

Excerpts from  
*The Secret of Schoenstatt's Life*

*Das Lebensgeheimnis Schoenstatts*  
(Letter to Msgr. Joseph Schmitz)

Volume 2  
Santiago, May-June 1952

Translated by Fr. Jonathan Niehaus,  
compiled 2007, 2010, 2011

Major portions here as translated for Chapters 6 and 7 in  
*Schoenstatt's Covenant Spirituality* (somewhat reworked)

## INTRODUCTION

{19} *The unique covenant of love* between the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt and Schoenstatt is incredibly rich in graces and life, a richness which will not easily be exhausted. It can and should not be our intent to open wide its spillways in order to let the accumulation of God's blessings in its totality to pour and flow out over the land of our soul – over mind and will and heart – or to exhaustively describe its value for life. We lack the time to do that. At the moment there is probably also a lack of interest. From time to time head and heart wrestle with the questions which have recently been raised, seeking clarification and explanation, in order to make new decisions easier and to prepare their way.

(...)

{22} There are still other dangers which threaten our Schoenstatt existence. They especially come from two sides: from outside the Church through *collectivism*, and from within the Church through *mechanistic thinking*. But conversely we can also say that because we have realized our form of being – our original covenant of love – so vigorously and steadily, we have not only been preserved from these dangers, but they have been banished wherever we have met them, and we have even seen it to be our task to counteract their spread {23} in widest circles through the covenant of love.

We may do well to pause here for a moment in order to *more deeply grasp the covenant* and only then to investigate this two-fold function<sup>1</sup>.

(...)

{24} Much can be said of significance about our covenant of love. It can be called the *fundamental form and fundamental purpose*, or final goal, the *fundamental strength and fundamental norm*

---

<sup>1</sup> Presumably to overcome collectivism and mechanistic thinking.

of our family. Our family's history can be seen and explained as the historical unfolding of this covenant, as a genuine covenant history, as a triumph of mutual covenant loyalty. To some extent that has already been done in the "Key"<sup>2</sup>; it is an attempt which will have to be continued and perfected at a later date.

At the same time, our covenant can be seen in the larger context of the universal events of salvation. {25} Through this comparison, namely through study of the likenesses and differences, similarities and dissimilarities, we can come to a clearer understanding of the covenant and gain in the conviction *that our covenant of love is a unique, concrete form of the covenant which God sealed with humanity in paradise and wants to realize through the history of salvation and of the world.*

We are familiar with such thoughts, of course, but they require that we take a closer look, so that we are prepared to face each imaginable inner difficulty and can respond to the questions posed by others. (....)

---

<sup>2</sup> "Key to Understanding Schoenstatt".

## THE COVENANT WITH GOD IN THE HISTORY OF SALVATION<sup>3</sup>

{26} The history of salvation reveals itself to the eye of faith as a distinctive covenant history. On the one hand, with regard to the elect, it is a history of union, on the other, with regard to the damned, it is a history of separation.

### *The Image of the Bride and Child*

The Book of Revelation, which is written in the spirit of the prophets, describes God' Covenant in images. It compares it with the covenant of love of marriage, that is, with the image of the bride and spouse.<sup>4</sup> So in this sense we would have to see salvation history as the history of divorce, or of marriage and espousal. The Bridegroom is Christ, the bride is the Church. Apocalyptic eras are times when developments accelerate, so also the completion of the divorce, or the maturation of marriage. If, even in normal times, the cross and suffering either help to bring Christ to birth in souls, or dig his grave, so the shock waves of an apocalyptic era in the physical, moral and religious fields have to be seen as heroically helping to bring Christ to birth, or effectively and successfully digging his grave<sup>5</sup>.

The holy writers felt much as we ordinary people do. They were so gripped by important life-processes that they were not sparing in the concepts they used. It {27} almost seems as though they were helpless in this regard – they could not find the right word that perfectly reflected what they wanted to say. The event was too amazing, too puzzling, too mysteriously deep, as in our case. They listed one image after another in order to reveal the wonderful greatness of what they had experienced. In this way a fullness of images came into existence. Although they tried to remove one covering after the other from an event, they were nevertheless unable to reveal it completely.

---

<sup>3</sup> The translation in this section (pages {26} to {36}) is adapted from a 2004 translation by Mary Cole.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Rev 19, 7-10; 21, 9ff; 22,17.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. the discussion on this subject in the retreat course on "The Apocalyptic Priest" held in 1940.

Each image was an attempt to reach into the “bright darkness” – that is, it reveals only a little bit of brightness without managing to illuminate each and every bit of darkness. From this we can conclude that not only the light, but also the darkness grows when a whole series of images attempts helplessly to form adequate concepts and express them in words.

When we apply this to our case it means that at times the Bible speaks about God’s kingdom, in order to express the oneness between the people and their King as a symbol of the union that exists between God and the People of God.<sup>6</sup> At other times the Bible speaks of a plantation, a field, a vineyard, an olive tree.<sup>7</sup> The covenant people are meant, but they are described as owners, beneficiaries, guards, as watchmen and judges of God’s Covenant, in order to express the profound and intimate relationship between the two partners. Or the Scriptures depict God as the shepherd, and the Covenant People, as well as each individual person, as a flock and lambs in his pastures.<sup>8</sup> Once {28} again this is to highlight their reciprocal and warm fundamental relationship. At times the Scriptures use the image of a holy building in which Christ is the living cornerstone and Christians the living stones that have been fused into a vital unity.<sup>9</sup> At other times they use the parable of the vine and its branches, in order to convey the vital union between the two partners.<sup>10</sup> Or else they talk about the mysterious Body of Christ, in which Christ is the head and Christians the members, but all are combined to form one, single body.<sup>11</sup> Then they use the image of an eagle that carefully attracts and leads its young.<sup>12</sup> The eagle is God, its young are the Covenant People. They show a particular preference for the image of family life, using the fundamental relationship between mother and child, or between father

---

<sup>6</sup> The Old Testament tells us that God is King. Cf. the royal Yahvist psalms, such as Ps 96-98, with the psalms that extol an earthly king, such as Ps 21 and 144.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Jer 11,17; Ps 80, 9-14; Jer 11, 16 etc.

<sup>8</sup> Cf Ps 23; Jo 10, 1-18.

<sup>9</sup> Cf 1 Peter 2, 4-8.

<sup>10</sup> Cf Jn 15, 1-8.

<sup>11</sup> Cf Rom 12, 4-6; 1 Cor 12, 12-27, etc.

<sup>12</sup> Cf Dt 32, 11 etc.

and child, as a template.<sup>13</sup>

The sermons of our Lord and the apostles, especially St Paul and John, use the word “child” with tangible warmth, in order to characterize the relationship into which human beings enter with their divine Covenant Partner, the “Father”, through God’s Covenant.<sup>14</sup> The two words “Father” and “child” take on a special resonance in their mouths, which they did not, and could not have had in the Old Testament for the audience of that time. Ever since our faith has known about the Triune God and the innertrinitarian divine {29} life, ever since it has brought us the good news that we share in a mysterious way in this innertrinitarian divine life, which was given to us when we were planted into God’s Son made man through baptism, the words “Father” and “child” in God’s Covenant have taken on a unique character and mysterious depth, and have been amazingly enriched.

To his creatures God is no longer merely a Father who allows his rain to fall on all, his sun to shine on all, and who cares for all<sup>15</sup>, or, as Goethe put it when he wrote about the “ancient, holy Father” and his “imperturbable hand” that “sows scorching lightning from rolling clouds over the earth”, and “the furthest hem of whose clothes” we kiss “with “childlike shivers in our breast.”<sup>16</sup> No, the Covenant God is the Father, our Father in heaven, who generated his co-equal and co-eternal Son, who sent this Son to our earth and let him take on our flesh, and who makes us his children through incorporating us mysteriously into his only-begotten Son in such a way that it endlessly surpasses and outshines any purely natural fatherhood. That is why the Credo prays:

We confidently believe the words  
spoken to us by Eternal Truth.

We willingly submit our understanding

---

<sup>13</sup> Cf Is 66, 13; 2 Sam 7, 14, etc.

<sup>14</sup> Cf Mt 5,45; Rom 8, 14-16; 1 Jn 2, 14, etc.

<sup>15</sup> Cf Mt 5, 45; 6, 25-34.

<sup>16</sup> J.W.v. Goethe, poem “*Grenzen der Menschheit*”.

as we follow your truth with heart and hand.

Faith is the secure path  
shown to us by the Word.

{30} Eternal salvation will only be given  
to those who have been granted this faith.

God, we believe that your might  
brought the world into existence.  
You are the one who sustains and governs it  
and wisely leads it to its goal.

You who are enthroned in heaven's heights  
wish to look upon us with love  
and *see in us your Son*  
*who reigns with you on the eternal throne.*

We are so poor and weak and frail;  
but you exalt us and make us great  
*as members of our transfigured Lord*  
*who, as our Head, draws us to you.*

God, you *elevate our being*  
and make the soul your temple and dwelling  
*where you, with the Son and the Holy Spirit*  
manifest yourself as a permanent guest!

Body and soul are consecrated  
to the most holy Trinity,  
who is enthroned in us as in heaven,  
dwelling in us with every richness.

We are therefore placed into the divine,  
raised above all the world;  
we are worth more in your eyes  
than the entire earth without us.

The works of every culture  
are only a tiny grain of dust  
in comparison to the glory  
your love bestows on us.

{31} You have given us your Son  
who silently hangs for us on the cross.  
You send us the Holy Spirit  
who educates and instructs us.

You place an angel at our side,  
who is ready to protect us.  
You give us a Mother full of kindness  
who cares for us with love.

You have caringly entrusted us  
to the Church, the Bride of your Son,  
so that she may lead us through life  
and enkindle in us genuine love.

Your Son lovingly offers himself for us  
as the sacrifice on the altar.  
He is there as friend and food,  
silently close to us in every situation<sup>17</sup>.

From the beginning until today a tangible Father and child  
lifestream has increasingly flowed through our Family. It has made  
full use of the "Father-child relationship" in every respect as a symbol  
of our covenant of love with God, and has formed its personal and  
community life accordingly. In this it is obviously obeying the clear  
guidance of the Holy Spirit, who has spoken unmistakably through  
the "law of the open door," and who has shown us the way of child-  
hood and childlikeness in theory and practice. He has revealed it to

---

<sup>17</sup> *Heavenwards*, p. 24-26, emphasis added by Fr. Kentenich for the purposes  
of this study.

us with great love and care in the Bible, which clearly reveals his wishes to us.

{32} With us, in much the same way as the soul of St Theresa of the Child Jesus<sup>18</sup> was led by grace, the image of the bride has retreated strongly into the background. So it is less alive in the public awareness of the Family, and does not form our life particularly deeply or constantly. So it is understandable that the need is now felt to study the covenant between God and ourselves in great detail from the point of view of the “Father-child symbol”, to follow it up using the spiritual currents that became effective in our Family history, to re-animate them, and to understand the reasons why they have so effectively repressed the symbol of the bride. We want to put off this attractive and appealing work to a later date.

For the moment, let us remain with the image of the bride. We will then be able to extend the framework of salvation history and understand the Old and New Testaments more easily. The reason for this is because the symbol of the bride was more common in the Old Testament than that of the child. However, let us not forget that it is just one symbol of the Covenant with God.

#### *Love, the fundamental law of the world*

In order to deepen these thoughts, and so that we will not forget them in the later discussions, let us recall that *Everyday Sanctity* means the same as Francis de Sales – although using more abstract {33} terminology – when it speaks of “the world’s fundamental law of love.” By this it means that the ultimate motive, the reason behind all reasons for all that God and the God-Man do, is love. More precisely, God does everything out of love, through love and for love. That is to say, his main motivation in everything he does is love, which is so strong that it sets all the other divine qualities in motion and takes them into its service, not least God’s justice and omnipotence. Behind everything he does is a distinctive and tangible movement of love, which aims at the most perfect union of love

---

<sup>18</sup> Therese of Lisieux (1874-1897), canonized in 1925.

between the loving partners, or the covenant partners.

This movement of love has four steps. The Gloria of the “Mass of God’s Instruments” brings us the good news:

First step:

God the Father, you give yourself  
*lovingly and entirely*  
*to your Son in the Holy Spirit*  
in the kiss of eternal delight.

*You are thus perfect in yourself,*  
*are Love that never ends*<sup>19</sup>.

Second step:

*Love has sent the Son*  
as the pledge for our salvation.

{34} *Love gave life to the Son*  
*through his Mother-Bride*  
and asked him, our greatest treasure,  
to shed his Blood.

Love moved him before his death  
to bequeath to us his Mother-Bride,  
so that she, the Sure Portal,  
may lead us swiftly up to God.

