

The Marian Pilgrimage: Day Fourteen: Wednesday 20 May 2020

The Shrine of Our Lady of Schoenstatt

Schoenstatt Shrine and Our Lady



Original shrine in Schoenstatt

The Schoenstatt Shrine is a Catholic shrine and part of the Apostolic movement founded by Fr Josef Kentenich in Germany in 1914, a place where the Virgin Mary is invited for protection and influence.

Fr Kentenich was born on the 16th of November 1885, in Gymnich near Cologne. When he was eight years old his single mother had to leave him in the care of an orphanage. On the day of his arrival she entrusted her son to the Blessed Mother Mary. From then on, Our Lady should be his Mother and Educator. Later he himself would say that this consecration was decisive for his entire life.

It was clear to him from an early age that he wanted to be a priest. He experienced the guidance of God and the education of his Mother Mary that enabled him to overcome difficulties and obstacles along the way to this goal. On the 8th of July 1910, he was ordained as a priest of the Society of the Pallottine Fathers in Limburg. In Two years later the Pallottine Order assigned him to be the spiritual director for the students in the order's newly built House of

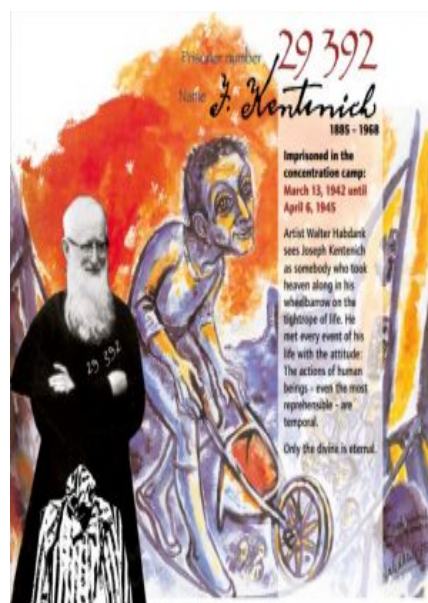
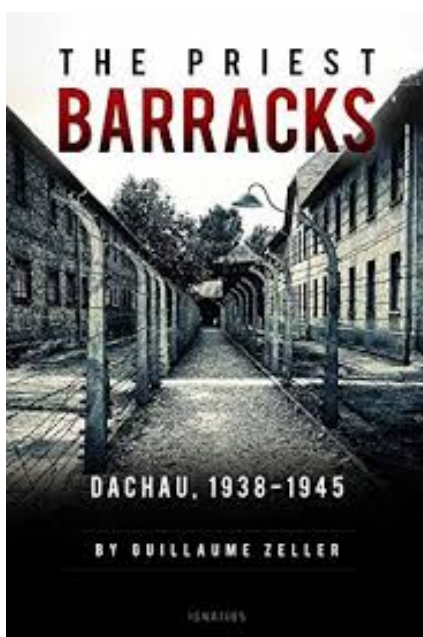
Studies in Vallendar-Schoenstatt. His talent for teaching and his clear, religious objectives helped his pupils to grow and develop.

"Under the protection of Mary, we want to learn to educate ourselves to become firm, free, priestly personalities."

(Fr J. Kentenich, Oct 1912)

From 1920-1940, Father Kentenich was the leader of the growing Schoenstatt Movement within the Church. His work spread to other countries and continents. Based on the first shrine in Schoenstatt where the movement started its special devotion to Mary, there are dozens of replica Shrines around the world.

Because of his religious influence over so many people, Father Kentenich was suspected by the Nazi regime in Germany. In September 1941 he was arrested, and in 1942 he was sent to the Priest Barracks of Dachau Concentration (in German Pfarrerblock, or Priesterblock) which was the centre for imprisonment of clergymen. Of a total of 2,720 clerics recorded as imprisoned at Dachau some 2,579 (or 94.88%) were Roman Catholics.



A statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that was formerly in the Catholic Chapel used by the priests at Dachau, is currently displayed in the Carmelite convent Chapel.



After the liberation of the camp in 1945 Father Kentenich as prisoner no. 29392 in KZ Dachau returned home to Schoenstatt on 20 May 1945. He recognised this as a victory of the Blessed Mother.

Father Kentenich then set out to strengthen and further the Apostolic work of Mary, in other countries. Father Kentenich was prophetic in his interpretation of the events of the time. He saw the great changes in society and in the Church recognising the spiritual streams behind them. In the Schoenstatt communities he attempted to give living answers to the issues of the contemporary Church and through orientation of life and education he sought to prepare people for the future. He was a man ahead of his times, and his thinking was not yet understood by the Church authorities before the Second Vatican Council. In 1951 he was ordered by Rome to leave Schoenstatt, and he spent fourteen years, in exile, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA.

