

17. On the 15th Anniversary of Schoenstatt's Foundation: 18 October 1929

In the 1920s the Schoenstatt Movement only gradually became aware of the fact that Schoenstatt had been founded on 18 October 1914. Without doubt the main reason is to be found in Father Kentenich's own actions. Although he proclaimed the content of the talk of 18 October - later called the "Founding Document" - he did not refer to the event or date. His main reason was that he wanted to know whether a source of grace had really broken through on 18 October. This would become evident through the life that was awakened, the "creative resultants", if he did not suggest it by referring to the historical facts. There is no doubt that the founder himself was always fully conscious of the import of the date and event of 18 October 1914.

It is possible that the fifteenth anniversary of the foundation was the first time it was celebrated. This only happened, or so it seems, within the framework of the newly founded community of Sisters, and at their initiative, so it was very low key.

Whoever reads the talk will notice how much its content departs from the expectations expressed by the Sisters. Without any preparation, and quite spontaneously, the founder opened the hidden recesses of his soul and developed his vision, which he deduced from his belief and conviction that in fact a source of grace had come into existence. Through it the Blessed Mother wants, as he said, to intervene in the events of the times, and she wants to encourage and enable us to attain the highest ideals.

For the Schoenstatt Fathers it is particularly remarkable how clearly the founder saw the risk of introducing an existing community, such as the Pallottine Society, to a new spirituality. The danger of division became a tragic reality. During his exile the founder said on a number of occasions that in the 1920s it would have been a real possibility for him to form a separate community of priests from the diocesan priests. It would have been the key community supporting the Movement - the "pars centralis et motrix" - but he did not do so because he believed and was convinced that according to God's plans this position had been "reserved for the Pallottines".

Fr Kentenich quoted this talk in the longest study he wrote in his life. It was written in 1956 and was addressed to the Superior General of the Pallottines of that time, Fr Wilhelm Möhler. For this reason it is called the "General's Letter". In the study Fr Kentenich gave the reasons for his conviction that St Vincent Pallotti's mission could only be carried out with the help of a new and special divine initiative - a source of grace, such as was being offered through Schoenstatt's foundation.

Fr Kentenich personally wrote a short introduction to the talk quoted here, which is also included.

This text has been taken from an unpublished (and largely untranslated) typescript of the "General's Letter", p. 204ff.

[I. 1956 Introduction]

In order to arrive at a better understanding of the October talk (1929) that follows, two factors have to be considered. As can be gathered from the text, it was given to the Sisters of Mary. They had come into existence in October 1926, so in 1929 they were in the first stage of their young life. The Virgo Sacerdos and Virgo Mater courses followed the Immaculata course. (132) All three courses had been given to the Family with their spontaneous, fresh new life. The 18 October 1929 arrived. The course mother of the Virgo Mater children suddenly got the idea to send me an invitation via "heaven's post" to come down to the valley from the Bundesheim (Movement House) to our shrine, and to give a talk, a sort of Founding Document for the Sisters of Mary. I didn't have to think long about it and answered their wish, setting off down to the valley. As is immediately evident, and despite its profound content and all - encompassing vision, the talk bears the stylistic traces of an unprepared, off - the - cuff chat. So it all the more clearly and overwhelmingly reveals the ideas that moved me at the time, and that had always moved me. They simply had to find spontaneous and meaningful expression. I give the whole and unabridged text here. There is no need for a commentary. If it is read thoughtfully, the individual sections complement and clarify one another. The talk runs as follows:

[II. Talk of 18 October 1929 - Introduction]

"I am sure you had read the letter from our "Federation heaven" before I even received it. Or haven't you? At most the Sisters coming down from the Bundesheim haven't yet seen it. They also have a right to know what it said. Through this letter from our Federation heaven I have just been reminded that we are celebrating an important anniversary today. Fifteen years have passed since the Movement began at this little shrine. What I said at that time - I think I was standing at exactly the same spot - has proved afterwards to be a sort of prophecy. Now the Virgo Mater children would like me to become one of the "prophets" again in the spirit of their course ideal. I really don't know whether I should come before you as a minor or major prophet. History will decide. However, before I begin to "prophecy", I want to read you the letter from heaven:

„Federation heaven, in the month of the Rosary 1929

Dear Father of my Sisters,

Does everyone in Schoenstatt remember which memorable day has dawned today? It is the 18 October. Fifteen years ago today I gave myself to the young Sodalists and my shrine, and

accepted them as my instruments...”

