

## **GREETINGS FOR THE CELEBRATION ON THE 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF HOERDE**

Dear Leaders of the Schoenstatt Federation Communities!  
Dear Participants!

Today we recall the stellar moment of the Apostolic Schoenstatt Movement. When we study the facts which surrounded the event at Hoerde, it is clear that it is one of those modest moments which have made history. Those youth who had recently survived the First World War became the leading characters. Amidst the war, a new future through the idea of Schoenstatt began for them. With enthusiasm, they wanted to live for that better world. The leaders were approximately 25 years of age. They knew that the Spiritual Father was the key figure. Although Father Kentenich did not appear at Hoerde, they did not waver from the idea they had with the Apostolic Federation. Their strong spirit of initiation was the sign of the action of the Holy Spirit. It has to be something from God. It then became the initiative of Father Kentenich who was made free for the work by his provincial superior, Fr. Kolb. He gave to the Apostolic Federation the necessary space and the renewed Chapel of the Sodality and said: "this should guarantee and foster the Work which pleases God."

The seed of this stellar moment has produced abundant fruits; first in Germany, then in Europe and today on all continents. In the fruits we recognize the action of grace. Together we admire the great harvest. You are the harvest of the seed at Hoerde. We all belong to the fullness of that harvest.

For that reason, I want to say a word of congratulations and of thanksgiving to all of the members and for all generations of Federation. You have made this fruitfulness possible, this harvest..... with your life, your surrender and your apostolic force. The efficacy, the efficiency of the Federation members in different parts of the world today give Schoenstatt a dynamic look. You have assumed, with profound mission awareness, an active and dynamic role in the Schoenstatt Work.

Those who took the initiative for the Federation Congress and this celebration also deserve to be thanked. Together we give thanks to the Mother of the Lord who in the Chapel in the Valley, with her attracting force, binds youthful hearts, educates them and sends them forth into the apostolate.

The second word is a motivation in this hour of hope for the Federations and for the future unity of the Movement. The context of the present era is the globalization of the world with its opportunities and its shadows.....secularized society as a challenge for our missionary task and for the federative collaboration of the Movements for the good of the Church.

Our hope is that the Federations are transformed into the guarantee of the spirit at Hoerde for all of Schoenstatt.

The spirit of effective apostolate!

The distinct sign was the beginning of the apostolate in all areas. Always and above everything, we should be interested in the apostolate. This is the criterion for the vocation to the Apostolic Federation. We do not want to lament on the state of the world, rather we want to rejoice for being able to do something for this world. With this spirit, we can impregnate a positive climate in the Church.

The spirit of freedom and being able to be with one another in a federative way!

Where there is a spirit of freedom, people have a special radiance. The free and strong personality attracts with its dignity and at the same time creates respect and veneration. From there follows the confidence of being together since no one wants to take advantage of the other and takes seriously the possibility of deciding freely. Fruitful alliances are a result. This means that there is only one sovereign, the Holy Spirit. From this spirit comes a solid being one in each other among the apostolic forces of the Church.

The spirit of initiative and responsibility!

The spirit of Hoerde does not wait for the initiatives to come forth from the authorities, the presidencies, or the governing boards. Hoerde does not know the mentality which indicates that everything comes from above and I must sit down and wait without taking my own initiatives. In the spirit of Hoerde can be seen the opportunities which the current times present. It looks at its own possibilities and talents and assumes initiatives. It has to do with having lay courage for an active co-responsibility united to a healthy humility. We need a healthy and holy spirit of competition for effective apostolic initiatives. The members of the Federation can react and act quickly. Schoenstatt needs these groups of infantry for the activity. The radiant eyes of these Schoenstatters should convince and create an atmosphere which motivates and takes the initiative everywhere.

In conclusion, two petitions:

Do not forget the Original Shrine!

At that time, the Shrine was given to the Apostolic Federation “to guarantee and foster the future of the Work which pleases God.” Until now, this has not changed. The Original Shrine is the source for all currents of life. We are the instruments of the Blessed Virgin who act from it. In this source comes forth a Family of many languages and cultures. All currents of grace flow from there to the Church. We cannot leave this only to the Germans. From this source, the water of grace for 2014 should continue to flow abundantly.....for the good of the Church.

Trust the young generation!

Hoerde began with youths. Father Kentenich entrusted the initiative to them. To renew the spirit of the beginning means to entrust something to the new generation.....trust them with sufficient responsibility. The Holy Spirit lives and acts in the youth. Only they can sustain and take the Work in the future. Whoever trusts in the young generation believes in the leadership of the Holy Spirit, in an internal and external constant renewal. In this way, He maintains alive the idealism and the passion. May the Federations be workshops where the strong and creative characters of the time unite and are formed as apostles for

this era. Schoenstatt is grateful to the Federations. Schoenstatt needs strong Federations for the road toward the future.

I wish you a celebration filled with abundant graces!

Fr. Heinrich Walter, 08-20-09

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