

Message for the 2014 Conference

From 1st -7th February 2009, 89 Schoenstatt Movement leaders representing 32 countries from five continents as well as members of the General Presidium gathered at Schoenstatt's place of birth. With us we bring the riches of our covenant of love, as well as the covenant's unique development in each culture. The diversity of languages and backgrounds present here allow us to experience a cenacle atmosphere. This moment of grace allows us to discover what the God of life is expecting from our family during the centenary celebration of Schoenstatt's founding. During this time, we are fully aware of the world-wide prayer chain from our many covenant brothers and sisters.

An atmosphere of unity in diversity, of mutual respect and deep regard for our respective roots, was created as a result of intensive interaction in the groups and plenary sessions.

We discovered the fruits Schoenstatt has produced over the last 100 years and the various ways in which they are evident. However, at this stage in our history, we also humbly acknowledge our personal limitations and the limitations of the community.

It is with great joy and gratitude that we renew our covenant of love with the Blessed Mother, fully aware that this is the essence of our family. This quiet act of faith of Fr. Kentenich with a small group of sodalists is still alive within us, just as fresh as it ever was during the founding moment in the original shrine on 18 October 1914. We were surprised to discover that our deep faith in the reality of the covenant of love with the Blessed Mother is what moves and inspires us globally. This is the source of our fruitfulness and the concrete way in which live and follow Christ. This is exactly **what** we want to celebrate throughout our jubilee in 2014.

As to **how** and in what spirit we want to celebrate this jubilee, we recall that our father and founder taught us how to grasp the **currents of life** and be guided by them. Therefore, we have to try to embrace the different currents within our family today. We discovered that the source of the covenant of love is present in our times through several powerful currents of life:

- The power of the **shrine** in all of its aspects;
- The attachment to our **father** and his charism;
- **Missionary force**;
- The gift and challenge of family **unity**.

We would like this spirit to permeate both the preparation and the actual content of the jubilee celebration. Each one of us is called to cultivate and promote these currents according to their own situation. The force of these streams will ensure that covenant graces overflow into the varied areas of our apostolic strategy.

From this perspective and in this light, God led us to examine our own identity in order to discover the open doors required to carry our mission into the Church and the contemporary world. We know that the covenant of love has the ability to develop a culture responding to all needs of our time.

We identified five strategic areas which must become a priority. Our apostolic deeds must also be improved at this point in time:

- Marriage and **family life**;
- The challenges and dynamic of the **youth**;
- The application and publication of Fr. Kentenich's thought within the **educational** field;
- The incorporation of our original charism into the diocesan and universal **Church**;
- Effective collaboration in the creation of a new **social order** and a culture inspired by the covenant.

In preparation for the Jubilee and beyond, we would like to stimulate our entire family to promote apostolic activities in these priority areas so that they become a reality.

In addition to all of this, the question of **where and when** we want to celebrate the Jubilee was raised. We also discussed which symbolic action we could put into motion to secure and express fully this jubilee spirit. The "corner stone" is the celebration of the founding act. The other elements of the celebration are built around it, whether they take place in Schoenstatt, Rome or at local level.

It was clearly evident from the various countries' contribution that the MTA is inviting us to go on pilgrimage to the original shrine on 18 October 2014. All are welcome to participate in this pilgrimage. The place and time hold sacramental value for us. We hope to have a world-wide live link to the celebration held at our place of origin. In this way, the current of graces radiating from the original shrine and the extensive fruitfulness returning to the original Schoenstatt after 100 years will be fully expressed.

Another dimension of the jubilee celebration is Rome. Together with our father we congregate at the heart of the Church to renew our commitment to it and highlight our missionary nature. As a gift we bring the fruit of our shrines and our apostolic projects and ask the Holy Father to commission us. In this way, we take up our founder's wish, expressed at the shrine in Belmonte: *omnia matri ecclesiae*.

In the spirit of our jubilee celebration we also hope that the founding act is expressed at local level according to the situation and resources of every Schoenstatt family. This will result in a world-wide network linked up to this moment of grace.

Through our preparation and celebration of our covenant renewal we will receive the graces of this jubilee. In a cenacle moment we reached a consensus as to the gifts we hope for during the centenary, such as missionary force, the fraternal and solidarity spirit of the family in the father and holiness. These graces are necessary if we are to enforce our currents of life and make our apostolic strategy a reality. These are the gifts and great tasks that await us.

In light of this document the General Presidium will be coordinating the necessary steps required for a common preparation of the jubilee, such as creating the required committees, formulating a motto and publishing texts written by our father on the five strategic areas that have been mentioned. They will also select common elements to be emphasised in the years leading up to the start of the jubilee year on 18 October 2013. A triennium should take place, grasping the life streams of our international family which have already been mentioned in accordance with the wishes of the majority present at the conference.

Finally, we suggest that the Father Symbol, given to us by our founder, begins a world-wide pilgrimage in the near future. Centred around our father, we hope that our family can be purified, that it grows in unity and, in this way, is strengthened in its mission of service to our Church and society.

Schoenstatt, 7 February 2009