I don't want to repeat later what is written here. There are so many reasons for heartfelt gratitude. Everything the Blessed Mother says here from our Federation heaven has literally come true ...

„For the first time I came to dwell in the chapel as the treasurer of the capital of grace, and since then - that is, for fifteen years - rivers of grace have flowed far beyond the boundaries of Germany even into the missions. How happy I am that my Sisters in the Mother House have remembered this hour of grace with great gratitude. This morning they again profoundly re - lived the memorable event together through reading the written document of that day. How happy they would be if today they could experience a similar hour of grace in the chapel as the Sodalists did at that time. I would love to do it in order to bring the zeal and appreciation for the capital of grace to its original, greatest flowering.“

So this evening our Virgo Mater children are expecting me to say something that will inspire them and awaken interest in the capital of grace.

„I know that Father will gladly help me, and will give himself to me today in this spirit as an instrument for my Sisters. I will give my blessing in rich measure, and I am gladly prepared to make the 18 October 1929 the starting point for a further fifteen grace - filled years. This evening my Sisters are full of joy, completely open for God and the world, and even though it is the evening, they are still not tired.“

The Blessed Mother knows us really well!

„What the 18 October 1914 means for the whole Movement, could become the 18 October 1929 for the community of my Sisters.
With a motherly greeting and blessing!
The Mater Ter Admirabilis.“

In heaven's post I obviously come off well ...

There are two thoughts in the note that the Blessed Mother wants to give us today for our path through life. The one refers to the future, the other to the present.

[1. A look into the future]

„I will give my blessing in rich measure, and I am gladly prepared to make the 18 October 1929 the starting point for a further fifteen grace - filled years...”

Is the Blessed Mother also prepared to draw the veil a little from the coming fifteen years? That would interest us all. It would also awaken our enthusiasm to attain her main intention - to arouse greater enthusiasm for the capital of grace in us all. Well, what can we probably expect to happen in the coming fifteen years? What I said for the first time a few months ago on the occasion of the consecration of the secondary school students could perhaps come closer to fulfilment in the coming fifteen years. [\(133\)](#) At that time I said that “in the shadow of our little shrine the fate of the Church, not just in Germany, but far beyond Germany, will be essentially co - decided in the coming centuries.” So if this day is to be a profound turning point in the development of our Family, if the Blessed Mother again promises to give us her blessing in a deeper way today, won't the waves of blessing point in this direction, won't they have to flow in this direction?

It is our way to read the future from the past and the present. What are developing in our Family at present are profound spiritual currents that are increasingly being directed into the open. These are spiritual currents that powerfully aim at taking hold of wider and wider circles. It is really amazing how many individual priests, and how many communities of priests, have been looking towards Schoenstatt in the past months. They are making great efforts to direct the rivers of grace from here into their dioceses.

[Priests in the shadow of the shrine]

As I see things at the moment, the Blessed Mother wants to attract large numbers of priests here. Consider whether this does not already answer our hopes and expectations? If the fate of the Church is to be co - decided from here, the Blessed Mother has to send above all our priests - our diocesan priests, our religious and also the priests of the pars motrix, the Pallottines - here far more than until now; they will have to take their bearings far more from here. She has to send all these groups here so that her river of grace can embrace them, and so that they can then go out again to fight God's battles in the world.

[The selfless and hidden service of the Sisters of Mary]

It was obviously not the intention of a Marian Movement from the beginning that we Sisters, who are allowed to work here as the immediate instruments of the Blessed Mother, should make a great gesture and move out into the world at large. It will probably have to remain our main task also in the coming fifteen years to stay in the background and carry out painstaking, finicky work. Also in future it will be our essential task to be at the service of the Church as a whole, and the Movement, as a selflessly serving member.

[The renewal of priests from the shrine]

We, especially those of us who have been working together for a longer time, and who have already understood our course ideal more deeply, know about the God-willed importance of the priesthood for the sanctification of the world. The priesthood is the normal means through which God's Spirit directs his rivers of grace into a world that desperately needs his help. So once our priests have been caught up and renewed, once our priests have taken their bearings from Schoenstatt and breathed in our spirit, we will be on the quickest, shortest and surest way to help the Blessed Mother to determine the fate of the Church for centuries here in the shadow of our shrine.

Indeed, the importance of the priesthood for the healing and sanctification of the world! There is a saying you may have heard - it is a saying that has proved its truth down the centuries. The saying is this: *Omne malum a clero!* Every bad thing comes from the clergy!

