

Reflections

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Rooted in the Father and Founder

The experience, a personal relationship with the Founder, **is a gift**. It is a grace which contains an experience which no one can give us from the outside. It is personal for each one of us: to encounter him, to live his history with him and to personally love him according to the measure in which we experience his love. Sooner or later, each member of Schoenstatt will receive that grace-filled moment.

What can we do concretely to receive that grace?
How can we be open for the grace of being deeply rooted in the Father and Founder?

1. Get to know him. It is difficult to love someone you do not know well. The first step is to know Father, become interested in him, and to open ourselves to his person. For many it is hard to read and study, but it is the best way to get to know him in depth....to know his person, his life, and his work. If we want to get close to our Father and Founder, we must make the effort.

By this means we will discover that the most profound meaning of his life was to be Father. Throughout his life we can see how the grace of paternity, which was given to him by God, grew and developed. He felt it and he would say that his being Father was the core of his personality and mission. God gave us a Founder whose personal charisma was to radiate the face of a father. God the Father gave us a living reflection of his own paternity.

By studying the life of Father Kentenich, we will be able to discover another essential characteristic of his personality: before men, he was and always wanted to be father; but before God, he always felt as a child, the smallest child.

The mature man is both child and father. He is like a bridge by which God wants to give Himself to us. That is the ideal which Father preached and the ideal which he embodied throughout his long life.

2. Acknowledge him. To know and to acknowledge is not the same thing: for example, the devil knows God but does not acknowledge him. In what sense are we to acknowledge him?.....as head of the Schoenstatt Family.

As such, he has a primary position within the Family. Personally, he is the bearer of a great mission, a mission which he has entrusted to the entire family, but he is the one who received it. Therefore, we have to acknowledge him and accept him as the Head if we want to belong to his family.

3. Follow him. It is not only enough to acknowledge him. We have to identify ourselves with him and with his work. His exemplary life gives him the authority to be our model....because He embodies best what Schoenstatt endeavors to accomplish: to create a new man in a new community. We must be faithful to his spirit, faithful to his principles, faithful to his mission. Only in this way will we be his genuine children who can further his work.

4. Attach ourselves. Father, on his part, wants to make contact with each one of us. He searches for us. He invites us to get close to him. We should receive him, give him a place in our lives, and embrace him in our hearts. We should accept him as our father and feel we are his children. In this way we will begin to share our lives with him just as we share our lives with Mary.

So, let us begin to dialog with him. Let us tell him about our joys and sorrows, our struggles, successes and failures. We will ask him for advice and help. Let us entrust something to him and let us pray to him; for example, the novena....and then let us give ourselves to him and entrust ourselves to his care and paternal protection. Let us entrust ourselves into his leading and educative hands.

The fruit of that growing attachment to Father is a deep rootedness into his heart. There he receives us all and makes us feel we are his dear children. He shelters us in his paternal love, and above all, he takes us to the heart of God where we feel accepted and rooted eternally.

Questions for reflection

1. Do I pray the novena to Father Kentenich?
2. How much do I know about the life of our Father and Founder?
3. Is he a model for me?

If you wish to comment on this text or give a testimony, write to: pn.reflexiones@gmail.com

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