This difficult time of testing of the founder and his foundation ended on 22nd October, 1965 when Pope Paul VI gave Schoenstatt his Apostolic Blessing. Father Kentenich promised the Holy Father that Schoenstatt would help the Church to fulfil its post-conciliar mission. Father Kentenich returned to Schoenstatt on Christmas Eve 1965.

Father Kentenich interpreted the events of the time, the great changes in society and Church, and the spiritual streams behind them. In his communities he attempted to give living answers to the present and future times through orientation and education. However, his thinking was not yet understood by Church authorities prior to the Second Vatican Council. In 1951 he was ordered by Rome to leave Schoenstatt.

His exile in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA, lasted fourteen years.

This difficult time of testing of the founder and his foundation ended



In the three years following the exile, Father Kentenich made himself available to his communities and many individuals through personal conversations, letters, discussions, and talks. Though his message was the same, it was deepened and sealed by the tests and experiences of many decades. The covenant of love with Mary grew to the heights of the covenant of love with the Triune God.

His own experience of the merciful love of God the Father allowed him to become even more a father for many people.

On 15th September, 1968, the earthly life of Father Joseph Kentenich came to an end. After celebrating his first holy Mass in the newly built Church of the Blessed Trinity on Mount Schoenstatt, he died in the sacristy. He is also buried there.



Here also is the Mother House, the heart and the headquarters of the General Directorate of the Institute of the Sisters of Mary. The institute was born in Schoenstatt, and there the founder lived and gave structure to the community. The currents of life of this international family meet here, and flow out from here to every place where there are active members of the Institute. The Mother House is the home of all the Sisters of Mary

Since then this place has become a place of pilgrimage and prayer for many people from all over the world. They come to ask Father Kentenich for his intercession before God for their intentions. They thank him for the help they have experienced. They entrust themselves to him and choose him to be their father and educator – for his mission continues from eternity.

In 1974 on 18 October, the 60th anniversary of the founding of Schoenstatt, the Holy See gave permission to open the beatification process for Father Joseph Kentenich.

The ecclesial process of his beatification and canonization was opened in 1975 in the diocese of Trier. Prayer for the canonization of Father Joseph Kentenich:

God our Father, In Father Kentenich you have given us a father and a prophet, a witness and a herald of your message for our time, enkindled by the Holy Spirit. Give us of his fire. Give us of his founder spirit. Let his charism be so alive in us that we can shape the future of the Church and society. May his vision be our vision: In the power of the covenant of love, a new world is to arise – a world in which people form a covenant culture wherever they live and work. Father in heaven, we ask you: Accept Father Kentenich into the company of the saints recognized by the Church. Open the door to him and his mission everywhere so that he can guide many people on the way to the fullness of life, the way to you. We ask this of you, in communion with Mary, our Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen, and Victress of Schoenstatt, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SCHOENSTATT IN SCOTLAND



Sisters Margareta & Mary Elisabeth are part of a community of consecrated women who have committed themselves to surrender to God in the spirit of the Evangelical Counsels. They possess a marked secular character; that is, they live their ideal of surrender to God amidst the world. At the present time there are three sisters at Schoenstatt Scotland. Below the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary Scotland.





Mother of God, of the Redeemer, of the Redeemed

Additionally, Mary is inspiration for a vigorous Catholic renewal. In the title 'mother Thrice Admirable' *Mater ter admirabilis* possesses additional interpretations. First of all, the 'Thrice' *ter* denotes, matchlessness, beyond count, not just once, or twice, but three times admirable! secondly, the term *admirabilis* 'admirable' does not just say Mary is someone we can venerate, esteem and look up to, but reveals she is also someone we can count on 'look to' for assistance and comfort.

Father Kentenich advanced the interpretation of the title on numerous occasions highlighting significant features of Mary and her mission:

(1) Admirable as Mother of God, mother of the Redeemer and Mother of the Redeemed

(2) Admirable in her power, in her kindness and her faithfulness,

(3) Admirable as daughter of the Father, mother and bride of the Eternal Word, and vessel and shrine of the Holy Spirit;

(4) Admirable in her faith, love and hope.

In Scotland the Schoenstatt movement based on the dynamic wonderful graces of Mary can encourage us to particular pilgrimages to the lovely shrine in the beautiful surroundings of the Campsie Hills.