Is it true? Study history down the centuries and millennia! Study the time of the Reformation! One of our best scholars, who died in the midst of his work, the great Dominican Denifle, spent his whole life studying Luther and the Reformation. Do you know what was his general judgement? "The Reformation was the huge sewer through which the filth that dominated the Church at the time had to flow away!" Where did this filth in God's Church come from? *Omne malum a clero!* If things aren't going well in God's Church, we may take it for granted that things are not going well among the clergy, unless the opposite is clearly proven and we are forced to look for other reasons.

So I think - and I am sure you join me in this - that it is the powerful work of grace that not just an individual course, but also many in our Family feel spontaneously urged to sacrifice themselves for the priesthood, in particular for the priests God and the Blessed Mother send here.

Has the veil been drawn away from the future to some extent? In the last few days I have personally been moved by these thoughts, and have not thought of the fifteenth anniversary. In the last talk I gave you in the hall, I indicated our future task in general outline. I told you at the time of the many demands and requests from priestly circles. Since then these have increased, not just from individual priests, but also from communities of priests. As a result the thought leaves me no peace that in the coming fifteen years we will have to develop our main thrust in this direction.

When I talk about the priesthood in general, I feel urged to divide the whole priesthood into three classes: diocesan priests, religious, and our *Pia Societas*. [\(134\)](#)

[About the *Pia Societas Missionum*]

We Sisters lead such a calm and peaceful life here that we completely forget that from here, from this shrine, the re - organization, indeed a reformation of the whole “Pia Societas Missionum” has taken place, and that this re - organization and reformation is increasing its influence within the Society.

What will the next fifteen years bring in this regard? Is it possible that a greater split and division will one day take place in this community? Rise up with me to a higher vantage point! Notice from the standpoint of history how other religious movements have come into existence in the course of the centuries, how they have grown, and how secessions and separations have developed within these communities. Think of the community that by its very nature has the greatest character of a movement - the Franciscans. Look at how many splinter groups formed there. We can be sure that all were God - willed; all have held onto the ultimate idea of the founder in their own way.

Indeed, what will the next fifteen years bring? Will the whole community allow itself to be re - organized, or will separation take place - on the one side those who base themselves on the Movement and sacrifice themselves completely for it, and on the other side the others? Or will unity come about? Humanly speaking it would be easier and more beneficial for the Movement if separation takes place. You already have a proof of this in the history of our small Family of Sisters. Think of the negotiations with Bosweiler [\(135\)](#) at the beginning of our history. Can you imagine what would have become of our Family if this union with Bosweiler had taken place? We would have had nothing but inner crises to overcome until now; we would not have been able to work into the depths, to the centre [of our spirituality]; we would have constantly had to move at the periphery.

Let me ask once again if the veil has been lifted from the coming fifteen years? I have only shown you the possibilities. Personally I hope that we will manage without a separation. Personally I hope, and will also do all in my power to ensure, that the community remains united and grows together to form a fruitful entity.

What will the next fifteen years bring us? Many battles, difficult battles, but ultimately the victory of our cause, victory on the way to a quiet, modest reformation, not deformity. That is what I confidently hope.

[Religious]

When I talk about the clergy, I like to think of a second group - the religious life as a whole. I am not to blame for presenting all these thoughts to you today. The Virgo Mater course is to blame, or the Blessed Mother, who played the letter from heaven into my hands through

the Virgo Mater course.

You probably do not know that much damage is done to the Church of God because one religious community opposes other religious communities, the religious oppose the diocesan clergy, and the diocesan clergy oppose the religious.

When, quietly and in the background, we look at our great task as a Marian Movement, we will have to work and advance in the direction of seeing to it that the whole clergy are united to form a single entity. I may say this because I can clearly see what is developing at present. We always infer the future from the past and present. Of course, I have mentioned a task that anyone who knows the circumstances would call utopian. They would say: it is unthinkable; it is a figment of your imagination! This disunity has existed for centuries. How can you dare to want to create unity in this huge community?

It is true! Who could dare to try to bring about unity in this huge community with its many conflicting interests? On our own we would never have the courage to do so. We only dare to do it to the extent that we believe and hope that the Blessed Mother has given us a mission in this regard.

At any rate one thing is certain, if the fate of the Church is really to be co - determined for centuries from here, we may and must accept that the Blessed Mother wants us to cultivate this great, important and difficult field of work.