Full of strength in her Son,  
she is the one who always victoriously overcomes  
the kingdom and the works of Satan,  
bringing peace to the world<sup>20</sup>.

---

<sup>19</sup> *Heavenwards*, p. 19, emphasis added by Fr. Kentenich.

<sup>20</sup> *Heavenwards*, p. 19f, emphasis added by Fr. Kentenich.

Third step:

*Love has united us with him  
who daily gives himself to us  
as the rich food of sacrifice  
on the long pilgrimage.*

*Love has drawn us into the mission of the Eternal Word  
that salvation be fulfilled,  
letting us faithfully share in his fate  
and making us great as his instruments.<sup>21</sup>*

Fourth Step:

*Love has called the world  
to resemble a stairway of love,  
effectively leading us heavenwards  
into the heart of God.<sup>22</sup>*

{35} The summary of the stages of love looks upon all world events from the point of view of a river of love, which flows out of the bosom of the Trinity and flows back to it:

We see streams of love flowing,  
pouring down richly on earth and heaven,  
coming from Eternal Love  
and returning to their source

Glory and love be to the One seated on the throne,  
to God the Father and the Son  
and the Spirit of Holiness,  
now and for all eternity. Amen.<sup>23</sup>

The world's fundamental law of love has to become the norm for the life of the covenant partner; it has to become an unchangeable law of life. Love has to be the queen of our life and work. The loving wooing of the divine covenant partner requires a loving answer from the human partner. It can and may be that everything is motivated by love, through a distinctive movement of love towards perfect union in love with God, who is Eternal Love. This movement of love is distinctive when it is so much in the foreground that it is not only constantly connected with the moral virtues, such as humility, obedience, etc., but also most perfectly governs, crowns and inspires them, and keeps them in constant motion. This is what St Paul meant when he depicted all the virtues as a practical form of love. He said:

{36} "Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1Cor 13,4-7).

This does not mean, nor does it recommend, that the cardinal virtues and their many and varied ramifications are meant to lose their independent motivation. That would be a mistake, because then love would easily lose its direction, measure and boundary. It would not sufficiently form the God-willed ideal image of human greatness that bears God's stamp. On the contrary it would easily become musty and soft, and make people musty and soft. It will not become a "letter of recommendation ... to be known and read by all, and you show that you are a letter of Christ, ... written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts" (2 Cor 3, 2f)

(....)

---

<sup>21</sup> *Heavenwards*, p. 20, emphasis added by Fr. Kentenich.

<sup>22</sup> *Heavenwards*, p. 20, emphasis added by Fr. Kentenich.

<sup>23</sup> *Heavenwards*, p. 20f.

**I**

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GOD'S COVENANT IN THE HISTORY OF SALVATION**

{43} Anyone who leafs through the pages of history of the past several thousand years and does so in the light of revelation will readily subscribe the following assertion: *The covenant with God, the covenant of love between God and his people, is the fundamental purpose and fundamental form, the fundamental strength and fundamental norm of the entire history of salvation, from Adam right up to the day when the Lord will appear with majesty and might in the clouds of heaven for the final judgement of the living and the dead.*

*The Covenant with God – the Fundamental Purpose of the History of Salvation*

The book of Revelation recounts with dramatic imagery the course of history as directed by God, and vividly portrays its consummation. History's inherent and God-willed meaning is therein revealed – the {44} consummation of the union of love between God and man, symbolically illustrated by the wedding banquet of the bride and the Bridegroom. The two are portrayed at the end of time as completely open and receptive to one another, running into each other's arms with the tender cry of longing on their lips, "Come!" (Rev 22,17). They are united with and in one another in an eternal and indissoluble union of love. That is the ultimate purpose of all world events and every event that comes our way.

"Then I saw," writes the author the Revelation, "a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, arrayed *as a bride* prepared to meet her husband. I heard a loud voice speak from the throne: 'Behold God's dwelling among men. He shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes...for the former world has passed away.' The One seated on the throne spoke: 'See, I make all things new...I will be

his God and he will be my Son" (Rev 21,1-5.7). "Alleluia! The Lord, our God, the Almighty reigns! Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory, *for the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride is waiting...Happy are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb!*" (Rev 19,6-7.9).

"One of the seven angels...now came and said to me, '*Come, I will show you the bride, the one espoused to the Lamb.*' He led me in spirit to a very high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven in the glory of God...I saw no temple there, for the Lord, the almighty God is its temple, and the Lamb. The city had no need {45} for sun or moon, for the glory of God shone over it and its light is the Lamb" (Rev 21, 9-10.22-23).

*The Covenant with God—the Fundamental Form of the History of Salvation*

Philosophers point out to us that the *causa formalis* of an object is determined by the *causa finalis*<sup>1</sup>. The covenant of love, whose consummation represents the final purpose of all world events, must therefore be the fundamental form of the history of salvation as well, both as a whole and in its individual parts. In other words, through it each event takes on the form and character of love. Each even has been prepared and sent by love, is meant to be awakened and deepened by love, is meant to be creatively shaped and perfected by the repercussions of love.

The sacred books confirm this time and time again through a never-ending variety of figures of speech, narratives, and stories. It is like the golden thread which unites all the many events: The Lord of history is the God of the covenant. All the strands come together in his hand and are skillfully woven into a single cloth. His root relationship to humanity is the covenant relationship. It is what forms and determines every act of the One who guides the world. It calls for the creative co-activity on the part of the covenant partner guided

---

<sup>1</sup> The form which an object or person has (its *causa formalis*) is determined by the purpose for which it was made (its *causa finalis*).

by God.

God revealed himself to Adam and Noah as the God of the covenant with the whole human race<sup>2</sup>, while in the case of Abraham and Moses he limited himself to the immediate relationship with the {46} chosen people<sup>3</sup>, the people of God which, in the new covenant, enters history as the people of the Church<sup>4</sup>. The New Testament speaks of the covenant of the Lord with his Church<sup>5</sup> which opens and secures the way for the covenant of love with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

To be sure, the story of *Adam and Eve* does not explicitly speak of a "covenant", but God's relationship to them and theirs to God is clearly a covenant relationship. The way the partners relate to one another depicts the realized and radiant ideal of a mutual covenant of love. Their dialog is the communication of lovers who have found their way to and belong to one another. The covenant obligations are only implicitly mentioned, but can be inferred in all their detail from the consequences of the breaking of the covenant.

*Noah* was the first to hear the word "covenant" from the mouth of God. Yahweh spoke:

"I am establishing an agreement with you, a covenant, that you and your sons, your wife and your son's wives shall go into the ark...For indeed, I am establishing a covenant with you and with your descendants... I will establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all creatures be destroyed by the waters of a flood... This is the sign that I am now giving for all ages to come of the covenant between me and you and every living creature with you: I set my bow in the clouds to serve as a sign of the covenant between me and the earth" (Gen 6,8; 9,9-13).

{47} God remains faithful to his plan. But when the appointed time came, even while keeping his loyalty to his covenant with the human race, he set out with a new approach: He introduced the

---

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Gen 1,26-30; 2,7—3,24 and Gen 6,5—9,17.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Gen 17; Ex 19,5; 24,7f.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Gal 6,16; Rev 7,1-8.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Heb 8-9; Eph 5,22-33.

principle of a chosen elite into the history of salvation. *Abraham* and his descendants were set apart from all other nations. Yahweh sealed a covenant with him. In it, God pledged Abraham the promised land, a land flowing with milk and honey<sup>6</sup>; descendants as numerous as the sand on the seashore<sup>7</sup>; and that the redeemer would be born from among his descendants<sup>8</sup>. In return he demanded that his covenant partner be completely given to him until the end of time.

At the time when Israel was wandering through the desert under the leadership of *Moses*, God sealed the covenant—previously only made with the patriarchs as representatives of the people—directly with the entire nation on Mount Sinai. Sacred Scripture recounts:

"As Moses prepared to go up [the mountain] to God, the Lord called out to him from the mountain, 'Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and proclaim to the sons of Israel: You have seen for yourselves what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you up on eagle wings, carrying you to myself. If you hear my voice and keep my covenant, then you, among all the nations, shall serve me in a very special way, for the entire earth is mine. You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation...' And all the people answered with one voice and said, 'Whatever the Lord commands, we shall do'" (Ex 19,3-6.8).

{48} This event was so profound that it touched the very depths of the consciousness of a people. It developed a covenant awareness which would later—despite all shifting moods and times of inner paralysis—always produce anew surge of vitality and victoriousness.

In the fullness of time, the second person of the Godhead appeared in flesh. He fulfilled the purpose of the old covenant<sup>9</sup>. By his blood and his death on the wood of disgrace he purchased his bride, the Church, and led her home. This is the new covenant, sealed in the blood of Our Lord. Through it the Church, and with it we

---

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Gen 15,7; 17,8; Ex 3,8.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Gen 22,17.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Gen 12,7; 17,5-7 together with Gal 3,16.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Heb 9.



ourselves, have been dearly bought<sup>10</sup>! The *matrimonium ratum* which was consummated on the cross must become the *matrimonium consummatum* of our personal redemption<sup>11</sup>. The symbolism of a bridal relationship thus entered the New Testament, but in the sense of an adequate illustration for the covenant and relationship of love between Christ and the Church and the soul in the state of grace. At the same time, the illustration for the same fundamental attitude to the Father became that of the father-child relationship. We must remember that these are only images and symbols, and should not dwell on them overlong. Regardless of the imagery, however, one cannot overlook that the central reality is a mutual covenant of love.

Baptism is for the New Testament what circumcision was for the Old—the integration and incorporation {49} in the covenant relationship. Through baptism all who have been baptized have made a covenant with Christ. They have been baptized into his death and stand in a communion of death with him<sup>12</sup>. They are called into an indissoluble union with him in a sacred and mystical communion of being, living, loving, and fates, and with him be drawn into his own union of love in the Holy Spirit with the Father.

St. Paul adopted the concept of brideship and expanded on it with love. He speaks of the Church in Corinth as the Lord's bride. His premise is that all are members of Christ and children of the Father. He therefore writes, "I am jealous of you with the jealousy of God, for I have given you in marriage to a single husband, presenting you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor 11,2)<sup>13</sup>.

If that is so, every soul in the state of grace can be called a bride of Christ in the broader sense of the word. In the stricter sense it applies to those who have freely chosen this bridal relationship in an

---

<sup>10</sup> Cf. 1 Cor 6,20.

<sup>11</sup> By Christ's death on the cross he gave his yes to his "matrimony" with the Church (*matrimonium ratum*), but this union still needs the positive assent of the individual Christian for it to become effective, to be "consummated" (*matrimonium consummatum*).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Rom 6,1-10.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. also Eph 5,31f.

exclusive and lifelong manner. Hence we can understand the Church's tradition of the virginal state of life and the ancient consecration of the virgins. The concept of brideship allowed St. Paul to solve a number of difficult questions, especially concerning marriage and over-glorification of the body.

(....)

{51} Like Paul, St. John explains the covenant with God using the bridal symbolism. For him, too, the Bridegroom is not merely God but Christ. He interprets the present age as a time when the bride waits for the Bridegroom. Hence he closes the book of Revelation with the words:

"It is I, Jesus, who have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the radiant Morning Star. The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!' Let those who hear it say, 'Come!'" (Rev 22,16-17).

And again:

"The One who gives this testimony says, 'Yes, I am coming soon!' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev 22,20).

#### *The Covenant with God—the Fundamental Strength of the History of Salvation*

Just as the covenant with God was Israel's fundamental form and fundamental purpose, it was also its fundamental strength, that is, its undying source of strength. In the covenant, Yahweh promised to protect his chosen people. He lent them the strength of his arm, his arm of omnipotence, and Israel felt sheltered in his protection. They relied on and trusted in him in every situation and never ceased to call on him, especially when the waters of oppression ran deep. Despite the times they doubted and strayed, they always looked for and found their way {52} back to God's covenant. As the Lord of Hosts promised to Jacob:

"I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and of Isaac. The land on which you rest I now give to you and your decedents. These shall be as numerous as the dust of the earth. Through them you shall spread out to the west, the east, the north and south. In you and your decedents all the nations of the earth shall

find blessing. See, I am with you and will protect you wherever you go, bringing you back to this land. For I will never leave you until I have fulfilled my promise" (Gen 28,13-15).

Even more unequivocal was the word of the Lord to Moses:

"I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the Lord almighty... And I established my covenant with them, granting them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as foreigners. I have also heard the cry of the sons of Israel whom the Egyptians have enslaved. I am mindful of my covenant... I am the Lord. I will free you from the forced labor of the Egyptians and deliver you from their slavery, and I will rescue them with my outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you to be my people and be your protecting God, and you shall know that I alone am the Lord, your God, when I free you from the forced labor of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land which I solemnly swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I will give it to you as your own inheritance, I the Lord!" (Ex 6,2-8).

