

Foreword

At long last Part II of the Kentenich Reader has been completed. It contains a broad outline of our founder's spirituality, and forms the third section of the whole collection. So this section has been given the heading: "Teaching" to distinguish it from the autobiographical and historical texts in Volume I.

Since this section contains a total of 46 texts, it soon became evident to the editors that publishing such a volume of material in a single book would make it unwieldy.

The result was that the second volume we envisaged has had to be divided into two books. The texts dealing with the foundations of our spirituality – the Marian covenant, faith in Divine Providence and everyday sanctity, faith in our mission and the spirituality of an instrument – will appear in Volume II: "Studying our Founder". The texts on anthropology, pedagogy, the spiritual life, and Schoenstatt's goals will appear in Volume III, "Following our Prophet".

The table of contents for the entire collection has already appeared in Volume I. The work of editing Part II has, however, led to slight changes being made. Texts 40-43 have been re-arranged, and the final texts have been enlarged. So in order to find the correct information, it is advisable to consult the table of contents of Volume II and III.

As to the aims and objectives of the whole collection, as well as the criteria for the selection of texts and the editorial work, please refer to the Foreword of Volume I. However, since the editing of the texts is the responsibility of the editors, it seems advisable to repeat what was written in the first Foreword:

"From the point-of-view of making it easier to encounter Fr Kentenich despite the passage of time, the problem of editing the texts became acute. Fr Kentenich's language was not only creative and original, it also reflected the times in which he lived. Its effect on the present-day reader is that it is antiquated. If the text is a transcript of the spoken word – which was naturally kept as literal as possible in the first edition – it can make for tiring reading, because of the typical circumlocutions, repetitions and padding of that time, as well the grammatical inconsistencies.

So the editors decided to smooth the texts presented here. They were very conservative in doing so with the written word, but more generous when dealing with the spoken word. Nevertheless, they were very careful not to change the meaning of what had been said; their aim was to bring out the meaning more clearly. Their main intention was to make the style

more fluid and hence easier to read. More extensive modifications of the text, especially any additions, such as sub-headings, are indicated with []. If a whole paragraph has been omitted, this is indicated by [...] on a separate line.

One of the main problems of translating Fr Kentenich's legacy is his creative use of language. It is not possible to take a dictionary equivalent for many of his concepts, because even in German they do not reflect standard usage. Fr Kentenich has given them his own meaning. In order to find a suitable equivalent in another language, many heads are needed to delve through the layers of meaning encapsulated by a concept. We are not always in the happy position where Fr Kentenich himself has defined the meaning. This makes translating the founder both challenging and rewarding.

In keeping with the purpose of this book to facilitate an encounter with Fr Kentenich, we did not make use of the conventions of textual criticism. Footnotes are only added to explain the text, or indicate literary sources. In the translation further footnotes have had to be added to elucidate points that would be familiar to the German reader. So if anyone is particularly interested in the original written or spoken word, they will have to refer to the sources from which the text was taken. The introduction to each text provides its precise source."

This project is being completed in the run up to the centenary of Fr Kentenich's ordination to the priesthood. The whole work is dedicated to him. The purpose of this collection, and the hope of the editors, is that it should help the reader to encounter our Father and Founder in these texts and get to know his spirituality more deeply.

Schoenstatt, 8 July 2010

Fr Peter Locher,
Fr Jonathan Niehaus,
Fr Hans-Werner Unkel,
Fr Paul Vautiér (+2007), in grateful remembrance, especially for the initial selection of texts.