

Milwaukee04
Golden Jubilee of the Exile Shrine

**The Importance of the Exile Shrine
for Father Kentenich and the Schoenstatt Family**

Talk on Friday, July 9, 2004
by Sister M. Petra Schnuerer

Sister M. Petra Schnuerer is a member of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary. She came as a university student from Germany to visit Father J. Kentenich in Milwaukee in 1958, and decided to stay and work for him as a secretary. In 1961 she joined the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary. Since then she served her community and the Schoenstatt Movement in Wisconsin, New York, Puerto Rico, in the Dominican Republic and in Germany. In 2003 she traveled through Chile, Ecuador, Spain and Portugal in the service of the exile message of the founder. At present Sister Petra is stationed at the International Schoenstatt Center in Waukesha and is responsible for the Spanish speaking Schoenstatt Movement in the area and for those who come on pilgrimages to the exile places.

Dear Schoenstatt Family:

Let us rejoice and be glad! God and our MTA have done great things in the history of our Schoenstatt Family! And we are their witnesses. We are celebrating the golden jubilee of Father's Exile Shrine.

Today, we extend the shadow of the Jubilee Shrine to this shrine here, the International Shrine of the Father Kingdom. Both shrines belong together; they form a close unity of mission and grace. In both shrines the spirit of our exiled Father is being originally perpetuated, and in both shrines our Mother Thrice Admirable, and Queen of Schoenstatt leads us into the heart of our father and founder.

After we have heard the history of the Exile Shrine, we are now invited to look at what it meant to our father during the time of his exile in Milwaukee, and what it might mean to our Schoenstatt Family in the future.

I would like to start this presentation with two statements – one refers to Father, and the other one to his covenant partner, our dear Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen, and Victress of Schoenstatt.

The first: I think we are entitled to say – and we do it with great joy:

The Exile Shrine was Father's great treasure.

The second statement – we stand with great admiration before the Blessed Mother's power, wisdom, and love when we hear it:

During the time of Father's exile, the destiny of the Schoenstatt Work was essentially co-decided in the shadow of the Exile Shrine.

We immediately are reminded of Father's shadow word of 75 years ago.

Both statements have to be justified and explained.

They will be dealt with in the first and second part of this talk with the titles: 'The Exile Shrine's significance for Father' and 'The Fruitfulness of the Exile Shrine' respectively.

I. The Exile Shrine's Significance for Father

We repeat: The Exile Shrine was Father's treasure.

In our context the term "treasure" is not to be understood as a good to be guarded in a treasure box, but rather as a highly valuable good the inherent powers of which need to be activated and developed for the benefit of the Church and the world. In other words, this "treasure" of our father is to be seen as his "capital investment".

An example taken from life might lead us closer to our understanding of "treasure":

Due to perverse situations little Annie got separated from her mother. In her loneliness the little girl again and again clasped the medal on the chain she wore around her neck. Asked why she repeatedly held on to that medal, Annie answered: "It is the gift from my mother. I treasure it. When I touch it I feel that my mother is with me! Her gift is close to my heart."

We can easily imagine how Father treasured the shrine erected in the park below his office window! In addition to its importance as a Schoenstatt Shrine, it was very close to his heart since it was a gift prepared for him by his beloved Blessed Mother in the difficult time of separation.

1. The shrine was a real gift.

Yes, the Exile Shrine was a gift to Father, prepared for him by his covenant partner, the MTA. Acknowledging the generous instruments whom the Blessed Mother used for the construction of the shrine – Holy Cross Parish, its pastor, and the Pallottine Fathers of the Mater Dei Province – and giving them due credit, we nevertheless must say that this Schoenstatt Shrine was the gift of the MTA to our father. She was the initiator of its building, and Father was the "onlooker" as he himself put it. He was the recipient of the gift. After the dedication of the shrine, Father could say in all truth:

"Without my doing the Blessed Mother has followed me into exile with her shrine."