Israel built with unshakable confidence on the covenant which God made with them. Whenever it drifted into forgetfulness because of the people's superficiality, worldliness, and passions, the prophets arose to return it to public awareness. At God's command, Hosea had to marry a prostitute, for "the land, too, had become unfaithful to the Lord" (Hos 1,2).

Israel "is no longer my wife, and I am no longer her husband. Let her remove her harlotry from before her, the signs of adultery from between her breasts... She has been unfaithful... and acted shamefully. 'I will go after my lovers,' she said... Therefore I will hedge in her way with thorns... and if she runs after her lovers, she shall not overtake them... Then she will finally say, 'I will go back to my first husband, for it was better for me then than now.' But she still does not see... Therefore I will do it differently... I will bring an end to all her joy... Thus will I punish her for the festivals of the Baals for whom she burnt incense while she decked herself with her rings and jewels, and in going after her lovers, forgot me... If that is so, then I will surely allure her

again... and speak to her heart... Then you will again call me 'My husband'... And I will espouse you to me forever; I will espouse you in right and in justice, in tenderness and love; and I will espouse you in utmost fidelity. Then you will know that I am the Lord" (Hos 2,4.7-10.13.15-16.18.21-22).

In Isaiah we read:

"For your husband is the one who created you... Yes, the Lord calls you back, like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, a wife married in youth and then cast off. For your God says: For but a brief moment I abandoned you, but with great love I take you back. In an outburst of wrath, for a moment I hid {54} my face from you; but with enduring tenderness I take you back... Though the mountains leave their place and the hills be shaken, my love will never leave you nor my covenant of peace be shaken, says the Lord, who so tenderly loves you" (Is 54,5-8.10). No one more shall call you "Forsaken", or your land "Desolate". You shall be called "My Delight", your land "Espoused", for once more the Lord will delight in you and make your land his spouse. As a young man marries a virgin, your Restorer shall marry you; and as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride, so shall your God rejoice in you" (Is 62,4-5).

The New Testament is entirely imbued by the covenant, by the community of love and life with Christ. The branches must wither unless they are attached to the vine (cf Jn 15,1-6), and the members cannot live and work apart from the head (cf 1 Cor 12, 12-26). The same is true of all Christians. They have no rest until they can pray together with St. Paul, 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2,20), Christ who solemnly declared, "Apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn 15,5), and "No one comes to the Father unless it be through the Son" (Jn 14,6). They join St. Paul when he says, "I can do everything in him who gives me strength!" (Phil 4,13); "I boast of my weakness so that the power of Christ be revealed in me" (2 Cor 12,9).

*The Covenant with God—the Fundamental Norm of the History of Salvation*

All of this helps explain why the Old and New Testament make the covenant with God the standard for all life and striving. It is the fundamental norm for one's attitudes, actions, and {55} daily living. Especially the Old Testament saw and experienced the covenant with God as the great defining force of its history. Covenant loyalty brought blessings; covenant disloyalty brought curse upon curse. The upheavals and blows of history forced Israel to reseek and renew the covenant again and again. If God did not entirely cast off this faithless people in the course of the centuries, it was for the sake of the faithfulness of the patriarchs and prophets.

"But the Lord," states the Bible, "was merciful with Israel and looked on them with compassion because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (2 Kgs 13,23).

The covenant was most alive in the hearts [of the people] when the covenant act had been personally experienced and was still fresh in mind. At intervals, the prophets would call for a solemn renewal in order to reelevate the covenant to the norm of existence and form of daily life. To present at least one of the many examples of this, we can recall Josiah, of whom it is written:

"At that, the king advanced to the pillar, where he made a covenant before the Lord that they would follow him and observe his ordinances, statutes, and decrees with their whole hearts and souls, and thereby fulfill the words of the covenant written in this book. And the entire people entered into this covenant" (2 Kgs 23,3).

In the New Testament, the covenant with Christ—established in the baptismal covenant and led to perfection by the sacraments, by God's guidance and intervention, and by our personal struggling and striving—is *the* heart of Christian life. It is the axis around which all things turn, the norm which answers all {56} questions concerning our salvation and speaks the final word of blessing and curse in both this world and the next.

II

**SCHOENSTATT'S COVENANT OF LOVE AND THE COVENANT WITH GOD IN THE HISTORY OF SALVATION**

We have now sketched out the context in which our covenant of love belongs. We have called it a unique and concrete form of the covenant which God sealed with man in paradise and wishes to bring to fruition through world history and the history of salvation. The similarities and differences can now be defined without great difficulty.

*The Covenant of Love as a Renewal of the Baptismal Covenant*<sup>1</sup>

The first similarity is that our covenant, like for all Christians, is founded in baptism. How many Christians enthusiastically sing, "Unwavering shall forever stand the *covenant* of my baptism...<sup>2</sup>", but are unaware of how fundamental covenant is for their Christian existence, and that it is really a covenant between two partners, namely between Christ and the individual soul, a covenant which implies serious covenant obligations and covenant rights for both sides. Too little do they know the nature and demands of the baptismal covenant which they have made.

Through the spirit of faith we know that three essential elements are involved:

- a giving up of self,
- giving of self to the other,
- and being given a home in the heart of the other.

{57} The Christian is set apart from the world. To be a Christian means to give up oneself, to no longer be one's own master and no longer do what one pleases. We have been given over to the Lord, and the Lord has made us his own and joined us to himself.

(...)

For us, the covenant of love with the Blessed Mother as it

---

<sup>1</sup> See also *Mary, Our Mother and Educator*, p. 178-182.

<sup>2</sup> First line of a well-known German hymn by F.M. Berghaus (1762-1814), "*Fest soll mein Taufbund immer steh'n.*"

historically came about and came to fruition is a {58} far-reaching renewal, reenforcement, and safeguard of the baptismal covenant, namely the covenant with Christ and the Blessed Trinity. Every consecration and the covenant renewal it implies is a new, a freely chosen and freely willed decision for Christ, for him and for his interests and kingdom. It is a new and unequivocal, a powerful redirection of the will from earth to heaven, a new decision for the King of the World and the King of all Hearts. At the same time, however, it sets grace in motion from heaven to earth, from him to us. To put it in other words, it represents a deeper growth into the intimate communion of love between him and us and the Blessed Trinity.

*The Covenant of Love as Schoenstatt's Fundamental Purpose, Form, Strength, and Norm*

The covenant reality has taken such deep root in our awareness and feeling for life that we may unhesitatingly call it our fundamental form, our fundamental purpose, our fundamental strength, and our fundamental norm. That is how great the similarity is which we have to the thought and feeling, desires and actions of the Old and New Testament! I am not sure if another modern religious community could make the same claim to the same extent that we can.

Each page in our family history is a testimony to this deep-rooted and far-reaching similarity. {59} *Heavenwards*, which may be considered an authentic document of our spirituality, demonstrates the same thing. The same attitude can be shown to have shaped the spiritual life of all Schoenstatt children who have already died, both men and women. In the end, there is no question in the general opinion of the family that the only gate by which one can enter this kingdom is a covenant act in the form of a consecration. Just as baptism makes us Christians, baptism *and* the consecration make us Schoenstatt children. As is our wont, by "consecration" we mean a unique and concrete renewal of our baptismal covenant.

One can fulfill all the practices of the family—one can painstakingly keep a spiritual daily order and check it each day, one can have regular contact with a confessor, one can be apostolically active

and work for charity, one can do this and that and many, many other things—but if this unique consecration is not there, then an essential part is missing and one is not a Schoenstatter!

The degree of one's membership is determined by the degree of the consecration. We therefore distinguish between a first consecration and a leader or lifetime consecrations. We speak of a "Blank Check", of the *Inscriptio*, and {60} of a "Joseph Engling Consecration", and hold it for self-understood that the members of our institutes and federations strive for these three heights of the covenant of love<sup>3</sup>. We take it for granted that all without exception will have climbed these heights in one form or another by the end of [the first] tertianship, and that their character's authenticity and soundness, as well as the integrity of their being can be measured by the seriousness with which they live their consecration in daily life. That is our way of interpreting the words of Our Lord, "Not those who say to me, 'Lord, Lord!' are the ones who love me, but only those who do the will of my Father in heaven!" (Mt 7,21).

*The Covenant of Love in its Orientation on the Covenant with God in the History of Salvation*

We are so imbued by our covenant awareness, that it moves and is at home not only in the narrower confines of our original {61} Schoenstatt world, not only in the broader circle of the history of

---

<sup>3</sup> These three additional levels of the covenant of love developed out of the need to continuously strive to overcome the hesitation of our hearts to give itself entirely to God and the Blessed Mother. In the *Blank Check*, one consciously places everything which one is and has and whatever God may send, be it joy or suffering, into the hands of the Our Lady as a blank check which she can use as she pleases. In the *Inscriptio*, one inscribes one's heart in the heart of the Blessed Mother, especially under the aspect of overcoming the fear of the cross by freely asking God to send whatever crosses he holds in store for us. The *Joseph Engling Consecration* is then even more specific in offering one's life, should it be in God's plans, for the work of the Mother Thrice Admirable in Schoenstatt. It is named after the most outstanding member of the founding generation of Schoenstatt, Joseph Engling (1898-1918), who offered his life to the Blessed Mother shortly before his death in 1918.

salvation of the New Testament. Its radius extends to Adam and Eve and embraces every great moment of the covenant with God in the Old Testament. Once more, that is how similar our unique covenant of love is to the universal covenant with God in the history of salvation!

Turn to *Heavenwards*. The short, aphoristic references to the main actors in God's plan in the Old Testament are not there by some coincidence. They may and must be seen as rifts in the rock which allow us to glimpse into the depths of a mysterious, unknown world of great wealth, one which forms a world in its own right, only divulging its secrets and treasures to those who know the way or seek it with patience and attentiveness.

The passages which refer to *Eve* recall the covenant which she and *Adam* sealed with God, its tragic end, and the grave consequences which this broken covenant has for all of world history. It is the source of serious reflection about the universal covenant reality in the history of salvation. The "Prayer in Time of Need" therefore prays:

"[Christ] chose you as the second Eve:  
you shall save what the first Eve lost.  
Just as she drew us into ruin,  
from you stream forth the rays of eternal salvation<sup>4</sup>."

In a number of places the Way of the Cross makes similar references to Adam and his position in the plan of salvation:

{62} "The work which the Father has entrusted to you  
and to which your Mother-Bride could give her yes,  
gives you no rest until it is completed  
and *Adam's bill of debt* has been forgiven<sup>5</sup>."

In the Fourth Station we find:

---

<sup>4</sup> *Heavenwards*, p. 132.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 66. Emphasis in this and the following excerpts added by Fr. Kentenich for this study.

"The permanent helpmate for the salvation of souls  
may not fail to be present on your difficult way of the  
cross.

*The Father placed her at your side  
just as he once joined Eve to Adam*<sup>6</sup>."

The memory of *Noah* and the covenant which God renewed with him is kept alive in the idea of the ark, which is deep in our awareness because of the Second Founding Document<sup>7</sup>. It is in this context that "The Shepherd's Prayer" prays:

"They have made a covenant with you.  
May it stand as firm as if cast in bronze.  
Then I will know that they are in safe and loyal hands  
and will not fear the *raging fury of the flood*<sup>8</sup>."

The prayers depict *Abraham* at the climax of the test of faith which he so brilliantly mastered:

"May our Mother implore for us such earnestness;  
then we will be able to pass through every storm vic-  
toriously.  
*She will see to it that the Father  
will return the child to us in fatherly kindness.*

"But we must first present the child to him without  
reserve  
and completely direct all our love to him alone.  
*With great love and kindness he will then return the  
child to us,*

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 68.

<sup>7</sup> Second Founding Document (October 18, 1939), No. 2, in: *Schoenstatt: The Founding Documents*, p.31.

<sup>8</sup> *Heavenwards*, p. 138.

*even if at the last moment, as he did Isaac*<sup>9</sup>."

The prayers go even farther. They make the analogy and apply the covenant promises made to the patriarchs in all their detail to the contemporary history.

God promised Abraham that the Messiah, the Redeemer of the World would come from among his descendants. *Heavenwards* is referring to this when it prays: The Father

*"will make [the child] a great sign of his promise  
and himself become the child's generous guardian*<sup>10</sup>."

Applied to our shrine that means: The Blessed Mother has the great task here to give new birth to Christ in the souls for our times. Innumerable passages make this thought their own. In the Morning Prayer we find: We give you thanks

"for choosing Schoenstatt  
as the place of Christ's rebirth<sup>11</sup>."

