

## **Ernest M. Kanzler – Funeral 29.12.2020**

### **Homily by Fr. Juan Pablo Catoggio, Presidium President**

Dear family members of Br. Kanzler,

Dear Brothers of Mary,

Dear Schoenstatt Family,

Dear friends!

Once again, during the octave of Christmas, the Church once again celebrates the great mystery of Christmas, which cannot be spent in a single day: The mystery of the Son of God who became man! God himself has become man. He came from heaven to us, to lead the world to the Father, to unite us with God. He took on our human nature to give us a share in his divine life.

Within the context of the Christmas events, we gather to say goodbye to Br. Ernest Kanzler. In faith, we know that death is the true birth into Heaven. Beyond the great loss and the pain, there is gratitude: gratitude for him, for his life and his actions among us, gratitude for everything that God in his goodness has given Br. Kanzler and for all that He has given us through him. Beyond his passing, we are united by the Magnificat and the confidence that he will intercede for us from Heaven, especially for his community and for Schoenstatt.

On 16 December, Br. Kanzler sent Christmas greetings and a letter to the Brothers of Mary. He started as follows: "A very special Christmas is around the corner. God has ordained a completely new way to see the celebration of the birth of his Son. Now, more than ever, we wish for light in the darkness, confidence in the future, communion with our loved ones. The key values of Christmas are becoming clearer. The accessories of Christmas are put into their proper place. We are waiting for the Baby Jesus. He is the light in the darkness. In him, God has given us an absolutely trustworthy ally for any future that awaits us. Friendship with him gives us deep communion."

He has given us the key to guess the message of what we are celebrating today. Christmas shines a light on Br. Ernest Kanzler's life and allows us to catch a glimpse of the message he leaves us.

Jesus came into the world to redeem it, to transform it, to take it to the Father, to unite it with God. This very real world that he loved so much and accepted. Br. Kanzler committed himself to the mission of the Brothers of Mary, to unite this real world to God, to live in the midst of the world and to transform it from the inside. He was fully aware of his lay mission, as a man of the Church in the world and a man of the world in the Church, to be a witness to the Gospel, to work for a Marian shape to the world. In the midst of the world and from the world to God.



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He loved his profession where he worked as an industrial engineer, laboring with passion and becoming involved in the development of Daimler engines. He had a sense of rigor and precision to his thinking and a practical sense for many things that he knew how to put at the service of Schoenstatt and its mission.

The mystery of Christmas includes Mary and Joseph, the Holy Family. We can only understand Br. Kanzler, to the extent that is possible, if we look at his love for the Blessed Mother and for Schoenstatt. "United with Mary in love..." are the opening words of his course ideal. His confreres highlighted the enthusiasm and joy with which Ernest Kanzler crowned the Blessed Mother time and time again, or his great commitment to the construction of the Tabor Shrine.

Becoming man is always something concrete. It deals with real people and real places. People and places were important to Ernst Kanzler: peaceful in his manners, but generous and persevering; he worked hard to make Joseph Engling and Mario Hiriart known. God in his goodness gave him the joy of knowing that both causes for their beatification are progressing well in Rome. And places were also relational: Firstly, Marienberg and the Tabor Shrine and center, but also Cambrai, Prositten, and perhaps other places too.

What would Christmas have been like in Heaven when these favorite sons of the Blessed Mother met: Br. Kanzler, our father and founder, Engling, Mario!

At Mary's table, we are certain that St. Joseph occupied a special place. On 8 December, the Pope announced a year dedicated to St. Joseph and he gave us a wonderful letter about him, with the title Partis Corde -- Joseph loved Jesus with a father's love.

I have to admit it is not hard to see Br. Kanzler as a new Joseph. All of St. Joseph's characteristics that the Pope describes, also fit him incredibly well.

Like Joseph, Ernest Kanzler gave Mary and Jesus a home in his heart. Like Joseph, he always sought the will of God and carried it out in the obedience of faith. We do not know one single word said by St. Joseph, he could have been mute. But he definitely was not deaf. He listened and acted: God communicated his will in dreams -- four times it is described in the Gospel -- and then "Joseph arose, took the child and its mother and left." This fits in well with Br. Kanzler: a man of few words, but a man who listened and had a personal welcome, to listen and provide empathetic understanding. His confreres emphasized this: he was able to listen to each one personally, to welcome and accompany each one, to walk with each one personally. He was always able to see the good in each one, to value him and to promote him.

Like Joseph, he took his profession and work seriously. Like Joseph, he was a "gentleman" in the real sense of the word: Marian, modest, and dignified, masculine and noble, just as he appeared on the outside.

He was open to all that God showed through others. He was not prejudiced. In some way, things that were impossible for others were possible for him. For example, to celebrate the consecration not only in private but also through Zoom. But also in far more important issues: open to all.



Like Joseph, he trusted in God in all situations. Like the “just” that the Book of Wisdom praises. This gave him courage. God always has a solution, was one of his sayings. We need to search for and find solutions in God, not to invent them. But when he recognized that something was God’s plan, then he clung to it with courage, persistence, coherence, silence, and patience, and he continued to work on it.

Br. Kanzler, like Joseph, knew that he was called to be the father to a holy family. This is what he was for many people, especially his own community, where he was serving his fifth term as the Superior, 26 years in total. He was one the General Presidium for 32 years, an absolute record! He was “father to many fathers” in his community, to the Schoenstatt Men’s Movement. In his letter, the Holy Father describes Joseph’s “fatherhood” with words that are applicable to Br. Kanzler:

*The Church too needs fathers....Being a father entails introducing children to life and reality. Not holding them back, being overprotective or possessive, but rather making them capable of deciding for themselves, enjoying freedom and exploring new possibilities....The logic of love is always the logic of freedom, and Joseph knew how to love with extraordinary freedom. He never made himself the center of things. He did not think of himself, but focused instead on the lives of Mary and Jesus...an attitude that is the opposite of possessiveness...A possessive love ultimately becomes dangerous: it imprisons, constricts and makes for misery...The logic of love is always the logic of freedom, and Joseph knew how to love with extraordinary freedom. He never made himself the centre of things. He did not think of himself, but focused instead on the lives of Mary and Jesus... Our world today needs fathers. It has no use for tyrants who would domineer others as a means of compensating for their own needs; it rejects those who confuse authority with authoritarianism...In every exercise of our fatherhood, we should always keep in mind that it has nothing to do with possession, but is rather a “sign” pointing to a greater fatherhood. In a way, we are all like Joseph: a shadow of the heavenly Father.”(PC 7)*

As Br. Kanzler wrote in his Christmas greetings, may he intercede for us in Heaven so that Christ can be the light in the darkness. In him, God has given us an absolutely trustworthy ally for any future that awaits us. Friendship with him gives us deep communion.

And so, just as in 1965, the gift of Mario Hiriati’s life hastened the miracle of the Holy Night, may Br. Ernest Kanzler be an intercessor for a new miracle of the Holy Night.

*Original: Spanish. Translation: Sarah-Leah Pimentel, Cape Town, South Africa*

