant of love. "We are a family", said one of the helpers, with tears and rosary in hand, a helper, who could not vote, "but could pray".

As a group we looked at the fields where this message of our covenant of love can become a reality, where it can be applied and bear rich fruit. One key moment was when we asked the question how we want to celebrate. It came to mind that our father always looked towards the currents of life. He

led and guided Schoenstatt always through them. After a very skilful presentation from Fr. Walter Heinrich in respect of the currents of life and the areas according to our father and founder where we should or are working, we discovered the shrine and father current as well as a missionary and unity current. Of these four currents of life the first two we had and will always have and the latter two are new, strong voices that have developed through life and are also at the heart and soul of the conference.

We put all discussions, moderating and voting aside to discover what is lacking: the grace we need for 2014. The cards we had placed in the jar and placed at the feet of our MTA pilgrim Mother with the graces required written on them became an hour of grace as they were read a loud. These were printed in a booklet and handed out to all participants at the commissioning ceremony on the final day at the original shrine. They needed no translation.

THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE CONFERENCE: NOTHING WITHOUT YOU, NOTHING WITHOUT US

This cenacle hour - took place in silence when



everyone wrote down their longed for grace for 2014 on a card



which was then placed in the jar. Pilar Jensen then read one by one out loud while the youth knelt down in front of the pilgrim MTA. For may present this was a key moment of the conference, even for our professional moderator who had to fight back the tears, to mention one of many. We often here the words where heaven touches earth, but this was at that moment a true reality. We could feel it. We could sense the Nothing with you after discussing previously the Nothing without us.

One of the first highlights of the conference was already on 2nd February. On this feast day of the presentation of Our Lord in the temple, the participants went in procession into the original with all their national symbols, which they had brought along - crowns, patens, pictures, the cart of triumph, MTA pilgrim Mothers, father symbols. They also placed on the altar, symbolically speaking, what had grown

in their country since the first covenant of love almost 100 years ago, which Fr. Kentenich made with only a handful of young boys.

They were bringing their fruits back to the source. This was a very deep and moving moment. We then made our pilgrimage up the mountain on foot to the resting place of Fr. Kentenich, to have an encounter with him. One symbol after the other was then placed on the sarcophagus. It was an atmosphere gripped by deep gratitude and joy where we sang again and again in Spanish: Father your inheritance is our mission, we are yours, we go with you, our hand in your hand, our heart in your heart. As one participant mentioned:

"We have often spoken about the return current to the source. Here we are experiencing it."

Thanks to the live stream transmission of schoenstatt-tv hundreds around the world were also able to experience it.

Another deeply religious highlight of the conference, surrounded by a day to day stream of prayer 7th February. Every nation received one slate from the roof of the original shrine as a symbol of our covenant of love,



our gift and task, a reminder of 2014.

WE HAVE A MISSION TO FULFIL, A MESSAGE TO SHARE: LIFE WILL IGNITE FROM LIFE.



We experienced moments of total commitment which are only felt when a fire burns from within: Translators who fell asleep at 3:00 a.m. in front of their PC only to waken up smiling and continue with their work. We had some non - professional simultaneous interpreters who spoke until their voice gave way as well as some young helpers who would run three times within half an hour if required from Father Kentenich House back to Marienland. Then we had our moderating team who checked right up until our plenary sessions began if some comment, point had been overseen, missed. There were also participants

who were willing to work longer hours in order to come to a conclusion, a decision and others who made their pilgrimage in the short break at lunchtime down to the original shrine...

In the spirit of all of this and reaching a conclusion that can only be partly mentioned as our conclusion is the decision to celebrate the centenary jubilee of Schoenstatt with a large pilgrimage to the original shrine on 18th October 2014, to be linked on this day for all who cannot come in person through a live network and to renew our covenant of love. "It was clearly evident from

time hold sacramental value for us. We hope to have a world-wide live link to the celebration held at our place of origin. In this way, the current of graces radiating from the original shrine and the extensive fruitfulness returning to the original Schoenstatt after 100 years will be fully expressed. Another dimension of the jubilee celebration is Rome.

Together with our father we congregate at the heart of the Church to renew our commitment to it and highlight our missionary nature. As a gift we bring the fruit of our shrines and our

fulfilled, we have to pass our message on: the world wide common preparation of the family of the father towards the year of grace 2014. As stated in the official document from the conference, the message for 2014 : "A triennium should take place, grasping the life streams of our international family which have already been mentioned in accordance with the wishes of the majority present at the conference.

Finally, we suggest that the Father Symbol, given to us by our founder, begins a world-wide pilgrimage in the near future. Centred around our father, we hope that our family can be purified, that it grows in unity and, in this way, is strengthened in its mission of service to our Church and society."

Our heartfelt thanks is expressed to all who accompanied us in prayer and through many contributions to the capital of grace. This was really felt.

