



Dear Schoenstatt Family,

On this 18th of October, we wish you, throughout the world, many blessings on this Covenant day.

We celebrate our founding day and renew our Covenant of Love with Mary, especially united in the Original Shrine and with all the daughter Shrines of the world. This year, we renew our Covenant of Love in a special context.

The coronavirus pandemic has profoundly shaken the entire world and has brought grave consequences for all people, in all aspects of life: health, economic, social, and psychological. Time and time again we have wondered what God is saying to us through this and how we are responding in the Covenant of Love. In these last months, we have experienced again the value of personal bonds and we have learned to cultivate them through new technological means. We have rediscovered the importance of the family and of the home. Especially for our spiritual life, we are much more conscious of the importance of the Home Shrine, prayer as a family, etc. And we have experienced the challenge of living our Covenant in solidarity with many people who are suffering. It is in these circumstances that we crown Mary as the Queen of our physical and spiritual health.

Pope Francis published “Fratelli tutti,” his encyclical which calls us to give our concrete support to the “universal fraternity and social friendship” among peoples, cultures, classes, and nations, through the Covenant of Love and through covenant culture. Pope Francis speaks of a “pedagogy of fraternity.”

The debate around Father Kentenich, which ignited at the beginning of July, has awakened a great interest to more intensely study our Founder – his person, his life, and his charism – to more profoundly understand him and to make him known. This is also part of the context in which we renew our Covenant of Love this year. In the framework of the process of beatification, the diocese of Trier, which is responsible for the cause, has announced the creation of a new historical commission. Many people of our communities are studying these issues in depth, including the Media Commission of Communication – led by the International Presidium – and their information team. Even other historians outside of Schoenstatt are also investigating the history of our founder.

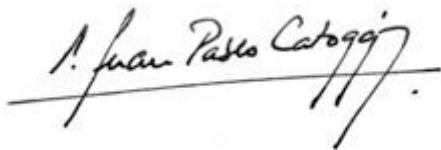
The International Presidium, which gathered some days ago for their annual conference at the Josef-Kentenich-Hof in Hillscheid, Germany, has created an International Investigation Group to thoroughly address these issues. Prof. Alejandro

Blanco, Secretary General of the International Federation of Priests, coordinates this interdisciplinary investigation team which includes men and women of our different communities and countries.

The postulator for the cause of Fr. Kentenich, Fr. Eduardo Aguirre, has already been able to work for three weeks in the archives of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, to see and to study the documents of the Holy See of that time, which recently have been made accessible for the period up until 1958. It will take some time for these documents to be evaluated. In any case, nothing has been found thus far that calls our conviction into question about the person, life, and mission of Father Kentenich.

We wish you all a felicitous and fruitful celebration of the 18th of October. May the Covenant of Love become more and more a source of life and mission for a Schoenstatt that goes out to the peripheries for a world in which we can all live as brothers and sisters as one Family.

In the name of the International Presidium

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Fr. Juan Pablo Catoggio". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Fr. Juan Pablo Catoggio