The entire Schoenstatt Office lives from this standpoint. It circles around the thought which is expressed in the prayer at Lauds:

{64} "You have graciously established Schoenstatt  
so that our times can see the Eternal Light.  
From there you want to go through our dark world  
as the Christ-bearer sent by God<sup>12</sup>."

The second promise which Jahweh made to Abraham was the promise of numerous descendants. They shall become as numerous as the sand on the shore. This oath is taken up by *Heavenwards* and

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 120.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 13.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 49.

applied to our family, on the condition however, that it take the Blank Check and Inscriptio seriously:

"He will make it grow and prosper like the sand on the  
shore

to the glory, praise and honor of the Trinity<sup>13</sup>."

Or:

"Even in storms and dangers  
you will always remain faithful  
to the covenant you have sealed with us  
and enriched with countless graces.

"You will send us vocations  
who join us in pledging themselves for your kingdom.  
You will give us work and richly bless us  
and unite your omnipotence to our powerlessness<sup>14</sup>."

Or:

"May his testament to us  
sustain us until the end of time:  
{65} our Mother Thrice Admirable,  
the treasure in Schoenstatt's meadow of peace.  
*As long as we loyally preserve this treasure,  
he will gather around us humanity's best*<sup>15</sup>."

The third promise gave Abraham the assurance of the promised land. In conscious parallel to the story of Abraham, *Heavenwards* sees this promised land as the ideal kingdom, the land of freedom:

"He will bless [the child] *with many holy children*  
who loyally proclaim the praises of our Mother.  
*He will let it become the salt and light of the earth  
which strengthens, warms, and brightens the Church and*

---

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 120.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 15.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p. 34.

world.

*"He will let it stride with courage and holy liberty  
through impersonal and turbulent times,  
using it everywhere as a noble herald  
of true freedom joyfully dedicated to God.*

*"I will gladly bear forever the somber chains of slavery  
if it stands as ransom for the family's freedom<sup>16</sup>."*

The "Home Song"<sup>17</sup>, which sings of our promised land as we see it with the eyes of faith, also belongs here. It is a land of love of God and neighbor, a land of purity and virginity, a land of freedom and of joy, a land of truth and justice, a land of lasting courage in battle and the eternal certitude of victory. Many other prayers go in the same direction. At times, the plea is also directed to the Blessed Mother:

*"Create a paradise for yourself there  
and hold the dragon at bay.  
Woman of the Sun, step forth with light  
and ascend to the heights of the noonday sky.*

*"Build from here a world  
which is pleasing to the Father,  
as our Savior once implored  
so longingly in prayer.*

*"May love ever reign there  
together with truth and justice  
and a unity which does not become mass-mindedness  
nor lead to inner slavery.*

*"Reveal your power*

---

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 121.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Heavenwards*, p. 158-161.

in the dark and stormy night.  
Let the world see your active hand  
and stand in admiration before you,

so that it speak your name with love,  
profess loyalty to your kingdom,  
fearlessly carry your banner far and wide  
and victoriously defeat every foe<sup>18</sup>."

Of course, we cannot allow *Moses* to go unnoticed in our world of ideas and prayers. After all, his role in the salvific history of the covenant with God is a preeminent one. From this standpoint we can understand the reference:

{67} "And if I myself may not see  
the prospering of your child in your presence,  
then I, like *Moses*, will remain on the mountain...  
Only grant this child the happiness of the holy land!<sup>19</sup>"

Those who visit *Heavenwards'* school of prayer will be easily and quickly freed from narrow self-centeredness. They will learn how to think and love universally. They will constantly move in the endless vistas of the universal events of salvation and the mysterious plans of Eternal Wisdom, Infinite Omnipotence and Love.

(...)

{75} At the end of such extensive deliberations one will not find it difficult to continue these thoughts and immerse oneself more deeply into the relationship between the covenant with God in the history of salvation and our own covenant of love. This brief overview of the lines of development and the main events in the history of salvation offers enough {76} points of departure for anyone

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 130-131.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 120.

who is familiar with the family's history so that they can easily compare similar events and develop their thoughts from there. In any case, we have now gained a reliable insight into what it means when we say: Our covenant of love is a concrete form of the covenant which God made in paradise and which he wants to realize through the history of salvation.

(....)

## THE ORIGINALITY OF SCHOENSTATT'S COVENANT OF LOVE

{77} The originality of our covenant of love is found in its specifically Schoenstatt character, namely in its deeply Marian character and its rootedness in our shrine. This means that Mary is our immediate covenant partner to the extent that she, under the title of "Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt", {78} is active from her shrine as the educator of many people for the establishment of an all-embracing and deep-rooted movement of renewal and education in the Church and world and [is active there] in fostering its vitality and fruitfulness.

The same thing could be said as follows: Our identity stands and falls on the mystery of Schoenstatt's Marian character.

(....)

### I

#### *The "Mystery of Mary"*<sup>1</sup>

{80} For years, the primary goal of our introductory weekends was to gradually awaken a sense for Schoenstatt's supernatural dimension as a work of God. This was the main goal time and time again until it took root in the family as a firm, faith-filled conviction, and became the foundation which carried the whole. Those who could not find their way to this conviction either did not join the family or soon left it on their own. Those who could not make this supernatural conviction completely their own {81} proved incapable of taking up positions of leadership. They simply lacked the most essential qualification—an outspoken supernatural attitude.

(....)

{82} [This supernatural rootedness] was fostered, deepened, and

---

<sup>1</sup> German: *Das Mariengeheimnis*. A more complete translation of this passage is found in *With Mary into the New Millennium*, "The Secret of Mary According to Grignon de Montfort."



differentiated through our early contact with Grignon<sup>2</sup>. Traces of his influence reach into the earliest beginnings of the family. He had an influence, for instance, on the concept of our Mother Thrice Admirable's capital of grace, and not only on the abstract principle, but also on the practical course of development, from the occasional contributions [to the capital of grace] on up to the Blank Check, the Inscriptio, and the Joseph Engling Act. The same is true for our life {83} with, through, and in Mary. The term "Mystery of Mary" is taken from him. It is plainly modeled after St. Paul's "Mystery of Christ"<sup>3</sup>.

Both St. Paul and Grignon have the same interest: Christ. The same fire for Christ burns in both and both confess in word and deed, "Nothing can separate me from the love of Christ!" (Rom 8,35). Both want to set the whole world ablaze for Our Lord with an all-consuming fire for Christ. Christ was not only the center point and anchor in the life of St. Paul, but was also the center point and anchor in the life of Grignon. Both gravitated in their own way around the mystery of Christ.

(....)

{84} The difference between the two is that St. Paul only made brief mention of the mystery of Mary as a part of the mystery of Christ, while Grignon greatly expands on it in his teaching and his life. He does so, however, in the interests of Christ. For him, the mystery of Mary is and will always be the heart of the mystery of Christ, just as the mystery of Christ is for him the heart of the mystery of Mary. The two belong inseparably together, not only in the order of being, but also in the order of living and acting. The one passage in which St. Paul refers to Our Lady—"born of a woman" (Gal 4,4)—contains in a first seed the entire mystery of Mary which Grignon saw in all its ramifications and untiringly portrayed and proclaimed. If he took the Pauline {85} "through him and with him

---

<sup>2</sup> St. Louis Grignon de Montfort (1673-1716). Cf. *New Vision and Life*, p. 111-112.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Eph 3,3-9.

and in him"<sup>4</sup> and added to it the "through her and with her and in her"<sup>5</sup>; if he placed the "in Mary" alongside the "in Christ" with particular love<sup>6</sup>, he did so only in the spirit of "*in Christo Jesu*" [in Christ Jesus] and solely in his interest to animate and secure the "in Christ". The "in Mary" is for him a perfect application of the law in the kingdom of God which Pius X clothed in the following words in his Jubilee Encyclical from 1904:

"For can anyone fail to see *that there is no easier and surer way for uniting all humanity to Christ and obtaining through him perfect childhood*, so that we may be holy and immaculate in the eyes of God, *than the way through Mary*!"<sup>7</sup>

(....)

#### *Schoenstatt and the Mystery of Mary*

{86} With that we have already begun—without our really noticing it—to answer the question of what the mystery of Mary is. With this question we find ourselves on terrain we have known since 1914, and where we have become more and more at home with each passing year. Looking back, we may and must admit that the Blessed Mother has truly—to speak in the spirit of the Founding Document—revealed her glories in a brilliant manner from her shrine<sup>8</sup>. She has led us deeply into the mysteries of her life and activity and we have strived both as individuals and in community—and not without success—to capture the rays of her glory through our ideals, letting them radiate in us so that they be reflected into the darkness of the world of today.

Retreats, conferences on education, and pastoral workshops have delved into the theoretical depths of the mystery of Mary. {87} They

---

<sup>4</sup> The opening line from the doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer at Mass. It is considered here a summary of St. Paul's Christ-centered spirituality.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Grignon, *Treatise on the True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*, No. 257.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, No. 261.

<sup>7</sup> Pius X, encyclical "Ad illum diem laetissimum", February 2, 1904; cf. *Papal Teachings: Our Lady*, No. 224.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. First Founding Document, October 18, 1914, No. 7.

sought navigable ways for its application in practical daily life.

There was also no lack of serious work and striving to grasp the core reality of Mary and the heart of her personality in order to trace all the individual rays and mysteries back to their ultimate source, to their common denominator. The answer which we found winds its way through *Heavenwards* like a golden thread. The image of Mary which motivates them and shines forth is that of the official and permanent companion and helpmate of Our Lord in the entire work of redemption. Even a fleeting glance into this little [prayer] book is enough to convince one of the fact. I can therefore leave the specific passages unquoted. In addition, it is an explicit documentation of degree and kind concerning our total surrender to the person, educational influence, and interests of the official Christ-giver, Christ-bearer, and Christ-server nourished by this spirit.

(...)

#### *The Objective and Subjective Sides of the Mystery of Mary*

{91} By the "mystery of Mary" Grignion understands the position of Our Lady in the objective plan of salvation and the salvific power of the total surrender to her and her educational influence. This mystery therefore has two sides—an objective and a subjective one.

The objective side is Mary's position. It is called a "mystery" because it is too little known in its entirety—even where it is recognized and acknowledged—and because it cannot be completely grasped or understood, for Mary is a compendium of faith, a "*speculum iustitiae*" (Mirror of Justice), a created reflection of the divine glories like no other, a "library of God", a "miracle of miracles" which, as Leo XIII interprets this word of St. John Damascene, is a miracle in the order of nature, grace, and glory<sup>9</sup>.

The subjective side is the total surrender of the individual Christian to the person and educative activity of the Blessed Mother. This, too, is worthy of the title "mystery" {92} for two reasons:

---

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Leo XIII, encyclical "Augustissimae Virginis", September 12, 1897; the original quote is from St. John Damascene (c.690-c.749), *Or. I de Nativ. B.V.*

Because the total surrender—both in the form and degree which Grignion strived for and taught, and in its remarkable effectiveness for personal transformation into Christ—remains an unknown and a book with seven seals for most Christians, i.e. a mystery.

(...)

#### *Mary's Salvific Mission*

{113} For Grignion, the essence of Mary's glory, the mystery of her person, and her position and mission in the history of salvation, is her dignity and function as the One who bears Christ. His eyes of faith were not sharpened by mere theological speculation, either. His keen insight was incomparably more a fruit of his deep prayer life and the gifts {114} of the Holy Spirit which were so copiously at work in his life.

His Marian motif, capturing as it does the mystery of Mary in both its objective and subjective dimensions, can be readily grasped. It can be translated in the following fashion into our manner of speaking: In the plan of the eternal Father, Mary, in her person, position, and function, is *conditionally* necessary for our salvation<sup>10</sup>. If the law "*ordo essendi est ordo agendi*" [the order of being is the norm for the order of action] is a truth of general validity, then one must speak of Marian devotion as a conditional necessity for our salvation. It is then simply not enough to portray her as "helpful" for our salvation. Indeed, this double necessity grows apace with the individual's actual and allocated share in salvation through the grace of redemption. The greater the degree of sanctity to which one is called, the greater must be the degree of Marian devotion.

In order to understand this compact compendium of Marian theology, asceticism, and pedagogy, we would do well to study Grignion's position more closely and allow it to sink in.

The saint speaks of two births of the Savior, a physical and a mystical<sup>11</sup>. The first is the birth of Our Lord from the womb of his

---

<sup>10</sup> In German: *bedingt* heilsnotwendig.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Grignion, *Treatise*, No. 30-36. See also Kentenich, *Mary, Our Mother and Educator*, p. 82-84.

most blessed Mother; its fruit is the historical Christ. The second is the rebirth of Our Lord in the soul; its fruit is the mystical Christ. And it, too, must occur – not physically, of course, but mystically – through the womb {115} of Mary.