*Preparation Committee
Fr. José María García - Sr.
M. Luciane Machens
& team*



the various countries' contribution that the MTA is inviting us to go on pilgrimage to the original shrine on 18 October 2014 . All are welcome to participate in this pilgrimage. The place and

apostolic projects and ask the Holy Father to commission us."(Message for 2014)

We left the conference fully aware that this mission still has to be

Message of the Conference 2014

From 1st-7th February 2009, 89 Schoenstatt Movement leaders representing 32 countries from five continents as well as members of the General Presidium gathered at Schoenstatt's place of birth. With us we bring the riches of our covenant of love, as well as the covenant's unique development in each culture. The diversity of languages and backgrounds present here allow us to experience a cenacle atmosphere. This moment of grace allows us to discover what the God of life is expecting from our family during the centenary celebration of Schoenstatt's founding. During this time, we are fully aware of the world-wide prayer chain from our many covenant brothers and sisters.

An atmosphere of unity in diversity, of mutual respect and deep regard for our respective roots, was created as a result of intensive interaction in the groups and plenary sessions.

We discovered the fruits Schoenstatt has produced over the last 100 years and the various ways in which they are evident. However, at this stage in our history, we also humbly acknowledge our personal limitations and the limitations of the community.

It is with great joy and gratitude that we renew our covenant of love with the Blessed Mother, fully aware that this is the essence of our family. This quiet act of faith of Fr. Kentenich with a small group of sodalists is still alive within us, just as fresh as it ever was during the founding moment in the original shrine on 18 October 1914. We were surprised to discover that our deep faith in the reality of the covenant of love with the Blessed Mother is what moves and inspires us globally. This is the source of our fruitfulness and the concrete way in which live and follow Christ. This is exactly **what** we want to celebrate throughout our jubilee in 2014.

As to **how** and in what spirit we want to celebrate this jubilee, we recall that our father and founder taught us how to grasp the **currents of life** and be guided by them. Therefore, we have to try to embrace the different currents within our family today. We discovered that the source of the covenant of love is present in our times through several powerful currents of life:

- The power of the **shrine** in all of its aspects;
- The attachment to our **father** and his charism;
- **Missionary force**;
- The gift and challenge of family **unity**.

We would like this spirit to permeate both the preparation and the actual content of the jubilee celebration. Each one of us is called to cultivate and promote these currents according to their own situation. The force of these streams will ensure that covenant graces overflow into the varied areas of our apostolic strategy.

From this perspective and in this light, God led us to examine our own identity in order to discover the open doors required to carry our mission into the Church and the contemporary world. We know that the covenant of love has the ability to develop a culture responding to all needs of our time.

We identified five strategic areas which must become a priority. Our apostolic deeds must also be improved at this point in time:

- Marriage and **family life**;
- The challenges and dynamic of the **youth**;
- The application and publication of Fr. Kentenich's thought within the **educational** field;
- The incorporation of our original charism into the diocesan and universal **Church**;
- Effective collaboration in the creation of a new **social order** and a culture inspired by the covenant.

In preparation for the Jubilee and beyond, we would like to stimulate our entire family to promote apostolic activities in these priority areas so that they become a reality.

In addition to all of this, the question of **where and when** we want to celebrate the Jubilee was

raised. We also discussed which symbolic action we could put into motion to secure and express fully this jubilee spirit. The “corner stone” is the celebration of the founding act. The other elements of the celebration are built around it, whether they take place in Schoenstatt, Rome or at local level. It was clearly evident from the various countries’ contribution that the MTA is inviting us to go on pilgrimage to the original shrine on 18 October 2014. All are welcome to participate in this pilgrimage. The place and time hold sacramental value for us. We hope to have a world-wide live link to the celebration held at our place of origin. In this way, the current of graces radiating from the original shrine and the extensive fruitfulness returning to the original Schoenstatt after 100 years will be fully expressed.

Another dimension of the jubilee celebration is Rome. Together with our father we congregate at the heart of the Church to renew our commitment to it and highlight our missionary nature. As a gift we bring the fruit of our shrines and our apostolic projects and ask the Holy Father to commission us. In this way, we take up our founder’s wish, expressed at the shrine in Belmonte: *omnia matri ecclesiae*.

In the spirit of our jubilee celebration we also hope that the founding act is expressed at local level according to the situation and resources of every Schoenstatt family. This will result in a world-wide network linked up to this moment of grace.

Through our preparation and celebration of our covenant renewal we will receive the graces of this jubilee. In a cenacle moment we reached a consensus as to the gifts we hope for during the centenary, such as missionary force, the fraternal and solidarity spirit of the family in the father and holiness. These graces are necessary if we are to enforce our currents of life and make our apostolic strategy a reality. These are the gifts and great tasks that await us.

In light of this document the General Presidium will be coordinating the necessary steps required for a common preparation of the jubilee, such as creating the required committees, formulating a motto and publishing texts written by our father on the five strategic areas that have been mentioned. They will also select common elements to be emphasised in the years leading up to the start of the jubilee year on 18 October 2013. A triennium should take place, grasping the life streams of our international family which have already been mentioned in accordance with the wishes of the majority present at the conference.

Finally, we suggest that the Father Symbol, given to us by our founder, begins a world-wide pilgrimage in the near future. Centred around our father, we hope that our family can be purified, that it grows in unity and, in this way, is strengthened in its mission of service to our Church and society.

Schoenstatt, 7 February 2009