Father was a spectator as it were. Separated from his Schoenstatt Family and far away from the Original Shrine at Schoenstatt, moreover not allowed to be present at the dedication of the first shrine on North American soil so close by in Madison, Father, in Milwaukee, quietly but intently observed as it were the doings of the Blessed Mother. During that time he experienced how Satan and the MTA had engaged in a gigantic battle about Schoenstatt, foremost in Europe. He observed that a campaign of hatred had begun

against his person, that God had permitted Satan to play with Father and his family.¹ In the midst of all this, he saw the walls of the Schoenstatt Shrine going up under his window. It doesn't take much to assume that Father couldn't but sense the Mother diligently at work personally preparing for him the gift of her tangible presence. We know that Father was an expert in interpreting every event in the light of practical faith in divine Providence. We also know that there was an indescribable bond of love uniting both, Father and the MTA. She, his partner in the covenant of love, counteracting hatred and the multiple attempts of destruction, "looked at Father with warm love"². She watchfully directed the construction of the shrine so that on the covenant day, October 18, 1954, she could take possession of her new throne and say to her chosen child and instrument, "I am here. I am with you and I will stay with you."

Could a mother ever forget her child? Could our dear MTA leave Father alone knowing that he was sentenced to vanish into obscurity – in umbra maneat! –?! Her presence in a real Schoenstatt Shrine was undoubtedly the greatest gift she could give to our father. Let us recall that in 1954, other than Father there was no one in Milwaukee who belonged to Schoenstatt.

Here I can tell you an experience with Father.

When in August of 1958, the two of us – another young woman and I – arrived in Milwaukee, we went straight to the shrine. There we asked the MTA to call Father Kentenich to the shrine. This way it would be easier and safer for us to meet him than to look for our founder in the huge building with people whom we did not know. The Blessed Mother was so kind as to send Father to us in less than four minutes. She made Father's words literally come true for us: "If you look for me you will find me in the shrine." A couple of days later I dared to ask the question: "Father Kentenich, how come there is a real Schoenstatt Shrine here and I see no Schoenstatt Family around it? I have learned that a Schoenstatt Shrine is to be constructed only when a local Schoenstatt Family needs it." I have to mention that in 1958 it was really very quiet around Father, there were no visitors coming, yet. Father really was alone. Father quietly, with a solemn tone in his voice answered, "The Blessed Mother followed me into exile with her shrine."

At that time the Exile Shrine was nearly four years old.

This experience that the Blessed Mother did not forget Father and followed him into the solitude of exile evidently overwhelmed him. Father always knew that he could count on the MTA for everything and anything, but that she would follow him into exile in such an outstanding and original Schoenstatt way was more than he had expected. When the exile ended, Father gave this experience on as a legacy in his farewell speech in the shrine on September 15 to those he was about to leave behind in Milwaukee. It was the first of three wishes he expressed to his listeners on that memorable evening,

"Child, do not forget your Mother."

¹ Father Kentenich, Retreat for the Sisters, March 1966.

² *ibid.*

2. The shrine was a very valuable gift.

The Exile Shrine was a very valuable gift to Father precisely because it was for him

- a. an eloquent proof of the MTA's love and faithfulness to his person and an additional proof of the supernatural reality of the covenant of love between her and him. The Blessed Mother simply is the Virgo fidelis, the Faithful Virgin. It is her way of showing her love. Since the Mother walked with her Divine Son the way of the cross and stood beneath his cross till the very end, she also wanted to be in exile with Father, her son and partner in the covenant, and go the way of suffering together with him. The silent presence of his beloved Mother in the nearby shrine surely was for our father and founder *the* great source of strength and joy, his consolation! According to Father's words, she then placed her rich mother heart at his disposal more than at any other time.
- b. The Exile Shrine also was an eloquent proof of the MTA's faithfulness to the covenant of love with Schoenstatt as a place and as a family. While in the homeland fierce battles were going on about the "Schoenstatt Secret" as well as about the position of Father within the Schoenstatt Work, here in Milwaukee the MTA silently but clearly confirmed that the Schoenstatt message proclaimed by Father from the beginning was God-given and therefore true. On October 18, 1914, the Blessed Mother did seal the covenant of love with Father in the Original Shrine. At that moment she did bind herself, as it were, locally to the little chapel and did form a union of heart, mind, and goal with her chosen instrument, the founder, so that from this original covenant of love the Schoenstatt Family could be born. By following Father into exile with the shrine, the Blessed Mother brought to the attention of anyone interested, that there are three basic elements to the covenant of love: Father, Mother, and shrine, head, heart and home. They cannot be separated from one another because God has planned them to be a unity. The founder should not be left alone in faraway Milwaukee. His Mother and covenant partner felt she had to go after him with her shrine. - Here is another little life experience that is apt to impress this God-willed unity in our hearts:

Certain personalities evidently had made it their task to devalue the founder before his followers hoping that they then would no longer keep Father Kentenich in their hearts. I could not understand such strange endeavors and looked at Father for an explanation. Father with his customary calmness said to me: "There is no need for an explanation because they will not achieve anything. They came too late. Once the covenant of love has gripped the heart of a person the Blessed Mother will occupy it and with her the father and the home. The three are one. God will not change his design. You see, there is no reason for you to be worried."

The Exile Shrine was a very valuable gift to Father for a third reason: It was

- c. a sure sign of hope for Schoenstatt in the United States of America.
In 1948 Father Kentenich had traveled through this country with the desire to 'cast out the nets' on behalf of the MTA, to see how this world power could be placed in her service. Given America's place in the world, finding 'allies' there could greatly

hasten the MTA's march to victory.³ During that visit Father decided to have the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary open their first establishment in the USA.

When a few years later, in December 1951, Father received the decree that exiled him to this USA, his reaction was as follows:

If God has foreseen North America for me then that country must have a task for me and I must have a task for that country. God will show in due time what in particular this task will consist in.⁴

Father recognized in every event in life, pleasant or painful, an expressed wish or will of God, and he immediately responded.

Ten years after the construction of the Exile Shrine Father described in more detail what the mission of the USA is. In his "Prayer for the Jubilee May 1964" (in 1964 Schoenstatt celebrated the golden jubilee of its existence) Father noted:

Confidently do we trust that, in choosing your instruments for the renovation of the world, you have benignly cast your eye upon our country and ourselves. Our nation is rightly placed among the great powers of the world, and we believe that, in the battle of modern philosophies for the shaping and conquering of the world, God has apparently and foremost given to our people the responsibility to bring to and maintain for the nations of the earth not only the culture but also the much disputed faith in Christ.

When on October 18, 1914, you took abode in your shrine in Schoenstatt, and promised by using Schoenstatt to lead the whole world in Christ to the feet of the Father, you thought also of our country because of its greatness and leading position. In like manner at that time you saw us already in your plans to be the instruments for this mission.⁵

Divine Providence apparently decided that in this large nation and world power, Schoenstatt had to be started by the founder himself. What better start could God have given us?! What better, deeper, and firmer foundations could he have laid for Schoenstatt in the USA?! For almost fourteen years Father sank his exile life and work as personal contributions into the capital of grace. The Exile Shrine, therefore, can rightfully be appreciated as Father's capital investment for his Schoenstatt Family in the United States of America.

Together, let us express our heartfelt gratitude to God and to our dear MTA for the Exile Shrine and its mission, for this great gift to Father and to us!

We sing the motto of thanksgiving.

³ ref. Niehaus, Jonathan, Visit to America, 1999, Introduction.

⁴ Father Kentenich, Letter to A. Menningen, Dec. 18, 1951.

⁵ Father Kentenich, Prayer for May 1964.

3. Father accepted the gift of the shrine and made it his own.

a. His “private chapel”

Father’s everyday life in exile moved about in a quiet rhythm between his office, Calvary Cemetery, and the shrine. These were the places one would see Father with certainty every single day. His office was his work place, the park-like cemetery lent itself for his daily walk, and the shrine could be called his “private chapel.” There Father celebrated his daily Mass early in the morning, and made his private visits to the Blessed Sacrament and to his Blessed Mother during the day. As far as I recall, Father was the only one of his community to celebrate Mass in the shrine. Some of the Pallottine Fathers sometimes did make short visits there. It should also be considered a gift that Father was not assigned to say Mass at any other places. Only on Sunday was he asked to celebrate Holy Mass in an orphanage in Wauwatosa – this was so until Father took over the Sunday Mass for the German immigrants at St. Michael’s parish in Lent of 1959. Otherwise Father was free to say Holy Mass in the Exile Shrine; he did so more than 3000 times. Yes, Father accepted the gift of the shrine, and making it his own he made it very valuable for all the generations of his Schoenstatt Family.