The woman who was formed by Christ is also the Mother who forms Christ in the faithful. She is simply *the* official Christ-bearer. Her private interests recede entirely into the background. She no longer has any interests of her own, or – to put it another way – all her personal and most personal, all her private interests belong entirely to Christ, both in his historical originality and in his members. She is so completely absorbed by him that it would almost seem that nothing would be left of her. She is and will remain in all things the official Christ-bearer.

(....)

{116} All such expressions are an explanation of the above term "conditionally necessary for our salvation". What it means is that Our Lady's cooperation was not an absolute necessity, but one which solely came as a condition adopted by God as part of his plan from all eternity. Redemption, in an abstract sense, could also have been achieved without the cooperation of the Blessed Mother, just as it could have been realized without the birth, suffering, and death of Our Lord. In both cases they were only necessary because the Father had ordained it that way from all eternity. That is what we mean by "conditionally necessary", that is, it is *necessary on the condition that it stands that it is so willed by the plan of God*.

(....)

{120} Like St. Bernard, Grignion does not derive his teaching from an abstract concept of redemption. He does not derive it as the logical and necessary consequence of a teaching of salvation which is seen and interpreted in an abstract manner. For him that comes as little in question as it does for us. He repeats in his own way the words of St. Bernard, "*Deus sic voluit, Deus sic statuit*" [God has

willed it so, God has ordained it so]<sup>12</sup>. That is, he joins this doctor of the Church in basing his argument on the free decision of the will {121} of the Father, on his free and clearly discernable mandate. We therefore find the following statement by Grignion: "There is not a single heavenly gift bestowed on humanity which does not pass through *her* virginal hands, for that is the will of God, who has willed that we receive all things through Mary<sup>13</sup>."

Those who so clearly recognize the divine plan and the position of Mary, those whose approach is so real or—if one prefers—so realistic that it meets the standards of a Christian realism, will take it as a matter of course that every personal whim and wish and will must submit to and follow the plans of God. In this case, that means that the individual will see Mary's position in the objective order in its conditional necessity, respond to it out of the conviction that a personal love for Mary is also necessary for his own salvation, and then translate it into action in his daily life. Father Köster provides us with an insightful description of Grignion's position. We read:

"All in all, Marian devotion is simply an application of the statement that our deeds must be oriented on the order of being. It seeks to fully acknowledge the mission of Mary both in the objective and subjective salvific realities, just as the fundamental statements of Catholic faith have presented it—nothing more. The act of her motherhood makes this so suddenly clear—her mission consists of the preparation and presentation of humanity to the Son of God. The preparation and deliverance of Christ's humanity into the hypostatic union with the Son of God which took place through her motherhood is but an eminent symbol and

---

<sup>12</sup> St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), cf. In nativitate B.V.M. sermo, c.7: "*Quia sic est voluntas eius, qui totum nos habere voluit per Mariam*" (For that is the will of him who wants that we have everything through Mary), and De Aquaeductu, no. 6: "*Haec est voluntas Dei, qui totum nos voluit habere per Mariam*" (That is the will of God, who wants that we have everything through Mary). See also Grignion, *Treatise*, No. 141.

<sup>13</sup> Grignion, *Treatise*, No. 25. Emphasis from Fr. Kentenich.

the beginning of this mission. This "transduction" or—if I may put it more {122} picturesquely—this transplantation and infusion of humanity into the Son of God is the characteristic feature of Mary's being. It is as if she were identical with this action of transplantation. For humanity, her heart and womb are not only the place where the transformation into the Son of God *can* take place, but—and whatever else should her universal mediation of graces, as it is understood today, mean?—by necessity *must* take place. At the same time, she is the place where it takes place *most perfectly*, for here is the place of the hypostatic union. There is simply no deeper union with the Son of God. To venerate Mary means to make this faith of the Church—for that is what the above words hope to express—one's own. That means, *to seek out the place in the current of the Christocentric lifestream—through contact of the heart with the Model of the Church—where the slope towards the Son of God is steepest, the current most irresistible, and the force uniting us to him the strongest in the history of salvation.* The heart of Mary, as the Marian dogmas seem to want to tell us, is the summit and therefore the greatest teacher of all Christocentric longing<sup>14</sup>."

(....)

{123} From this perspective we can understand why one can correctly maintain that all saints in the history of Christianity have been close to Mary, and why—especially in {124} more recent times, when the knowledge of Mary's position has become clearer—all who wish to ascend the summit of perfection must strive for perfect devotion to Mary in one form or another.

(....)

---

<sup>14</sup> Heinrich Maria Köster (1911-), Pallottine Father and preeminent Mariologist in Schoenstatt during the 1940s and 1950s, *Unus Mediator* (Limburg, 1950), p. 303-304. Emphasis from Köster.

## II

### *Answers to Modern Difficulties with the Mystery of Mary*

{126} The perfect fusion of hearts with the Blessed Mother is, according to Grignion, the easiest, surest, and shortest way to the fusion of hearts with Our Lord and the Blessed Trinity<sup>15</sup>. This is frequently seen by today's thinking as an irreconcilable contradiction, whereas it is seen by life as a compact unity and whole. On the basis of everything which we have already considered from the pen and heart of Grignion, we know that his efforts for an "in Mary" were solely in order to secure the "in Christ" and "in the Blessed Trinity".

{127} He is being entirely consistent with his way of thinking when he derives his "perfect devotion to Mary" from and bases it on the perfect imitation of Christ<sup>16</sup>. His line of thought is the following: Christ was under the authority of his Mother until he was thirty. The obedience which he lived in those years gave his heavenly Father more glory than if he had been working great miracles during this time<sup>17</sup>. The reason for this is simple – that and only that is what the Father desired of those years.

Christ came into the world to glorify his heavenly Father. He therefore prays in the "morning prayer" of his life, "Sacrifices and oblations you wished not, but you prepared a body for me; see, Father, I come to do your will" (Heb 10,5.7). Hence he chose as his life's motto, "I will always do whatever pleases the Father" (Jn 8,29). Through the kindness of the same Father we have become members and brothers of Christ. We, too, are therefore obligated to have the same attitude towards our Blessed Mother. Grignion first traverses the "*per Christum ad Mariam*" [through Christ to Mary] in order to perfectly traverse from there the "*per Mariam ad Christum*" [through Mary to Christ].

---

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Grignion, *Treatise*, No. 152-168.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, No. 61-67.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, No. 139.

### *The Philosophy of Love*

The philosophy of love can easily solve the theoretical difficulty which [Marian devotion] poses for modern thinking and sensibilities. {128} One must simply make reference to the assimilating power of love or the transmission of life which takes place in love.

According to Grignon, Our Lady is the personified, incarnate "relationship to God" – and to Christ and the Blessed Trinity – and "echo of God"<sup>18</sup>. To be inwardly transformed into Mary is therefore by necessity an inner transformation into [the likeness of] God and Christ.

(....)

The *Shepherd's Mirror* never tires of repeating the prayer:

"Let us abide in holy three-in-oneness  
and thus go in the Holy Sprit to the Father"<sup>19</sup>!"

{129} As it is strived for here, "three-in-oneness" is the union of the soul with Mary and Christ. It always seeks to come to a certain degree of fulfillment, regardless of where it starts. When one is spiritually mobile and open for God's guidance, the path will lead more from Jesus to Mary one day and more from Mary to Jesus the next. As a result, the reality behind the two words will intermingle, consciously or unconsciously, "from Christ to Mary" and "from Mary to Christ". Our Lady does not always have to be the organic point of departure for a deeper love of Christ, and may never be the final organic destination. But at all costs she must be the organic point of passage—otherwise an essential element will be missing in our Schoenstatt spirituality.

Such philosophical insights and laws may be recognized theoretically, but in practice many Catholics, especially those with a

---

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Grignon, *Treatise*, No. 225.

<sup>19</sup> *Hirtenspiegel* (The Shepherd's Mirror), v. 4751ff. This pastoral guide was written by Fr. Kentenich in the concentration camp in Dachau in 1943-44. Written in verse form, *The Shepherd's Mirror* also includes many "refrains" which are repeated again and again, including this one. This verse is also found in *Heavenwards* in the introduction to the "Schoenstatt Office", p. 45.

higher education, are unable to see any real sense in them.

### *The Psychology of Love*

The psychology of love leads us the same way—unfortunately with the same lack of practical success. According to St. Augustine, love is, seen from the perspective of the soul, an *inscriptio cordis in cor* [inscription of one heart in the heart of the other], a fusion of hearts<sup>20</sup>. As a result, perfect love must be seen as an *inscriptio perfecta, perpetua, mutua*—a perfect, perpetual, and mutual fusion of hearts. It is not something isolated, but has a living, {130} personal being at its focus which, as an image of God, ultimately awakens and nurtures the warmth of love and leads and transmits it back to the heart of God. It does that, however, by leading the immediate human object of noble love with itself into God and God's love. That is so true that the beatific vision not only consists of the mysterious spiritual intimacy between soul and God, but also between one soul and another, between human partners—just as the punishment of condemnation to hell consists of the animosity of the soul towards God and all other souls.

When we psychologically analyze the life process referred to here, we must speak of a law of organic—not mechanistic—transference and transmission<sup>21</sup>. But here, too, we must make the same observation: "Indeed I hear the message, but I lack the faith"<sup>22</sup>." The practical result is that those who might apply these laws [of the psychology of love] to the "in Mary" and "in Christ Jesus" are unable to see that they have any real sense. How can such an inability be

---

<sup>20</sup> St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430), letter to Paulinus of Nola (Migne: PL 33,122).

<sup>21</sup> The law of organic transference and transmission refers to the process by which God freely bestows (i.e. transfers) attributes which belong to him—in particular, his ability to give and receive love and life. We in turn have the task of passing on (i.e. transmission of) these gifts (to our children, for instance) in such a way that both we and the recipients of our love are led back to God. The same law can be applied in an analogous sense to any interpersonal relationship.

<sup>22</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1742-1832), *Faust*, Part I, Night Scene.

explained?

### *The Universal Laws of Order*

To continue: There is a theology, a philosophy, and a psychology of [God's] universal law of order. The God {131} of order laid down in his natural and supernatural creation a marvelous order which the intent observer cannot help but recognize. Consider the mineral kingdom, the plant and animal kingdoms, the realms of men and angels, the realms of nature and grace. In their own right, each of these kingdoms represents a significant order. But they also stand in relationship to one another, among, with, and in one another. In other words, they form a cosmos of order, a cosmos which is governed by two laws.

The first law is stated by Haecker. According to him, the lower<sup>23</sup> reality must, in every respect, be understood from the higher<sup>24</sup>. St. Thomas declares—and with that we touch on the second law—that the process of recognition progresses through the lower to the higher order. Hence the axiom, "*Quod prius non fuerit in sensibus, non est in intellectu*" [Nothing can enter the intellect unless it first passes through the senses]<sup>25</sup>. These laws appear to contradict one another, but must be seen and evaluated together. They ultimately describe two aspects of a single great and mysterious life process and represent two possible perspectives for viewing the world.

Suppose, for instance, that one wants to correctly understand the meaning of marriage. From Haecker's perspective, one must first think and feel one's way into the relationship which Christ has with his Mother-Bride, with Mary or with the Church. {132} The relationship between Christ and his Mother-Bride or the Church is the

---

<sup>23</sup> "Lower" is meant here in an objective, ontological and not a devaluative sense (e.g. "lower lifeforms"). To speak of certain things as "belonging to a lower order" is by no means to deny the intrinsic dignity which each order has in the sight of God.

<sup>24</sup> Theodor Haecker (1879-1945), German philosopher. The law of order which Fr. Kantenich presents here is from his book *Was ist der Mensch?* (What is man?) (Leipzig, 1933), p. 11.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-1274), *Summa Theologica*, I, 84, 6.

higher reality, the relationship between the marriage partners is the lower one. Or: The meaning of all mutual noble love is mirrored in the words of Our Lord, "Whoever loses his life for my sake will win it, while he who seeks to win it will lose it" (Mt 10,39).

It should also be remembered that whenever the lower order conforms to the higher, it can only do so by sacrificing its absolute autonomy. The price may be high, but the reward is equally great—it can participate in the perfection of the higher order. This is what happens to plant life when it is consumed by animal life, and to both the vegetative reality of the plants and the sensory reality of the animals when they are taken up by the intellectual life of man. Compare the price with the reward at each of the different levels. When united with a higher order, each order must give up its absolute autonomy and conform to the laws of the higher order. That is the price. The reward is then by no means small—participation in the perfection of the higher order.

