

Reflections

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The Home Shrine

First of all, many have an image of the Blessed Mother. It is what we call a Schoenstatt Corner. After the Covenant of Love, they begin to build and to slowly conquer their Home Shrine. Some are in a hurry. They feel the urgent need for the Blessed Mother in their homes; others take more time. But each authentic Schoenstatt family will, sooner or later, see that they cannot continue without having the Blessed Mother in the center of their home.

Our Father and Founder senses a divine strategy behind this. As original Christianity came forth in the families, thus also the renewal of the world must come from the homes. In this small and intimate circle, Blessed Mother wants to fulfill her mission..... renewing the family and educating new men and women for the world of tomorrow. Around these renewed families, other families who experience the influence of the Home Shrine become centered. In this way, our homes will function like magnets: they will attract others and the circle will become wider and wider. He concludes: “The renewal of our family, especially that realized by means of a serious striving for the Home Shrine, seems to be an excellent way to build a new world, a totally new world where Mary can act as she did in the home of Zechariah or at the wedding feast at Cana.”

Open Shrine, apostolic. If our relatives and friends come to our home and they approach the Home Shrine with faith, then it becomes a place of grace for them. For that reason, Father Kentenich invites us to open our Shrine and offer it to our brothers and sisters in need. When a beggar knocks on our door and asks for something to eat, none of us will reject him/her. We must do the same when someone asks for spiritual help. The best we can give them is to put them in contact with the Mother and Queen of the home.

The Virgin Herself seems to be anxious to meet with all Her children. For that reason She wants more Home Shrines. And if the people do not arrive at Her Shrines, She takes the initiative, goes out and looks for them.

I think that the Rosary Campaign is an example of this. The Blessed Mother becomes a Pilgrim to visit all of Her children.....to give them Her graces and to work miracles in their homes. Therefore, She asks us to open our Shrines to the world. She asks us to invite the people to enter so they can experience what we are living.

It is true that our first apostolate should be our own family. But we should not be selfish. Blessed Mother also wants to send us from Her Shrines and for this She offers the grace of apostolic fruitfulness. She wants to use us as instruments so that all of the families in our neighborhood, in our city, and in our country become Nazareth families. Just as She reigns and educates in our Schoenstatt families, She wants to do the same in the rest of the families.

Through us, She wants to transform the country into a Nation of God where Christ is the head and She is the heart. So then, what better apostolic work could we not do than to take all of our brothers and sisters to Her. In this way, Blessed Mother can fulfill Her mission also with them and give them Her gifts and graces.

If we see things in this context, we realize that our Home Shrine is an immensely large gift. We can never be grateful enough for it. But, for the same reason, it is a very big challenge: we cannot let the Blessed Mother down. We have to place ourselves obediently at Her disposal for Her great plans to conquer. And, above all, we have to take our Home Shrine seriously.....believe in the presence of Mary in the center of our home.....trust firmly in her power as Mother and Educatrix.....and give ourselves to Her with a childlike heart.

Questions for reflection

1. Do we show our Home Shrine to visitors?
2. Do I take time to pray in the Home Shrine?
3. If I still do not have a Home Shrine, what am I waiting for?

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