Father seldom spoke about his love for the shrine but one could sense that he loved it deeply. It was simply part of him. He referred ever so often to the Blessed Mother in the shrine, so much so that in his office one could perceive the same atmosphere as in the shrine. Father lived with the MTA, he lived in her, he lived in the shrine! It was in the sacred atmosphere of the shrine that Father lived and moved about. Wherever Father was there was shrine atmosphere.

Once after Father had spent some time in night adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, he said to the person next to him in front of the shrine:

“In the shrine, I was thinking: How would things be if at that time [1914] I would not have said YES. Surely I would have been spared many a suffering, but how many fewer shrines would there be in the world, and how many fewer adoration hours..!” (October 17, 1963, 10 PM)

b. The shrine was Father’s spiritual home and favorite place; his place of grace.

Father was the person of one great idea and of one great love. That is why he was so very simple. In his simplicity his greatness shone out all the more brightly. His entire life centered on the act of October 18, 1914. Therefore the image of the shrine as he depicted it in 1914 in the Founding Document was the same image that was visibly alive in him throughout the exile: The shrine was his home, his favorite place, his place of grace. From there Father expected to receive what he needed to remain at peace, to be joyful in hope and sure of God’s victory, throughout his way of the cross that lasted 14 years. He knew he would receive whatever he asked his Mother for in the shrine, and he received it in abundance. Once Father said, “When I am in the shrine grace is poured over me by the bucket full.” At another time he prayed aloud in the shrine, “Mother, you know how hard it is to have a great mission and to be sent

into solitude, into the desert.” In the Exile Shrine, Father talked to the MTA in a simple childlike way. He knew his Mother would understand. He trusted in her, and she excelled her generosity. With the graces from the Exile Shrine Father could continue shouldering the work God had commissioned him to build for the Church!

c. His Tabor and cradle of sanctity

Let us think of the shrine as the MTA’s Tabor and as the cradle of sanctity for Father and the Schoenstatt Family. The extraordinary inbreak of the divine, which in his first letter to the family after the exile on December 13, 1965, Father called the fruit of exile, is to be seen together with the Exile Shrine. There the Blessed Mother revealed to him her glories. There Father received the new insight into the threefold image of God, persons, and society. In terms of the family: the new image of the Father, the child, and the community. It was during the exile that the Blessed Mother led Father to the fullness of spiritual fatherhood. It was then that our father became a reflection of God the unendingly merciful Father in a way that we could only stand before him in grateful awe. The more his position as Father of the Schoenstatt Family and his integrity were fought against, the more he was immersed into God’s eternally merciful love.

Once Father sent me to the shrine to ask the Blessed Mother, that she would see to it that he could become a merciful father for thousands of people.

It was also in the Exile Shrine that Father was given the joy and bliss in suffering which inspired him to proclaim Christian life as a “game of love” between God the Father and the child of God. The last series of Sunday sermons at St. Michael’s were a course on mastering life in difficult situations. With a closer glance at his observations one can recognize in his sermons a description of his own life. Father clothed his heroic *Dilexit Ecclesiam* with the attire of the “love-filled, suspenseful game between God the loving Father and him, the child of the Father.” Father himself was the example of the newly viewed image of the child in a perfect and most attractive manner.

Will we ever be capable of surmising or grasping the importance of the Exile Shrine as Father’s cradle of sanctity?

We still can mention three more points:

d. His place of spiritual encounter with his international Schoenstatt Family

In the Exile Shrine, the international Schoenstatt Family united with Father spiritually in his daily Holy Mass. There Father offered himself and his own again and again to the Heavenly Father for the Schoenstatt mission and blessed every Schoenstatt child who desired to receive his blessing.