This law applies throughout all of creation, be it on the natural or the supernatural level. If nature submits to grace, it is not without many sacrifices for intellect, will, and heart. Such is the meaning of the ancient and sobering proverb: Grace builds on nature's ruins. Or: No transfiguration or perfection of nature can be obtained {133} without nature's profound sacrifice. The reward is a home in the supernatural reality and participation in its perfection and laws. That is the meaning of the axiom, "*Gratia praesupponit, non destruit, sed perficit et elevat naturam*"<sup>26</sup>, that is, grace does not destroy nature but presupposes its cooperation and has the task of perfecting and elevating it beyond its natural self.

Haecker's theorem is therefore correct. But so is that of Thomas. Because of the body-soul structure of our human nature, all natural insight begins with the senses and is translated into conceptual knowledge through the activity of abstraction done by the intellect. This process is not a contradiction to Haecker's view. Once a particular insight is gained, it is compared with the knowledge

---

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, 1, 8 ad 2 and I, 2, 2 ad 1.

already perceived. Haecker's axiom then becomes relevant: The lower order can only be correctly understood and evaluated from the higher order. The lower order can be seen as a symbol for the higher order. The higher order, as demonstrated by the above examples, is what is symbolized; it is the primary order on which the lower order must—in accordance with God's plan—be orientated. That is true even when historically—as in the case of marriage—the lower order is the first to appear while the higher one—in this case Christ and the Church—only develops with time.

### *The Third Law*

This line of thought draws our attention to a third law of order. If the lower order can only be understood from the higher order, we need to ask: What is the significance of the lower order for the higher? The {134} answer is: It points the way to the higher order. To be more exact, it is an expression, means, and safeguard for the higher order.

The significance of this can be illustrated with an example out of daily life. A Catholic's childlike love for his or her earthly father is an *expression* of his or her childlike love for the heavenly Father. Moreover, it is a strong *safeguard* for this love.

This is because the existence of such love makes an impression on the very depths of the pre-, un-, and subconscious life of the soul. It is then easy, in line with the law of organic transference, to spontaneously transfer this experience of love to the heavenly Father. As we know from experience, many Catholics fail to attain a deep childlike relationship with God the Father because they lack such a basis in the lower order. That there is a Father in heaven is something which has therefore become less and less real for many people. He vanishes into the flights of mere abstraction.

With that we touch again on the undeniably tragic effects of the philosophical idealism of our time<sup>27</sup> which has so dismembered—in

---

<sup>27</sup> Fr. Kentenich is referring to the exaggerated trend to a detached, objective, rational thinking which was especially prevalent in the decades before World War I. It was this exaggerated idealism which led him into

fact nearly dissolved—the natural order that we must reckon with its complete ruin. Both idealistic theory and [the symptoms visible in] everyday living portend a Christianity devoid of energy and vitality, and which must inevitably fall victim to a raging storm. The soul not only needs attachments to ideas, but also to places and especially to persons. The person can only become firmly rooted and perfected through persons and personal attachments. A human being without this deep-seated rootedness in the lower, in the natural order, is like a tree without roots. It {135} will quickly lose its footing in the natural order and not grow deeply enough in the higher, the supernatural order. That is what we must normally expect; exceptions only serve to confirm the rule.

(...)

This also makes it plain that the lower order is not only an expression and protection for the higher order, but also a *means* which helps towards its realization.

With regard to the endangered orders and their inner correlation, Marian love has an exceedingly decisive but unfortunately too little regarded role to play.

(...)

### *Mary in the Order of the World*

{137} The [Schoenstatt] family has a deeply anchored conviction about the concept of a divine world order which has its scholarly expression in two statements.

*The Blessed Mother is the world's equilibrium*, that is, in her and through her the cosmos of order is kept in balance between this world and the next<sup>28</sup>. The magnitude and relevance of the attendant ramifications are becoming clearer and clearer to persons who do not make light work of their responsibility.

(...)

The second familiar axiom states essentially the same thing. It

---

the depths of inner crisis in his seminary years. See *New Vision and Life*, p. 19-20.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Study by Fr. Kentenich in 1955, quoted in: *New Vision and Life*, p. 19.

traces the activity of Our Lady back to her being. It states: *The Blessed among women is the incarnation of both the natural and supernatural realities*<sup>29</sup>, namely the perfect embodiment of the unbroken natural and supernatural orders of being and living and their interrelatedness as intended by God. Each time we use this word, we are reminded that Mary's being {138} is also the norm which guides her activity, especially her mediation of graces.

(....)

{140} We have made explicit mention of the three laws of world order because the two hearts—the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary—each belong to two orders: a higher and a lower one; and because this is where German thinking has its difficulty in understanding a perfect surrender to the Blessed Mother in the sense of "in Mary". The inner and vital relationship between the "in Mary" and "in Christ" is too weakly seen and interpreted. That is particularly the case when rationalistic thinking and rationalistic piety, often also referred to as mechanistic or separatistic, prove their complete inability to join in [such a relationship]. This way of thinking tears apart things which belong together. Here as elsewhere, only a robust organic thinking can be completely in tune with life. That is what we find in the long-standing axiom from the theory of perception: *Quidquid recipitur ad modum recipientis recipitur* [A message is received the way the receiver receives it].

Hengstenberg<sup>30</sup> applies the said laws, in particular the three functions of the lower order on behalf of the higher, to the topic of our discussion in a manner which can be readily grasped. In the process he interprets {141} the two statements: "Mary is the world's equilibrium" and "Mary is the incarnation of nature and grace".

---

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *New Vision and Life*, p. 19, where in the same study from 1955 Fr. Kentenich notes that, "the Blessed Mother is simply the intersection point between the natural and supernatural realities...." See also Second Founding Document, No. 87.

<sup>30</sup> Hans-Eduard Hengstenberg (b.1904), German Catholic theologian. Fr. Kentenich quotes his work *Die Marienverehrung im Geisteskampf unserer Tage* (Marian Devotion in the Intellectual Struggle of our Day) (Würzburg, 1948).

(....)

[He] investigates the differences between the hearts of Jesus and Mary. At the same time, he clearly underscores the inner relatedness of the two hearts. It is not difficult to rediscover there the three functions [as they appear] in the Heart of Mary with regard to the Heart of Christ. {142} We only need to make the mental substitution of "in Mary" whenever he speaks of the "Heart of Mary", and "in Christ" whenever he speaks of the "Heart of Jesus":

"The difference between the two consecrations is that the Sacred Heart of Jesus and its order are borne by a divine person, while the Immaculate Heart of Mary is borne by a human person. In Christ we find a divine person with a human nature, while in Mary a human person with a human nature. As a result, the order which is realized in the Heart of Mary—because it is the order of a human personality—is closer to us in terms of time and example than the order found in the Heart of Christ. To be more precise: Through contemplation of the ordered Heart of Mary we attain a deeper insight into and love of the Heart of Jesus. As we have already said, the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary deepens and animates the consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus without being a contradiction to it and without being a mere 'multiplication' of consecrations.

"In Mary's heart we therefore have a way and a means which allow us to more easily and deeply find our way into the Jesus' heart. Consequently, her heart is also a means and a way for bringing about the effective activity of the Heart of Christ in the world. To be sure, the order which Mary represents as a 'cosmos' [in her own right] can only exist in the order which is laid down in Christ and his divine Heart. From that standpoint it is understandable how the membership of the world in Christ shall be realized through a special consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary<sup>31</sup>."

---

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 42. Emphasis from Hengstenberg.



We must take particular note of the sentence, "Through contemplation of the ordered Heart of Mary we attain *a deeper insight into and love of the Heart of Jesus*." That corresponds {143} to our observation: The lower order is a mirror, illustration, and expression of the higher order. Hengstenberg means the same thing when he speaks of a "deeper insight". In addition, he speaks of a *deeper love, and of a deepened and animated consecration to the Sacred Heart as a fruit of the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*. That is what the word "safeguard" wishes to convey, i.e. "the lower order protects the higher one". The third function which we have attributed to the lower order for the sake of the higher is characterized by the word "means". The text refers to that in its own way:

"...her heart is also *a means and a way* for bringing about the effective activity of the Heart of Christ in the world. To be sure, the order which Mary represents as a "cosmos" can only exist in the order which is laid down in Christ and his divine Heart. From that standpoint it is understandable *how the membership of the world in Christ shall be realized through a special consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary*."

The allusion to the fact that, "to be sure, the order which Mary represents as a 'cosmos' can only exist in the order which is laid down in Christ and his divine Heart," reminds us of the first law of the order of the world which states that the lower order must be understood in its relationship to the higher one.

(....)

{145} Finally, the text maintains the following:

"Admittedly, this consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary has the effect that *our hearts become ordered and capable of transmitting the order of the Heart of Mary to the rest of the world and of dispelling all disorder*. But this gain is—both for us and for the world—only a secondary one.

"If one wants to speak of advantage, then we must immediately face the justified objection that Christ can help us so much more effectively and {146} immediately than Mary. Why try to attain something through Mary when Christ 'can do it so much better'?! Of course, one could attempt to counter this

objection with the argument that it is a matter of respect not to go immediately to the highest authority with a request, but to first ask a lower authority, just as we do not immediately approach the highest authority here on earth but observe the 'chain of command'. But this answer would place our veneration in a dubious light. It would show that we have measured God and Christ using earthly standards—distinguishing them from human greatness only as a matter of degree and not of kind. In addition, we would be denying a fundamental tenet of our Christian faith, namely that we can come in immediate contact with God and Christ and that no one is closer to us than God himself. No, the reason for the veneration of the saints in general and the veneration of Mary in particular cannot be founded on a 'chain of command' for obtaining things from God (however true the thought may be that the saints can carry a prayer to God more worthily than ourselves). The above objection can therefore not be dismissed in this manner.

"The above objection can only be refuted if we stop thinking of veneration as something built on 'advantage'. In reality, it is simply the reverent acknowledgment, acceptance, and love of the order which God has placed before us in [the person of] Mary. If Marian devotion is seen in this light, then its seeming contradiction to the immediacy of our Christian relationship with God in Christ—something which is often the occasion for the confusion of others—is overcome. The fact that every Christian has an immediate and personal relationship with God and Christ stands by no means contrary to the fact that we venerate Mary because of the position which she has in the cosmos and in the plan of salvation, and that we express this love for her in a consecration to her [Immaculate] Heart.

{147} "In fact, we can practically go on the offensive. The above objection presupposes that the essence of our piety is to obtain either natural or supernatural goods from Almighty God. If that is my starting point, then I can eliminate not only Mary, but eventually Christ as well, for God is independent of both Mary and the humanity of Christ. Such a position, however, only

sees God from the standpoint of his power, and not as the God who, out of love, created the world in greatness, beauty, and truth and—entirely independent of our 'advantage'—sent his Son as the revelation of the interior life of the Divine. It is derived from a voluntaristic view of religion and piety. The goal of our Marian devotion is therefore not to ascribe something to Mary which she 'can do' and Christ 'cannot' (a ridiculous and heathen thought), but to *venerate the order which God reveals to us in Mary in accordance with his plan of salvation, and that we, through the attachment to Mary, deepen our attachment to God in Christ*<sup>32</sup>."

In this *summary* of the philosophy and psychology of love and of the theology, philosophy, and psychology of the order of the world, the relationship between the "in Mary" and "in Christ Jesus" will hopefully have become at least theoretically clear.

(....)

*The Three Laws Exemplified in the Life of St. Thérèse of Lisieux*

{154} In Christian love of neighbor the souls always seek to unite and connect in a personal manner, while maintaining the relationship with God. The unity therefore always consists of a three parties:

the unity from the "I" to the human "You"

and from the human "You" to the divine "You."

If this unity attains a high degree, then it experiences a "with", "through", and "in" with the living partner, with the personal "You" as a symbol and transparency of the divine "You".

{155} This spiritual three-in-oneness is found, be it consciously or unconsciously, implicitly or explicitly, in every stage of development. It never sees the human "You" as separated from the relationship with God, that is, from the divine "You". No Christian who has reached the age of reason will make such a separation, regardless of whether his or her love is still in one of the most primitive stages or at the loftiest levels of the purified selfless love of

---

<sup>32</sup> Hengstenberg, p. 44-46, emphasis added by Fr. Kentenich.

a canonizable sanctity, or at any stage in between. The only exception is the state of sin, in which one turns away from God and, for all practical purposes, denies one's relationship with God.

The primitiveness of a "primitive" Christian love for a personal "You" does not come from seeing the human and the divine "You" as separate, but from the emphasis on the "I", the relationship to self, which is so much in the foreground. Moral theology speaks of this as an *amor concupiscentiae* (love of desire)<sup>33</sup>. On the other hand, it must be made clear that the love of a saint is not heroic because it has eliminated the human "You" and only sees and embraces God, nor because it has degraded and profaned the human "You" into an "it", but because the spiritual three-in-oneness has experienced a shift of accent. The clinging to self has been overcome, the "I" recedes into the background, and the human and divine "You" stand in the middle-point in such a uniquely mysterious two-in-oneness that the human "You" is seen more in God than God in the human "You".

