

SCHOENSTATT: The Garden Shed that became a Place of Grace for the World

The International Apostolic Schoenstatt Movement celebrates its Centenary in October 2014

Anyone who visits one of the five Schoenstatt shrines in South Africa this year will immediately notice the excitement in the air. There is a festive atmosphere in and around our shrines which are decorated with colourful banners and flags with the Schoenstatt logo on it as well as the words YOUR COVENANT – OUR MISSION! There is a similar atmosphere in each of other 200 shrines scattered throughout the world: in Africa, Europe, South America, North America, Asia and Australasia. The entire International Schoenstatt Family will be coming together on 18 October 2014 to celebrate the 100th Jubilee of its founding, but more than that, it will be celebrating 100 years of a special Covenant of Love that its members have made with Our Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen and Victress of Schoenstatt.

What is the Schoenstatt Movement?

In October 1914, against the

ominous background of a looming World War, a young priest, Fr Joseph Kentenich, was inspired to instil a seemingly impossible idea into the hearts and minds of a group of young boys studying at the Minor Seminary in Schoenstatt, Germany. They had been busy restoring an old garden shed to its former usage as a Chapel – a place which they now claimed as their 'home'. Knowing that these young men would soon be called into the frontlines of war, Fr Kentenich was keen to place their formation, education and protection into the hands of our Blessed Mother. He suggested that through their commitment to their own self education under Mary's guidance and through their love for her, they could persuade her to take up her dwelling in this chapel and turn it into a place of grace for many. The talk given on 18 October 1914 became known as Schoenstatt's Founding Document. The following is an extract from this talk: "We could not accomplish a

greater apostolic deed nor leave our successors a more precious legacy than to urge our Lady and Queen to erect her throne here in a special way, and to work miracles of grace... to make this place a place of pilgrimage, a place of grace for our house and for the German Province, and perhaps even further afield." (Fr Joseph Kentenich).

Guided by Fr Kentenich, these boys also entered into a Covenant of Love with her, drawing on the rich tradition of our Christian covenant history which can be traced throughout the Old Testament and culminates in the new and everlasting covenant, which is Christ our Lord.

This 'Covenant of Love' entails bringing all one's sacrifices, joys, concerns and placing them at the disposal of Our Blessed Mother. She in turn will mediate graces to all who come to the Shrine in faith. Today millions of people all over the world have indeed found a home in our shrines; have encountered miracles of inner transformation and have found new meaning and purpose in their lives. Our Blessed Mother is understood as being a great educator able to assist us with our self-education and at the same time helping us understand our calling in the modern world today. She offers us her heart as our home.

Schoenstatt in South Africa

By 1933, Fr Kentenich was able to read the signs of the times in

Germany and knew that the rise of Nazi socialism would be dangerous to his fledgling foundation, so when Bishop Henneman asked for Schoenstatt Sisters, he saw this as the 'open door' and a means to safeguard the mission of Schoenstatt in another country. In January 1934 a group of young 'pioneer' sisters arrived in South Africa, the first country outside of Germany where Schoenstatt was established. Thanks to the dedication of those Sisters, the Movement is present in many parts of South Africa. Shrines can be found at Cathcart in the Eastern Cape, Cape Town (Constantia, Tamboerskloof, and Hanover Park), and Johannesburg (Bedfordview).

What does Schoenstatt have to offer the Church?

The greatest crisis of our times is the breakdown of family life, and this concern is central to our Universal and local church as it struggles to find pastoral responses to minister effectively and compassionately to challenging family situations. One way of preserving the family is to ask our Blessed Mother, to also take up her place in our families, centred around a "home shrine" (a holy corner) where families can gather in prayer; or having the Pilgrim Mother (an image of our Schoenstatt Queen) who travels from home to home helping families to connect with their joys, concerns and suffering and placing it into the Blessed Mother's hands. Our Blessed Mother

is the great formator and educator of Family Life and we assist her in this task through all our training weekends and group activities. At the heart of the Schoenstatt work is the spiritual formation of sound families, of firm free personalities anchored in Christ.

Besides the family apostolate Schoenstatt also focuses on various members that make up the Church: single working women, men, mothers, youth, and children. We also have a growing pilgrim circle which draws all who are searching for a sense of a 'home' – a family with whom to share their joys and sorrows, successes and frustrations.

Our Covenant spirituality, together with its original educational approach inspired by the charisma of our Founder, is deeply rooted in our Catholic faith, and gives an answer to mechanistic thinking that separates faith from life issues and which espouses holistic living, thinking and loving in and through a covenant culture. Our covenant spirituality binds us to all, irrespective of race, colour, class and inspires us to put our faith into action.

We contribute to building up the local Church through our covenant spirituality, through training leaders to take active roles in their parishes, and by supporting the intentions of our Archbishop. Our pilgrim circles of refugees, our initiatives with adult literacy, and empowering women to be self-sufficient are all small contributions towards drawing those on the periphery into the very centre of Mary's heart.