There was once a lucky priest visitor who for one reason or another could take Father’s place in saying Mass in the Exile Shrine. After Mass this priest said: “Never in my life did I have so many Schoenstatt people with me [spiritually] in my holy Mass as I had today.”

- e. The shrine was also the place where Father received his visitors (after 1960 there were many) and from where he sent them out again with his blessing. It was moving to watch his visitors say goodbye to Father in front of the shrine. They got into the car and Father went back into the shrine. He stayed back as “the praying Moses on the mountain.”
- f. For the last point I need but refer to last night’s PowerPoint presentation: The shrine as the local center for a growing family around Father with celebrations, dedications of families, dedications of babies, weddings, and funerals, and pilgrimages of large groups – from the German community of St. Michael’s parish. Wherever Father was there a family formed, a slowly growing happy family around their caring spiritual Father.

Putting these six points together we can rightfully say: During his exile, Father’s life and work were so intimately interwoven with the Exile Shrine that this shrine will go through history as *the* symbol of Father’s exile. That is why we are celebrating its Golden Jubilee with style and joy. That is also the reason why we expect to receive special jubilee graces from the Exile Shrine during these days, among others a great and sincere love for our shrines, but most especially for the shrine where Father experienced the love of his Mother and Queen in such an unexpectedly profound and intimate way, in an extremely difficult situation.

4. Father felt responsible for the future of the shrine.

He could not possibly do otherwise. Those of us who lived here know how much Father cherished this shrine and how responsible he felt for its future. The following incident is a delightful proof of Father’s concern about the shrine’s future.

It was in February of 1964. The struggles about Schoenstatt’s existence became increasingly harsh, and the separation of the Schoenstatt Work from the Pallottine Society was imminent. Suddenly Father asked the person who was with him the following question: “What will happen if the separation comes about and the Pallottines will no longer want this shrine here?” “Well, we’ll move it out to the Schoenstatt property.” was the answer (this land here had just been purchased). “And what will we do if they will not want the shrine in Madison either?” continued Father. Both shrines were built on Pallottine grounds. “Then we will move that one, too.” the other one replied. They both laughed heartily. Then the conversation went on in a serious tone. Father said in a thoughtful manner: “Through Father, this shrine has acquired historical value.” From then on, Father W. Brell took up contact with a moving company to investigate the possibility of moving the Exile Shrine out here to this property. The project was feasible, the experts said, but not an easy job and immensely costly. This answer did not close the door for Father, yet. Only when further investigations resulted in the necessity of cutting and reconnecting 340 overhead electricity and telephone wires along the 21-mile route the moving truck would have to take was the project adjourned. Then Father said, “Then we should at

least save the altar. Father has said many masses on this altar and he also has laid his works on it." Ever since, alert guardians are keeping watch.

Yes, Father was very conscious of the importance this shrine will have in Schoenstatt's history precisely because it was his Exile Shrine.

II. The fruitfulness of the Exile Shrine

At the climax of Schoenstatt's founding history God and the MTA obviously wanted to seal their "favorite creation and favorite occupation," Schoenstatt, with a resplendent exemplary manifestation of the founder's heroically sacrificial love for the Church. The exile decreed for him by the Church was to be a unique setting for such a manifestation and a great opportunity for the work and the workmaster to prove their authenticity and love. Father and his family were severely tried and tested by the Church and found to be worthy and faithful. The 14 years in Milwaukee became the most fruitful ones within Schoenstatt's founding period. While Father was filling the capital of grace in the Exile Shrine, the Blessed Mother showed herself victorious in leading the work to completion in its land of origin, true to Father's conviction: "I take care of the Blessed Mother's great concern – the Church – and she takes care of her Schoenstatt." Today, we want to mention some important fruits of the Exile as a proof for the above statement:

During the time of Father's exile, the destiny of the Schoenstatt Work was essentially co-decided in the shadow of the Exile Shrine.