Those who have never experienced this spiritual three-in-oneness on the earthly level, or have done so without the necessary depth, will {156} only be able to understand the three-in-oneness with Mary and Christ with difficulty. They lack the experience; they lack the starting point, the bridge of association. They are therefore unable to appreciate the laws of emotional transfer. The wealth of their supernatural life is often depleted because of the impoverishment they had to endure in the lower, the natural order. The words of St. John apply to them twice over: "Whoever does not love, is among the living dead" (1 Jn 3,14).

A classic example of the spiritual three-in-oneness between an "I," a human "You," and the divine "You" is St. Therese of the Child Jesus<sup>34</sup>. Her human "You" was her earthly father. It is not difficult to document how he, belonging to the lower order, was an expression or representative or transparency and safeguard, as well as a help for her until the end of her life in embodying her image of the heavenly

---

<sup>33</sup> For the degrees of love, see M.A. Nailis, *Everyday Sanctity* (Waukesha, c.1980), p. 59.

<sup>34</sup> St. Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-1897).

Father and her relationship to him. It is written of her:

"Thérèse is born into a family which immediately serves her as an image of heaven. Her family, with its customs and relationships, acts as a kind of picture-book for her, in which she learns to spell out the reality of the Christian faith. Everything in this book is concrete, speaking directly and intelligibly, for it is composed in the simple language which God has devised for his children. *There is no danger that the child will linger too long over the letters and miss their spirit and meaning.* The picture is luminous, the letter significant, and the child absorbs the meaning from the picture it sees and the word it hears. *Symbolic vision and grasp of wholeness precede the development {157} of abstract thought and provide the surest guide for the awakening mind.* The world is wholly sacramental, its appearance an effective symbol of the Spirit of God working through appearances and matter.

"At the centre of the family is the *Father*. Thérèse loved him, almost idolized him; at a glance she saw in him the unbreakable unity of love and authority. Never fearing him for a single moment, her relationship to him taught her that obedience and love are indivisible, because they are ultimately one. *Through her father's authority she comes to understand what God's authority means. She looks towards her father; her father looks towards God, and so she learns to look to God.*

"Thérèse is still quite small when her father takes her to church; during the sermon he bends over her and whispers, 'Listen carefully, my little queen, he is talking about your patron saint.' 'I paid great attention, but I candidly admit that I looked at my father more than at the preacher. His fine face was so eloquent to me. Many times his eyes filled with tears which he tried in vain to keep back. When he was listening to the eternal truths it was as though he no longer belonged to this world but had been transported to a better one.' And it was Thérèse who knelt beside her father during evening prayers: 'I only needed to look at him to learn how the saints pray.' Throughout her life Thérèse is convinced of her father's sanctity. She tells with enthusiasm of how

people named him 'Monsieur Saint Martin' on the pilgrimage to Rome; how he made wonderful progress on the path of sanctity from the very beginning of his illness; he had learnt how 'to forgive immediately,' whilst 'Mama and everyone who knew him testify that he never spoke an uncharitable word.'

{158} "*Is it not easy to understand how a daughter sees in such a father a direct reflection of God the Father? Indeed the two are so intimately linked together in Thérèse's mind that she dares to write at the time of her father's death: 'The good God has taken away the one whom we loved so tenderly. Did this not happen so that we might say in all truth, 'Our Father, who art in Heaven?'* And once, when speaking of God, she lets slip the phrase: '*Papa, le bon Dieu.*' At the back of her mind is the image of her own father, 'who, as dew-drops reflect the sun, himself mirrors the divine father-love from which all fatherhood takes its name.' 'When I think of you, Papa, then I automatically think of the good God, for I cannot imagine anyone on earth more saintly than yourself.'

"But this father-image does not become wholly transparent until the mystery of suffering begins to overshadow this holy man. One day he returns home from the church of Notre Dame at Alençon, overcome by the consolations he had received there. He tells the children of the prayer that had welled up in his heart: 'My God, this is too much—I am really too happy. It is not possible to reach Heaven this way. I wish to do some suffering for you. And I have offered myself...' But God, who hears our prayers before they are spoken, had long ago revealed to Thérèse the form which her father's suffering was to take—in the prophetic vision of the figure in the garden, with his head veiled, the meaning of which neither she nor her sisters could unravel. Thérèse later gives voice to her awe as she remembers how Leo XIII at their audience had 'laid his hand upon her father's venerable head as if wishing to set a secret seal upon him in the name of Christ.' The children's sorrow as they watch the offering being fulfilled is heart-rending; their father sinks into darkness—he actually used to veil his head very often at the start of his

illness; he has to be taken into a nursing-home, where he pines away during long years of desolation. {159} *Now it is not God the Father but the Son who becomes visible through the veil cast over the sorrowful face.*

"Right into her period in Carmel the image and destiny of her father remained with Thérèse as the shadowing forth of divine mysteries. As one of the saint's sisters explains: 'It was in Carmel, at the time when our father's serious illness was causing us such a severe trial, that Thérèse drew nearer to the mystery of the Passion. It was also during this period that she received permission to add the name 'of the Holy Face' to her own.' Her devotion to the hidden Face of Sorrows is later described by Thérèse as the very heart of her piety. Without any prompting she takes up the motif of the suffering servant of Isaias, picking out the verse where it says 'his face was hidden' [Is 53,3]. And so the prophetic vision of her father in the garden is not an isolated or unintelligible event.

"We are indebted to Petitot for having shown us the profound connection between this seemingly chilling vision and the subsequent flowering of Thérèse's *mystique* of the Hidden Face. *It is essential to notice that Thérèse's first sight of this does not come to her from the original, Christ, but from the reproduction, her father.* This fact is a divine confirmation of the symbolism uniting the two orders. 'As the adorable Face was veiled during the Passion, similarly the face of His faithful servant had to be veiled during the days of his humiliation so as to shine with greater glory in Heaven.' And Thérèse feels herself drawn into the drama that is being played out before her eyes: 'I wished that my own face, like that of Jesus, might be hidden in sorrow so that no one should esteem me. I thirsted to suffer and to be forgotten.' Two months before her death {160} she pays him her final tribute in the noble description she gives of him. *And when making her profession she unites his sacrifice to her own by asking for the wreath she wore on that day to be placed on the desolate man's*

*brow, along with the formula of profession*<sup>35</sup>."

Reality does not frequently come this close to the ideal. That does not mean, however, that we should not whole-heartedly strive for it. But what will be the fate of the untold millions who grow up practically without a father for either body or soul? God is the sovereign Lord of all hearts that belong to him. He does not only have a normal way of drawing us to himself. He is often forced—to speak in a very human manner – to make use of the law of contrast in order to achieve his goal. In other words, he allows these men and women – and their number is legion – who were denied a deeper experience of an earthly father, to compare their experience with the father-experience portrayed by Sacred Scripture. Through the resulting contrast, a rational clarity can more brightly shine forth in the divine Father-image. If that is successful, the distorted image of the earthly father can gradually acquire a glimmer of transfiguration. Experience shows, however, that a certain inadequacy will often remain until the end of life, a lack of naturalness, of unaffectedness, down-to-earthness and originality, unless in one way or another an equivalent or {161} analogous earthly experience is made in later years which not only transforms, fills, and permeates the emotions, but also the unconscious life of the soul.(....)

{163} To summarize: According to the laws of order, the spiritual in-one-anotherness between a human being, another human being, and God is an expression, means, and safeguard for the spiritual in-one-anotherness between a human being, Mary, and Christ. Is it not therefore legitimate—leaving aside the question of whether it is appropriate or prudent—to not only apply the "through him and with him and in him" to the relationship with Our Lady, but also to noble human beings?

The inner *life-process* which we have described is in reality the same in all cases, be it the three-in-oneness of the individual with Our

---

<sup>35</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988), *Therese von Lisieux. The Story of a Mission* (New York, 1954), translated from the original German (Cologne, 1950) by Donald Nicholl, p. 72-74. Emphasis added by Fr. Kentenich.

Lady and Christ or the three-in-oneness of the individual with another human being and God. We are reminded of the example of St. Thérèse, the Little Flower. One is almost tempted to say that these laws of order, so briefly sketched out here, were in a certain sense also beatified and canonized together with the beatification and canonization of her teaching and life. Here, of course, we have said nothing about the different levels which vary from person to person. We have considered the process within the soul, not the ontological foundation upon which it rests<sup>36</sup>. God and the Blessed Mother are on a much different level than the average person, and yet, from the psychological standpoint the {164} process of love is always the same.

So it is that the laws of order always have the same threefold function, be it in the everyday human order, the Marian order, or the Christological order. We cannot repeat often enough: The lower order is and remains the expression, means, and safeguard for the higher order.

(....)

---

<sup>36</sup> The ontological foundation of the Christian's relationship with Mary was dealt with in Part I of this chapter.

### *Mary Overcomes the Mass-Mindedness of our Times*

{194} The consecration<sup>1</sup> is directed to the heart of Mary. One should not forget that it is a mutual perfect exchange of goods, a perfect mutual exchange of love, [that is,] a perfect, mutual fusion of hearts. Hence, {195} this type of a movement of consecration gains a quality which clearly emphasizes *the mission of Mary to overcome the demonic phenomenon of modern mass-mindedness*<sup>2</sup>, making [her mission] effective [in our times] and shedding light on Grignon's statement from still another side.

Spiritual writers today like to describe the current situation using the term *corpus diabolicum*<sup>3</sup>. The word is modeled after *corpus Christi mysticum*<sup>4</sup>. But the content is only partially analogous. The use of these terms is supposed to clearly show and characterize the battle lines between the opposing fronts. On the one side is the banner of Christ, on the other the banner of Satan. These are the two background powers engaged in mutual battle here on earth and are in search of instruments – Christ and Lucifer. Just as Christ has forged a mysterious union between his members and himself as the head – his mystical body filled with the Holy Spirit, so does the “ape” of God desire to form a visible corporation which he can constantly influence as his “body,” which he can direct as his “kingdom” and abuse for his purposes.

If the intent of Christ is to elevate his members to full awareness of their dignity, to the nobility of being children of God, Satan's intent is to depersonalize his followers and to let them be swallowed up by the masses. Because, in his way of doing things, the masses are directed by the “antichrists,” one speaks of a {196} mass demonism, that is, of masses directed by demonic powers.

---

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Kentenich has just talked about the consecration of the whole world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary by Pope Pius XII in 1942 (following the urging of Our Lady of Fatima), but also about the entire movement of consecration to Mary, both as promoted by St. Louis Grignon de Montfort and Schoenstatt.

<sup>2</sup> German: *Massendämonie*. One could also translate it as “demonism of the masses.”

<sup>3</sup> Diabolical body or corporation. See H.E. Hengstenberg, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> The Mystical Body of Christ.

Stalin once illustrated the importance of the masses for Bolshevism by drawing a comparison with the giant Antaeus. Just as in Greek mythology the giant Antaeus was unbeatable as long as his feet touched Mother Earth, and could only be strangled because Hercules lifted him up from the earth, the Communist Party will only remain unbeatable as long as it has its roots in the masses. Separated from the masses, however, it will be defeated. Another time he spoke of the necessity of the party to be united with the masses: Otherwise it will be impossible for the party not only to teach the masses, but also to learn from them; not only to lead the masses and to lift them up to the level of the party, but also to listen to the voices of the masses and to discern their most urgent needs<sup>5</sup>.

The mass man celebrates his greatest triumphs in Bolshevism. There he can be found in purest form. It is he who is meant when one speaks of the danger from the East<sup>6</sup>.

But the mass man, even if not realized to such a high degree, is also the danger from the West and for the West. As a spiritual problem it is a danger which threatens to totally overwhelm the average people of today. It includes an attitude of the soul which characterizes its entire being and which makes it the gravedigger {197} not only of Western but of every culture.

It must be addressed as an illness of the soul which has penetrated the innermost marrow of thinking and wanting and which determines all behavior to every question of life. For the superficial observer it shows itself outwardly as an indifference and uncertainty. Those who look more closely and find their way to the root of the disease, speak clearly of the bacillus of the mass-man who has already wrecked much devastation and havoc in the soul and is becoming an epidemic. It passes all individual rights, especially the rights and responsibilities of personal decision and responsibility, over to the masses – or to be more precise, to the exponents of the masses: to the leader or dictator

---

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Joseph Stalin, “Zu den Fragen des Leninismus,” in: *Fragen des Leninismus* (Moscow, 1947), p. 162f; and *Geschichte der kommunistischen Partei der Sowjetunion* (Berlin, 1946), p. 438.

