

Schoenstatt

Many of you have heard of our Schoenstatt Center near Waukesha. It is one of the major retreat centers around Milwaukee.

Schoenstatt is a Catholic movement which began in Germany in 1914. It is named after the place near Koblenz on the Rhine River where it started. A Schoenstatt means A beautiful place and the little valley of its origin is indeed beautiful. It began with a group of high school boys led by a young priest, Fr. Joseph Kentenich. They wished to be committed Catholics, but the outbreak of World War I made them wonder how it could be done in such difficult circumstances. The boys needed a spiritual powerhouse, so Fr. Kentenich suggested that they invite Our Lady to make their little chapel a true place of grace. In return, they would do their part to really try to live the faith. This was the beginning of our Schoenstatt Shrine of the Mother Thrice Admirable.

The years after 1914 verified that the little chapel indeed became a place of grace, inspiring much courage and heroic love of God. Already in WWI, many young people were attracted to Schoenstatt, and in the 1930s the movement began to spread around the world. Today there are over 150 Schoenstatt Shrines in 28 countries worldwide.

Schoenstatt is one of many Catholic movements inspiring the Church in a new way. It involves lay people, sisters and priests, offering different opportunities to grow in faith. The inspiration a movement gives should ultimately be a help and not a hindrance to one's parish life and Schoenstatt tries to inspire lay people so that their parish commitment is more meaningful to them and they get more involved.

Our shrines are open to visitors. Each is a replica of the Original Shrine in Germany. Their small size (room for about 25 people) and handcrafted decoration especially invite visitors to stop and pray and offer God their needs and concerns. The two shrines in the Milwaukee area are in Milwaukee (55th and Wisconsin) and at our Schoenstatt Center west of Waukesha (1 mile south and 2 2 miles west of I-94 and CTH AT). Stop by and visit some time!

Fr. Jonathan Niehaus
Schoenstatt Fathers

Schoenstatt (shorter version)

Schoenstatt is a Catholic movement of spiritual renewal. It promotes a practical spirituality which inspires Catholics to be more committed to their faith. Typical is a deep love for Mary, the Mother of God, commitment to the Eucharist, and faith in Divine Providence in everyday life. Members take part in groups, retreats and/or pilgrimages.

At the heart of the movement is its place of origin, the small *Shrine* in Germany where it began in 1914. Replicas are found at all major centers worldwide, allowing pilgrims to share in the same graces and visualize the mission of the Church as both local and universal, horizontal and vertical.

Locally, shrines are found in Milwaukee (55th and Wisconsin) and at our Schoenstatt Center west of Waukesha (1 mile south and 2 2 miles west of I-94 and CTH AT). Welcome!

Fr. Jonathan Niehaus

What is Schoenstatt?

(written for WYD 2002)

The International Schoenstatt Movement is a movement of renewal in the Catholic Church begun in Germany in 1914. It originated from the youth work of Fr. Joseph Kentenich (1885-1968), a young Pallottine interested in leading young people to sanctity. As the movement took root in Germany, and then later worldwide, it became known and appreciated as a Marian movement, an apostolic movement and a movement committed to the wholehearted renewal of Church and society. It works to connect faith with daily life, the natural and the supernatural, God and world, in all walks of life. As a result, Schoenstatt diverse family of communities and activities has groups and branches for families, boys and girls youth, mothers, men, professional women, priests, etc. All of it is united in the covenant of love, a special consecration to Mary as Mother Thrice Admirable (MTA) of Schoenstatt.

One of the unique features of Schoenstatt is its network of Shrines. Its founding in 1914 consisted of a covenant of love where Fr. Kentenich and the first youth offered their hearts and striving for sanctity to Mary with the request that she take up her abode in their chapel as a place of grace and pilgrimage. It soon became clear that Mary was working in the Shrine in a special way through such graces as the *Agrace* of a home@ (feeling at home in the Shrine and in the heart of Mary), the grace of inner transformation and the grace of apostolic zeal. As Schoenstatt began to spread internationally, replicas of the original Shrine were built, also on the basis of the original covenant of love with Mary. Today there are over 160 such Shrines in 28 countries worldwide, many of them with their own retreat center or welcome center. Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims visit the many Shrines, and many thousands have taken the shrine home with them, so to speak, by inviting the Mother Thrice Admirable to dwell in their homes in a *Ahome shrine*.@ A rosary campaign centering around a pilgrim image of the MTA further extends the network of Shrines by giving many Catholics a chance to receive a *Avisit from Mary*@ that invites them to pray the rosary and bring their needs to our Blessed Mother.

Schoenstatt is present in some 50 countries around the world. This includes countries such as Germany, Switzerland, Poland, England, Spain, Portugal, Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, Puerto Rico, the United States, Burundi, South Africa, India, the Philippines and Australia.

Versions of Question No. 1 from A150 Questions@

1 (Fr. Rafael)

What is Schoenstatt?

Schoenstatt is an apostolic movement of renewal born in the heart of the Church. Its spiritual center is the Schoenstatt Shrine. Here Mary reveals herself in a special manner as Mother and Educator who gives birth to Christ in us, thereby making us in his image continuously.

The Schoenstatt Movement encompasses diverse communities, which form the Schoenstatt AFamily@ or AWork@. As a movement of renewal, it bears a marked apostolic and lay characteristic; with its own pedagogy and spirituality particularly apt for those individuals who live within the world today and who must face an ever-increasing de-Christianized and materialistic environment.

The purpose of the Movement is to form a new community based on new persons who overcome the mass-mindedness of our times and who are capable of forging a new culture immersed in Christ=s spirit.

2 (Fr. Jonathan)

What is Schoenstatt?

Schoenstatt is a divine initiative within the Church which has touched the lives of tens of thousands of Catholics worldwide and helped them to more actively live the Gospel of Christ. Schoenstatt is

a movement of renewal,
a place of grace
and a unique spirituality within the Church.

As a *movement of renewal* in the Catholic Church, Schoenstatt works to help renew Church and society in keeping with the spirit of the Gospel. It seeks to reconnect faith with daily life, especially through a deep love of Mary, the Mother of God. It is an international movement found on all continents. Its membership includes people from all vocations and walks in life. It is a spiritual family whose many branches and communities join to form a single Schoenstatt Family.

As a *place of grace* Schoenstatt has touched the lives of millions. The *Schoenstatt Shrine* is the movement=s spiritual home and center of life. This shrine is dedicated to Mary as the Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen and Victress of Schoenstatt. In addition to the Original Shrine in Germany, there are over 160 replica daughter shrines around the world, where people gather for prayer, renewal and inspiration.

As a *unique spirituality in the Church*, Schoenstatt has contributed to the growth in holiness of men and women since 1914. Its characteristic features have proven especially fitting for living the faith in our modern times. As a covenant spirituality it fosters a personal relationship with God, Mary and fellow-man. As an instrument spirituality it makes Christian discipleship more tangible and in tune with God=s will. As an everyday spirituality it seeks ways to form everyday life with practical steps forward in faith, hope and love.