1. The MTA completed her educational task on Father and implored from God an extraordinary inbreak of grace into his personal self and his extended self, the Schoenstatt Family. The supernatural character of both, the work and the workmaster, became ever more apparent. The newly viewed image of the Father, the child, and the community gives proof of the spiritual height to which the family was raised. The talks Father gave in Schoenstatt after the second Miracle of the Holy Night had occurred are filled with the spirit of joy and gratitude for this exceedingly great gift. For instance: "Today we still cannot fully grasp the new manner in which the image of the child, the image of the Father, and the image of the community have become a reality within us."⁶

2. The MTA completed the founding of the Schoenstatt Work.

Whatever was still missing for the Schoenstatt Work to be fit for its victorious march through the centuries was completed by the MTA step by step. It was her generous response to our father's unwavering faith, unbounded confidence, and unsurpassable love for God and his divine plan for Schoenstatt, here in the shadow of the Exile Shrine. Let us briefly touch upon five essential steps toward the completion of Father's foundation. I am sure we know them but we perhaps do not relate them to the time of exile.

⁶ Father Kentenich's Christmas Letter to the Schoenstatt Family, Dec. 13, 1965.

- a. The three essential elements of the covenant of love: **head, heart, and home**, that means our three contact points, Father, Mother, and shrine, were experientially and reflexively clarified in the Schoenstatt ranks and became their permanent possession. A small but very meaningful incident shows the quiet unison between the MTA's leadership in the large family and Father's activities in exile:

On December 18, 1956, during the Holy Mass in the Exile Shrine, Father received the inspiration to give to the Pioneer Couples a group motto. Ten days later, on December 28 at the group's Christmas party, Father gave it to them as his Christmas present. The motto was: "Patris atque Matris sum, nunc et in perpetuum, vivat Sanctuarium!" "I belong to the Father and to the Mother. Long live the shrine!" Fr. Brell composed a melody, and from then on the Pioneer Couples sang their motto whenever and wherever they got together. Mrs. Graber was the director; she never failed to repeat the motto three times and each time on a higher pitch. She made sure that the future Schoenstatt Family in the USA would be clear on Schoenstatt's triple H – Head, Heart, and Home.

- b. The Title of the Blessed Mother was completed with Mary's prerogative of **Victress**. Father knew of the efforts made in this line by the spiritual constructors of the shrine in Munich, in 1959. After his return from exile, he proclaimed the complete title officially in the Crowning Church of Liebfrauenhöhe, on June 2, 1966. Since then the Blessed Mother is invoked as Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen and Victress of Schoenstatt.
- c. The network of Shrines was completed during the exile time with the **Home Shrine and the Heart Shrine**. In Milwaukee Father had time to foster personal contact with individual persons and with the families. Here he could attentively cultivate a healthy natural and supernatural binding organism with the people around him, thus giving an essential contribution to the fulfillment the mission of the 31st of May that had led him into exile. Father's untiring service to individuals and to families was blessed with the birth and growth of the Home Shrine and the Heart Shrine. Our present Schoenstatt realm cannot be thought of anymore without these most important last stages in the development of the geography of our shrine. They are precious fruits of Father's exile, fruits from the Exile Shrine.
- d. In 1964, the golden jubilee year of Schoenstatt's founding, and the thirteenth year of the exile, the Church declared the **autonomy of the Schoenstatt Work** by separating Schoenstatt from the Pallottine Society. Years of struggle, prayer, and sacrifice had come to a blessed end and Schoenstatt was recognized as a new initiative of God. On that day Father thanked the Blessed Mother here in the newly dedicated International Shrine of the Father Kingdom for having "expertly disentangled the indescribably and hopelessly entangled ball of twine" the Work has been comparable to.
- e. What still was missing to complete the picture was the founding of a new community of priests who would take on the task of the **pars centralis et motrix** of the International Schoenstatt Work. This took place on July 18, 1965, shortly before the exile ended. Father quietly celebrated that miracle also here in this shrine.