[The diocesan clergy]

The third circle of priests, as I see them, is the diocesan clergy. All the religious currents that do not at least rest on the shoulders of the diocesan clergy will be condemned to unfruitfulness in the course of time. That is why the diocesan clergy have such a large part to play in our Movement. Besides this, they have to live in the midst of a world that is infected with paganism. So they are constantly in danger of being infected by the worldly spirit of paganism. That is why it is so important to gather them and place them under the influence of the Blessed Mother here in our shrine.

What I have shown you in broad outline could give rise to the hope that the next fifteen years in the history of our little Family will be extremely eventful and richly blessed. However, I have not yet told you everything that can be said on this subject. If from here, if from our shrine, the fate of the Church in its present situation is to be profoundly influenced, at least two other major currents of grace will have to flow out into Germany and Europe to water them and make them fruitful. This does not mean that the two currents

I am referring to are the only ones. They are only the currents that have slowly begun to circulate at present. We have to speed them up, but we also have to follow them with our thoughts and prayers.

[Women]

In a similar way, although not as strongly as with the priests, but nevertheless to a relatively great extent, the wellbeing of the world depends on women. Whoever knows the world today, also knows that the deepest roots of woman's nature have been infected, and that as a result it has become unstable. We are approaching a new epoch in history. Many people in the Catholic world already recognize this. Unless we as Catholics manage to take in hand and form the new type of person that has developed since the discovery of the steam engine, then, humanly speaking, the Church will lose the people of today. If we remain quietly in the background, as is fitting for a Marian Movement, we may not expect to be involved in any great and dazzling undertakings in order to realize the great idea of the shadow of the shrine. Whatever unfolds according to the laws of grace loves and looks for silence. This is particularly true here.

May I speak more clearly? I suspect that the principles of education we have carefully worked out until now in the individual courses of the Sisters' Family are correct, and show the direction for the present times.

The original way in which we educate ourselves can also take hold of the new person inwardly, and form him or her in a specifically Christian way. This new person is slowly becoming visible on the horizon. Can you understand what I am trying to say? I don't want to stick my neck out too far; I don't want to put everything I see and think into words, but I do want to say this much: If we manage in our way to form the new type of person in a Christian sense, and win him or her inwardly for God, we will have shown the Church the way along which it can lead the world to Christ in this new era.

From this you will understand why we set such great store by remaining quietly in the background, and why we do not dare to appear so soon in public. All that is great, all that is profound, matures in silence.

[Man in the new era]

To start with we are trying here to bring about this new human being for your sex. However, I do not think that with that we will have fulfilled our mission. The idea of the shadow of the shrine requires more of us. I suspect that later on we will have to go further; I suspect that

our principles of education and our methods of education are able to form the man of the new era, and give him to the Church. Precisely the principle we emphasize so strongly - as much freedom as possible, only as many binding obligations as necessary, but on that account all the more cultivation of the spirit - will, as I see it, be the only thing capable of leading modern humanity like the star that led the three kings to Bethlehem. It remained over the stable until all the people it had led there had knelt down and adored the Child.

I believe that when professional historians write the history of our times one day, and we are allowed to read what has come out of the little plant that was placed in the earth here, and when we notice how many essential elements for saving our times were contributed from our shrine, we will be surprised that we childlike people have been allowed to support this great Movement of renewal. We will be surprised that silently and in the background things have developed and grown seemingly all by themselves - things for which our present times long, as people who are dying of thirst long for refreshing water. You have no idea that, and to what extent, you personally exemplify a completely new type of person. Once again there were many priests here for courses, priests who were strangers here. Among them there were also older priests. I have just met one of them. He belongs to the very old generation. He said to me, "What sort of Sisters are those? I have never seen them before." Then he discussed in detail what he had noticed in you, and how he found you differed from other Sisters. Let me repeat - we take this for granted. However it is by no means something you can take for granted. From all this we can conclude how important it is for us to hold onto our educational principles without wavering. Of course, it is just as important that God should send us Sisters who are able to apply these principles in an enlightened way to the education of the Sisters. When I think of this great context, I would like to tell you a great deal. However, for the moment I won't do this; I would far rather talk about the future. It will pass ultimate judgement on us and our way of education.

[Overcoming a collectivistic mentality]

I have not yet come to the end of my vision of the future. Can we lift the veil from the future even more? Doesn't the saying about the shadow of the shrine assign still greater tasks to us? Will we manage to interpret the past and present in such a way that they offer us a perspective on the future? Let me dare to climb for the last time to the highest vantage point of time.