Where and how the Schoenstatt Movement will celebrate the centenary

GERMANY & ROME: In October this year members from the Movement in all five continents will gather in Schoenstatt, Germany from 16-19 October to give thanks for the last 100 years, to renew our Covenant of Love with our Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen and Victress of Schoenstatt, and our commitment to serve the Church through our Covenant of Love spirituality for the next 100 years. We also travel to Rome, as the heart of the Church where we will present our Jubilee gift to the Holy Father – the fruits of our shrines and our apostolic projects. In our audience with Pope Francis, we will also ask him to send us out with his blessings to live the covenant of love in all its dimensions and thereby become a blessing for the Church.

LOCAL CELEBRATIONS: Anyone who wants to join in the celebrations will be able to watch a live transmission via EWTN on 18 October at 5pm for the main events, and celebrate as an international Schoenstatt Family.

In Cape Town: 18 October, 2014. All are welcome to join us in Holy Mass at 11am in our Constantia Shrine followed by light refreshments afterwards. Live transmission in the afternoon at 5pm (EWTN).

Special pilgrimage graces associated with this Centenary Year

Pope Francis has given a plenary indulgence to all who make a pilgrimage to any Schoenstatt Shrine during this Jubilee year (18 October 2013 – 26 October 2014). You can obtain this plenary indulgence by making a good Confession, receiving Holy Communion and offering prayers for the intention of the Holy Father.

On behalf of the Schoenstatt Movement

Sr Connie O'Brien

Celebrating SA's Patroness

The Archdiocese of Cape Town again celebrated the feast of South Africa's Patroness, Mary Assumed into Heaven this year with a liturgical event in the church of Our Lady Help of Christians, Lansdowne at 14.45 on Sunday 17 August.

As this is the Year of the Family, our Patroness was petitioned in the many needs of families.

Mary was asked to assist families who suffer abuse, the problems associated with addiction, homelessness, being parentless [child headed families], migrant labourers and much else. She was asked to be with the many who loyally uphold true Christian families and who reach out to their communities in love. The many religious 'families' who teach the faith and render many other assistances so lovingly were also thanked.

As before, Archbishop Stephen Brislin presided over the service and delivered a homily.

This was a joyous celebration with uplifting singing and liturgical dancing, as has been experienced since 2002 when this celebration was inaugurated to mark the 50th anniversary of the proclamation of Mary Assumed into Heaven as South Africa's Patroness.

An invitation was extended to the entire Archdiocese to attend and celebrate our Patroness.

Each year this celebration is organized by the Schoenstatt family in Cape Town. This year has special significance as it is the centenary year of Schoenstatt internationally, as it was founded on 18 October 1914.

Francis Boule

Issued on behalf of the Schoenstatt Family in Cape Town



Shrine to Shrine pilgrimage

Wednesday – 24 September 2014

"Share the Covenant of Love"



100 years of Schoenstatt

Programme

07:00 Registration at Schoenstatt, Constantia
07:30 Blessing at Schoenstatt Shrine, Constantia
07:45 Depart for Constantia Nek (by car)
08:00 Start of pilgrimage walk – Constantia Nek

Stations:

1st God uses small instruments to achieve His goals
2nd So what is this Covenant of Love all about?

12:00 Holy Mass – Newlands Forest (followed by lunch)

Stations:

3rd She is my Mother and she is my Queen
4th Knowing that I can come HOME to Our Lady
5th The 100 years of Schoenstatt

16:45 End of pilgrimage walk – Villa Maria (Coffee/Tea/Juice)
17:00 Conclude with Benediction at Shrine, Tamboerskloof

For further information please contact:

David Stober 021 715 7398 / 082 496 1659
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Marcell Barry 021 705 2119 / 083 454 2209

The organisers retain the right to cancel the pilgrimage in the event of rain or any unforeseen circumstances.

NB: (Indemnity forms to be completed for all under 18s)



Mark and Brenda Renaud celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary at Our Lady of Good Hope parish, Sea Point on 28 June 2014. They were married by Mgr Clifford Stokes (left) at St Patrick's Church, Mowbray. Mgr Jock Baird, who concelebrated at the wedding (and at the anniversary), presented them with a papal blessing from Pope Francis. Mark heads up the Catechetics department at the Chancery.

NAZARETH HOUSE CAPE TOWN

Applications are invited from the public to serve on the Board of Nazareth House, Cape Town.

Board Members are appointed for a period of three years and serve in an advisory and consultative capacity.

Board Members must be South African citizens and be prepared to uphold the Ethos of the Sisters of Nazareth.

Board members serve in an honorary position and do not receive any remuneration, nor are they reimbursed for any expenses incurred.

Application can be sent for the Board Chairman's attention to: info@nazhouse.co.za