

Reflections

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The New Presence of the Father and Founder

1. Making the Father and Founder present. What does the Founder expect from the members of his Schoenstatt Family? It seems to me that he wants us to make him present in today's world. He wants each one of us to extend him, his work, and his charism. This has to do with his canonization. Upon canonizing someone, the Church confirms that the person lived a holy life and is, therefore, a model for all Christians. The Church not only canonizes the person, but also what the person did. The Church proclaims the validity of his/her work.

Therefore, upon canonizing Father Kentenich, the Church should also be able to canonize his Holy Family. That means that this man is so holy that there are thousands of persons who have sanctified themselves because of his example. So, our desires and efforts for sanctity are a testimony for his canonization.

At the Founder's funeral, a German Bishop said: "You are the letter of introduction for Father Kentenich." May the pastor say: *These Schoenstatters are the best workers.* May the Bishop say: *You can always count on this movement.* And may our friends and associates say: *This person or this couple has really changed since they belong to Schoenstatt.*

2. Responsible for his work. We believe that through him, God has wanted to give an answer to the challenges of our times. As a Schoenstatt Family, we must assume this answer in ourselves and give it as a service to the Church and world. We are to be extenders of the charism of our Father.

2.1 Heart of the Church. What is Father Kentenich's and our message for the Church? The words "*Dilexit Ecclesiam*" – He loved the Church – which are inscribed on his tomb clearly express the great concern of his life: to give to the Church a great movement of renewal of the Church and world.

Upon returning from exile in Milwaukee, he said to the Family present: "*We believe we have the vocation to be the heart of the Church.*" What does it mean to be heart? It means to be the power of love, a power which conquers the Church, a power which fills the Church with the heroism of love. To be a power of love, this is our mission."

Therefore, Father feels the need and the responsibility to renew the Church so that it can be the soul of the world. And Schoenstatt has the task to be Mary in the Church, to be the heart of that renewed Church. Thus he gave us the mission to put into practice the Church of the Council.

Now, what can we do to fulfill the assignment from our Father and Founder? If we want to help forge that Church of tomorrow, Schoenstatt must be an anticipation of the renewed Church, of the Church of the Council. Just as Father did, we should dedicate ourselves to build Schoenstatt and in this way we work for the Church of the future.

The other way of helping to renew the Church is by actively taking part in the pastoral organizations of the Church. We must help in the parishes and in pastoral endeavors with a great spirit of service. I believe we are all aware of the gifts which we receive from Schoenstatt and they are not just for safe-keeping, rather we should transmit them to others and enrich the whole Church. In the future, throughout the whole Church, something of our Schoenstatt charism should be noticed.

2.2 Soul of the world. Schoenstatt should be the heart of the Church and should also be the soul of the world. Father calls us to transform the world. If we want to make Father present, we cannot stay peacefully at home and live our heaven there. We have to strive that our world becomes a piece of heaven, a neighborhood of heaven.

Questions for reflection

1. Have we somehow changed with Schoenstatt?
2. Are we working for the Church of tomorrow? How?
3. What is my present apostolate?

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