The main opponent of the Church today is a socialistic (or collectivistic) mentality. I am not speaking of socialism, but of the socialistic mentality of our times. You can find this mentality not just in socialism, but also to a great extent in capitalism. It seems to me that in the foreseeable future we will have to enter into battle (on a larger scale) with this

tremendously powerful phenomenon of our times. Don't be afraid of socialism and capitalism, or whatever you may call these illnesses of our times! They have been permitted by God for the good of the Church. They have a great task. We have been called to take a leading role in helping to carry out this task. If we think correctly, if the spirit of our Family is alive in us, we may and must rejoice that we are living at a time in which the Church is surrounded by battles to such an extent. We don't need to be afraid - in the end the victory will be on our side. It is a matter for God and the Blessed Mother whom we are serving. Unless we are shaken up in this way, we are constantly in danger of falling asleep, or dozing off. Thanks be to God that the great currents of our times, which have to be overcome, give us no rest. If I personally live in the stormy seas of the present - day spiritual currents, if I see that in them the devil is at work to an extraordinary degree, I will never be lonely even if I am separated from public life by walls. The whole world will surge past my mind and heart and try to find a home there. So even we in the background can share in the fate of the world in a genuinely womanly way. We have done this from the beginning. Isn't all this really great? May I not say that it is not I that have been the "major prophet"? The Virgo Mater children have been. Allow me to read the text of the "heavenly letter" once more. "I will give my blessing in rich measure, and I am gladly prepared to make the 18 October 1929 the starting point for a further fifteen grace - filled years..." I think I may take it that you now understand these words better.

We have tried to look more deeply into the probable development of our Family in the coming fifteen years. What we have found could make us very happy. However, it could also place a second question on our lips. It is this: what can we do here and now, or in the present circumstances, to promote the development in the direction described, and in this way carry out the saying about the shadow of the shrine? The question about the future is replaced with a question about the present.

[2. A look into the present - Collect a capital of grace]

The answer we are looking for has already been given in the letter from our "Federation heaven". We can read there, "How happy they would be if they could experience today a similar hour of grace in the chapel as the Sodalists did at that time." An hour of grace! You may not expect this hour to cause a great stir. Since we are Sisters of the Blessed Mother, everything in us and around us happens quietly and thoughtfully. Nevertheless, I believe that the hour we are experiencing together at present will be a profound turning point in our personal souls, as well as in our family history. The "letter from heaven" referred to the capital of grace. You have no idea - and it is a good thing - how God and the Blessed Mother have until now led and guided the Family as a whole through you, the Sisters in the background. I believe I can clearly see subterranean rivers of grace, which strangers are

unaware of, and which are constantly fed by your generous contributions to the capital of grace. I am convinced that as a result we Sisters of Mary have been given the most important task for future history - at least for the immediate future. We have been called to carry out this task. I ask you: what do we call ourselves? Or, how is the "letter from heaven" addressed? The answer, "Dear Father of my Sisters!" Let me repeat, "my Sisters". Who wrote that? The Blessed Mother. I am really proud that I was personally addressed in that way, "Dear Father of my Sisters!" Whose Sisters are you? The Sisters of the Blessed Mother. What has made the title "Sisters of Mary" so dear to us is the idea that re - echoes here. So we can also understand that the Blessed Mother's importance for the salvation of the world indicates, in a certain sense and to a certain degree, the importance of "her" Sisters for introducing the graces of salvation into our present times. As Sisters of Mary, as Sisters of the Blessed Mother, you may never forget that. To be Sisters of the Blessed Mother means helping to redeem the world as she did, and after her example. ...

I am sure you don't expect me to pause here and tell you something new about the capital of grace. I think we may say that in her own way the Blessed Mother has exhausted herself completely in collecting contributions to the capital of grace. It was at the same time her contribution to the redemption of the world. Through a tremendous life of prayer and sacrifice she united herself mysteriously and mystically to our Lord on the Cross (as his permanent helpmate). (136) In all my work and planning I trust and build on your contributions. I gladly admit that the work with which I am burdened through circumstances is usually more than a human being can bear - it is inhuman and superhuman. Nevertheless I simply take it for granted. Why? Because I am convinced that I am borne by the river that flows from the shrine as a result of your prayers and sacrifices.