With awe and gratitude we look at these fruits of Father's exile. All of these great achievements became possible only because of Father's uncompromising faithfulness to the mission God had entrusted to him, and because of his heroic life of sacrifice out of love during the exile years. The entire work depended on his living out the exile. It was the touchstone of his love for the Church. Like Abraham his faith was tested and found firm. Like the Blessed Mother he repeated his *fiat* innumerable times and carried his heavy cross with joy, in close spiritual union with his family until his hope came true: "He who loves the cross is entitled to hope that the elevation of the cross will be followed by the blessings of resurrection."⁷

On the 16th of September 1965, after celebrating holy Mass for the last time in the Exile Shrine and after thanking those around him for all he had received from them, in an understood manner Father followed the telegram's call to Rome. The greatest of the exile fruits was still wanting. With confidence in his Victorious Queen he trustfully approached the grand finale of a 14-year momentous spiritual warfare -- with his flight to Rome. She would liberate Father in a way that the credit would be given to her alone. It was no small feat for the MTA to restore the exiled father to his family but she did come through in a wondrous way in the Second Miracle of the Holy Night.

In the shadow of the Exile Shrine the destiny of the Schoenstatt Work was essentially co-decided. Our father and founder fought the good fight. He kept the faith in his God-given mission. He did not shrink back from responding heroically even to the greatest challenges, and therefore his exile was crowned with a victory that came from God.

Conclusion

With gratitude and joy we feel urged to once more take upon ourselves Father's exile legacy and renew our commitment to Father and his worldwide mission. Open to receive many graces for the "exile situations" in our personal lives, may we be filled with the assuredness that if we courageously and faithfully walk in Father's "exile footsteps" we will also partake of Father's exile blessings! For the conclusion of the talk I will tell you of another episode with Father in the Exile Shrine and then end with Father's last words in the shrine before he left for Rome on September 15, 1965:

The episode:

I had a group of 12-year old boys who chose the ideal to become Immortal Apostles. They wanted to make a consecration to the MTA in the shrine and invited Father to be with them. Father fulfilled their wish. After the boys had said their prayer, Father stepped up to the communion rail, looked at the boys, and posed the question: "Can you tell me something about the greatest man in Schoenstatt? Did you already learn something about him? What was his name?" It was very obvious that Father was referring to Joseph Engling and the Immortal Apostles had had a few group meetings on Engling. The boys looked at Father and said nothing. Father turned the question this way and that way, but the boys just looked and looked. Finally Father blessed them, gave each one a little gift, and left the shrine. I turned to my boys and said:

⁷ Father Kentenich, talk to Pallottine Fathers, March 23, 1952 in Bellavista, Chile.

*“For goodness’ sakes, why didn’t you answer?” As of one voice they replied: “We couldn’t tell him to his face that he was the greatest man in Schoenstatt!” Oh, all right!
A little later I had an opportunity to tell Father about it. Father, with his typical smile said, “There you see, your boys are more intelligent than their leader.”*

The concluding words are Father’s own. He spoke them in his farewell speech in the Exile Shrine the night before he left Milwaukee on Wednesday, September 15, 1965. I could well imagine that Father would likewise want to direct these words to us when, at the end of these jubilee days, we will say goodbye in the Exile Shrine.

We have to say goodbye. What should I impress upon you yet? I have three wishes which I’ll express very simply. First of all, I think I should say,

Child, do not forget your Mother. ... Then,

Child, do not forget the mercies of the Eternal God and Father. ... My third wish is:

Child, do not forget your misery. ...

I think that, if we take this threefold advice, if we take these three sentences home with us, then we will have understood what the eternal Father and the Blessed Mother tried to achieve through our being together. .. Once more: Child, do not forget your Mother. For us, our Mother is the Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt. Child, do not forget the mercies of Eternal Father Love and of the merciful Blessed Mother, and do not forget to utilize your misery in order to grow deeper and deeper into the heart of the eternal God.

... I do owe gratitude to all Schoenstatt children who so bravely carried the banner all these years in other countries. When we meet again, we will give an account of our spiritual growth.

... Let us be happy! Let us be grateful that God has brought us together, that we tried to discover his wishes, his intentions, and to act accordingly, and to commit ourselves to the goal of *Ascende superius*. Always higher and higher until God has accomplished the goal he has had in mind for us from all eternity! ...

And therefore, I think I should conclude by repeating once more, my dear Schoenstatt families!”

End of the quote.

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Sister M. Petra Schnürer