[Higher graces of prayer]

When I quietly thought about our situation as a whole in the last few days, I came to the conclusion that what we have done together until now, what we have suffered and battled for, is definitely extremely great, beautiful and profound. Next to God no one knows better than I how the individual members of our Sisters' Family have struggled to be united to God, and at the same time to be detached from self, or to die mystically. It seems to me that as a result the next fifteen years will have to see a large number of our Sisters being led further up the ladder of the grace of prayer. I don't know how high, or to what extent, this can and should happen. Please look up what I said here or there about St Teresa's [of Avila] mystical graces. Let me repeat, it seems to me that we Sisters who try to fill the capital of grace to the brim will have to learn in the next fifteen years to pray and strive for profound graces of prayer. St Teresa practiced for twenty - two years before God drew here so closely to himself. If God gives you a similar grace, if he draws you very profoundly to himself, and

in this way makes you Sisters of the Blessed Mother in a very profound sense, you will have carried out the greatest task one can envisage. I am not saying this because it has been written here or there in learned books; I am reading it out of the guidance of grace granted by the Holy Spirit.

Let me take a further step and explain that unless God gives the Movement a number of pure young women who are prepared to consume themselves completely for the Movement through a constant life of sacrifice, and who are also espoused with every least fibre of their hearts to our Lord, their Bridegroom, I do not think that the Movement will be able to carry out its future task in the way we hope it will.

[The special position of the Sisters in the total organism]

I am saying this not just because I personally love you - also on that account I could be day and night at your disposal; no, there is another reason why I am saying it. It is because I value each one of you within the organism of the great task our Lady wants to carry out from her shrine in our times, or because I correctly evaluate our Sisters' Family in the organism of the great and tremendous task of our Family for our times and world."
[...]

[Epilogue of 1956]

So far the text of the talk.

Actually it would be very tempting to explain the above thoughts against the background of the situation of that time, and to follow the train of thoughts started there until today. You will probably still remember how strongly the priests gathered around Schoenstatt in the time that followed. It was not by chance that Monsignor Wolke called Schoenstatt the filling station for the priests of today. In actual fact it became almost fashionable for priests who were up - to - date to have attended a course in Schoenstatt. As far as I can remember, there were years in which a tenth of the total German clergy drew its spiritual nourishment and orientation from there. The numbers of religious who came there regularly also grew rapidly...

Besides this it would be worth our while to follow up the ways in which Schoenstatt tried to bring about the new type of men and women that had been my ideal from my childhood. However, historians can later study this in greater detail and record it truthfully. To summarize let me at least note one thing: there is no doubt that the Blessed Mother has opened a workshop and home for the genuine Schoenstatt person in Schoenstatt, as the

perfect opposite to the factory producing collectivistic people.

(132) One of the first courses of the Sisters of Mary with the ideal “Virgin Mother”. The first course, the “Immaculata Course”, made its consecration on 8 December 1927. The two older courses soon picked this up, and it became a tradition. It is a custom in the Sisters’ community to speak of the members of a course as the “xxx children”, using the course name. The very first members of the community were eventually united in a course, the MTA Course.

(133) Cf. previous text: Talk of 7 April 1929 “Shadow of the Shrine”.

(134) “Pia Societas Missionum”, PSM, was the name Pius IX forced upon the Pallottines shortly after Vincent Pallotti’s death (9.4.1854), because the Church itself is the “Society of the Catholic Apostolate”. The name was restored only in 1946 to the one intended by the founder for the Pallottines, SAC, Societas Apostolatus Catholici.

(135) The reference here is to a community of Sisters founded by Fr Adolf Panzer, a Pallottine Father, in Bosweiler, and hence known as the “Panzer Sisters”. Canonically they were associated with the Pallottine “Catholic Apostolate”. In the meantime the Pallottine General Chapter had issued a decree forbidding any Pallottine Father from founding another community of Sisters. So Fr Kentenich’s plan to found the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary was blocked. Fr [Adolf] Panzer died on 31.3.1926 and Fr Kentenich was asked to take an interest in the Bosweiler Sisters. He accepted the task in the hope that this group of Sisters would combine with what had already begun in Schoenstatt, and be led into Schoenstatt’s spirituality. With that no permission for a new foundation would have been necessary. His attempt to integrate the communities failed. The leaders of the Bosweiler Sisters then separated themselves from the Pallottines and became a diocesan congregation known as the St Hildegard Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate. A group of Bosweiler Sisters nevertheless decided to join Schoenstatt. Through this group a Pallottine Father, now Fr Kentenich, had the right to continue to build up and lead a community of Sisters. Such are the winding ways of Divine Providence.

(136) Cf. Heavenwards, p. 53, 56f., 95 – 97 for Fr Kentenich’s meditations on Mary as “deacon”.