<sup>6</sup> The danger for Western Europe from Communist Eastern Europe.

or however else is called the overlord or boss of the masses and knows how to set the chaotic masses in motion and to use them as compliant instruments, playing with them at will and offering them occasional bread and games – *panem et circenses* – in return.

The person thus denigrated into being part of a machine no longer thinks on his own, nor does he want to. He lets others do the thinking for him: his newspaper, the radio, television, the masses. For these things his senses are keen, *too* keen in fact; they are hungry, avaricious. His whole interest is given over to what he can perceive with his senses – his eyes, ears, and hands. For him all other things have little or no meaning.

Modern authors know how to vividly describe this life process. One can take, {198} for instance, books like those by Gustave Le Bon, *The Psychology of the Masses*<sup>7</sup>, or Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses*<sup>8</sup>, or Hendrik de Man, *Mass-mindedness and the Decline of Culture*<sup>9</sup>.

(....)

The actions of the average person today are determined by the perpetual mobility and restlessness of the machine, of which to all appearances he is a part. {199} One almost wants to say that he no longer acts of his own volition from a personality center, based on deliberated decisions; no, he *is being lived* – *homo no agit, sed agitur* [a man not acting, but being acted]. As a result, work of every kind gradually loses its character as participation in the creative and self-giving activity of God<sup>10</sup>. It becomes activity without a soul and always seeks the accompaniment of shop noise like a background

---

<sup>7</sup> Gustave Le Bon (1841-1931), French sociologist who wrote *La psychologie des foules* (1895; English translation: *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, 1896).

<sup>8</sup> Jose Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955), Spanish philosopher who wrote *La rebelión de las masas* (1930).

<sup>9</sup> Hendrik de Man (1885-1953), Belgian social theoretician who wrote *Vermassung und Kulturverfall* (Bern, 1951).

<sup>10</sup> Fr. Kentenich's definition of work in *Everyday Sanctity*. See Schoenstatt's *Everyday Spirituality* (Waukesha, 2003), p. 56f.

music that whips it into motion. The norm and selection principle is the life rhythm of the masses. It is the masses, led by their overlords, which declare what is good and bad, what is beautiful and ugly, what should be embraced and rejected. The conscience no longer plays a role, much less metaphysical principles. One feels at home and happy in the masses – and only there. Solitude, loneliness, silence, calm are the greatest crosses, unbearable burdens from which one flees like the plague, death, and the devil. The supreme crime is to be somehow different, even if that only means being a little different, thinking a little differently, acting a little differently from the masses, or to excel – even if only by a small amount – beyond the crowd.

The masses are absolutely unteachable. They can only be ripped out of their lethargy by suggestive influences. The effect on the individual is like an insoluble oppressive compulsion which can only be escaped with tremendous, heroic effort. The step from enslavement [in attitude] to the unleashing of the mass instincts is very short.

If this depersonalization and mass-mindedness of the individual has reached a high degree, we speak – as already noted – of the Bolshevistic person.

{200} The average person today who has not yet totally a victim of the bolshevistic propaganda machine, but who is nonetheless pulled downward and formed by the gravitation of the masses, must likewise accept the diagnosis of being a “mass man.” He is in constant danger of becoming a Bolshevik as soon as the party apparatus goes in motion and sets its designs on him.

(....)

{202} To be honest, we must all admit that, for better or worse, every one of us without exception is exposed to this depersonalizing influence and have fallen prey to it to not a small degree.

If in the pedagogical congresses of 1950 and 1951 we concluded that the spiritual volume of modern man has been greatly reduced by the industrialization and secularization of life and that modern man’s faculties of soul have lost much receptivity and resilience – be it of

the mind, will, or heart<sup>11</sup> – we must now add: All of this is increased exponentially by the modern demonism of the masses, which is both cause and effect. Who can say with certainty that they have remained untouched by its leveling-in effect? Those who are in the middle of the currents of life sense how difficult it is to elude its oppressive embrace. (....)

{208} We will later prove how our covenant of love with the Mother Thrice Admirable is capable of not only saving our existence from the threat of the demonism of the masses, but of also bringing it to perfection. Here we must be content with a diagnosis of the modern illness of the times.

---

<sup>11</sup> See J. Kentenich, *Education and the Challenge of the Times* (Pedagogical Congress 1950), Talks 2-7, and *Forming the New Person* (Pedagogical Congress 1951), Talks 2-6.

### *Mary saves the Social Order*

Nonetheless, in order to ease the understanding of the above mentioned double-function of our original covenant of love<sup>12</sup>, it may be worth the trouble to illuminate this question from another angle. What we just said about the detrimental effects of the demonism of the masses can also be put this way: It is the grave digger of the entire Christian social order.

Here is the word that has a full resonance for us, which wakes us from sleep like a fanfare of trumpets, which stirs and heightens our sense of responsibility. The “Key to Understanding Schoenstatt” {209} shows that Schoenstatt largely owes its existence and fruitfulness to the guiding idea of the idea of the new man in the new community in double form. This is the equivalent of saving the Catholic image of man and community in its many variations. From here one can draw a straight line that passes through the promise which I made in March 1947 at the private audience with the Holy Father – I want to see to it that the secular institutes contribute in their way to saving the social order – to the battle against the mechanistic mentality [engaged on May 31, 1949] which, consciously or unconsciously, is paving the way to the demonism of the masses all over the world.

If I am not totally mistaken, it is a task of consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary to save the social order which is so sick and shaken to the core, and in this way to see to it that the words come to their total fulfillment: “*Omnes haereses – etiam anthropologicas – tu sola interemisti in universo mundo!*”<sup>13</sup>

Do I need to first clarify a few concepts? What is meant by consecration should be familiar. It is, as we know, a perfect mutual covenant of love, that is, a perfect mutual exchange of goods and hearts or a perfect fusion of hearts of the two covenant {210} partners. In our case the partners are the Blessed Mother and the can-

---

<sup>12</sup> Presumably the double-function of the covenant of love to overcome collectivism and mechanistic thinking. See page 22f above.

<sup>13</sup> You alone have overcome all the heresies – including the anthropological heresies – in the whole world! (cf. Second Founding Document, No. 84).

didate for consecration. The spiritual attitude of both is formed along the lines of *totum pro toto*, all for all, total surrender for total surrender, love for love, loyalty for loyalty. The consecration includes a perfect mutual giving up of self, giving of self to other, and being given a home in the heart of the other<sup>14</sup>. In this way the two partners form a single great unity of life, work, and aims – such as one finds between a work master and an instrument with a free will.

Such a total surrender to a creature – in this case to the Blessed Mother – can never be an absolute surrender. It can only be made in connection with God – that is, because of God, in God, and for God. Only healthy organic thinking is capable of understanding it. Mechanistic or separatistic thinking cannot do so; it tears apart the Primary and the secondary causes. It sees insurmountable obstacles and contradictions in the very orders which – as we have already seen – are meant in God’s plan to find their way to each other so as to protect, illumine, and safeguard each other.

Sacred Scripture understands “heart” to be the core of the personality. God therefore calls out in the Old Testament, “Child, give me your heart!” (Prov 23,26). And in the New Testament the Lord declares, “You shall love the Lord, your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength!” (Lk 10,27). Christian philosophy proceeds from the clarification of the term “heart” to the clarification of the term “*Gemüt*”<sup>15</sup>. *Gemüt* {211} is the point of resonance between the higher and the lower appetites. It gives the fundamental tone when we react – in the emotions or will – to values or objects. The judgment of the intellect is presupposed as taken for granted. “Heart” says essentially the same thing as *Gemüt*, but stresses more strongly the person in whom this fundamental tone of

---

<sup>14</sup> A German play on words: *Enteignung, Übereignung, Aneignung*. See *Schoenstatt’s Covenant Spirituality*, p. 67.

<sup>15</sup> The German language distinguishes between *Gemüt* and *Herz*, while English and most other languages are limited to a single word – “heart.” Various definitions of *Gemüt* are: the harmony between the higher (rational) and lower (biological) appetites; the emotional center of the personality; the seat of the emotions. At times it is simply translated as “emotions.”



soul and spirit to things, goods, and values resides. One defines heart this way: the quintessence of all the faculties of soul and spirit joined to form a unique constellation and order in an individual person.

Just as man, in contrast to the macrocosm, is rightly called a microcosm, because all the levels of being and life have a place and are summarized in him, the human heart can also be considered a microcosm of the cosmos of values, as a compendium of subjective value receptivity, as a living, original, and individual [emanation point of] value realization. Seen this way, it is a symbol for the cosmos of values which is at home in him and in which he is at home.

The Immaculate Heart of Mary, which was completely free from all disorder, hence symbolizes a cosmos of values which represents the perfect cosmic order planned by God and never disturbed in the slightest way. Her heart accepts and personifies a hierarchy of values in which all the natural and supernatural values are always seen in the right light and brought into right relationship with one another and God. It has a personal organism of attachments in which both levels (natural and supernatural), all forms of attachment (to persons, places, and ideas), as well all forms of love (natural, rational, and {212} supernatural) have always perfectly maintained their God-willed balance.

Consecration to this Immaculate Heart is, according to what we have said about the essence and nature of the consecration, the same as a giving up (*Enteignung*), that means *liberation, a letting go* in which the heart must give up all values and valuations which do not correspond to the scale of values found in her heart, and with the giving over (*Übereignung*) of our heart to the values and cosmos of order in the kingdom of nature and grace as found in the virginal heart of Mary.

(....)

{215} We have called the heart the symbol of the personality core. It follows that the consecration involves a kind of mutual handing over of rights – properly understood – over each other's person. This overcomes the depersonalization which is so prevalent in the mass man and joins person to person in an intimate personal

unity of love to the optimal advantage of both parties. Of course, it also deals with unexplored mysteries of love which are, to most moderns, a total enigma.

The mass man in all his varieties is too comfort-oriented to really love. He lacks the needed depth, tenderness, and faithfulness. He does not want to {216} conquer or win over; he does not know how to coax or cultivate. His chase after experiences doesn't allow it. He wants to enjoy, enjoy, enjoy.

As a consequence, he lacks the deep personal experience of love which would give him a point of reference to tell apart

- the experience of the mass man (in which the personality core is swept away through a kind of mass socialization) and

- the experience of true love (in which the whole personality finds salvation).

The summit of the latter experience is love's mysterious unity or the fusion of hearts. It results in a remarkable transference of life, i.e. the enrichment that comes from a personal You. Correctly assimilated, it strengthens one's personality core in a way that would be otherwise impossible. Our Lord refers to this uncharted potential of genuine love for building up the personality when he says, "Whoever loses his soul for my sake will find it; but whoever wants to find his soul will lose it" (Mt 10,39).

It would be easy to add a chapter here about the pedagogy of love, about its essence, its laws, and its importance for our times. The whole world bemoans the lack of receptivity for religious values. More and more one hears it said that the sense of religion is in rapid decline. Scholarly research is being invested to find solutions to this dilemma.

(....)

{217} It seems to us that the solution is to be found in the reference to the "cosmic order" and the "organism of attachments," in other words to the art of loving and being loved – naturally, rationally, and supernaturally. We are not the only ones saying this. Many analysts say that a fruitful and lasting education is not possible without an education in loving and being loved.

Love is the beginning, middle, and end of all education. It must be at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end. It is and will always be the "magic key" which unlocks hearts even when the religious organ of the heart seems to have died. It is likewise the open door to the highest heights of the mountain of perfection. Here we are reminded of what has already been said elsewhere in the spirit of St. Francis de Sales about love being the fundamental law of the world. To which we add: It must also become the {218} fundamental law of education. While all may agree on this in theory, the hard part is translating it into practice. (...)

{220} Our consecration [in Schoenstatt] is not only about self-surrender to the symbolic meaning of the heart, but also to the person. {221} It [our covenant of love with the MTA] knows a strong personal attachment, a warm mutual personal love, a love person-to-person love. The Blessed Mother, our covenant partner, is doubtlessly our model, but much more than that she is the Mother of our being ordered to holiness, that is, she is the creative formator of the human heart after to the image of her own heart. For her personal devotion she demands of her covenant partner the gift in return of the same personal devotion, so that in time one can repeat the words: *Two hearts and one beat*.

But because Our Lady is not the final and highest [object of love] but only the mirror image, the transparency of God, perfect mutual devotion [to her] also means the perfect transmission [of our love] to God. So it is that the one who is consecrated can rightly say: *Three hearts and one beat*. Once more we stand before the "three-in-oneness" of which we have already spoken in so much detail<sup>16</sup>. Our "three-in-oneness" wants to be understood as the heart of man, the heart of Mary, and the heart of God. This sheds new light on another motto with which we are already familiar:

"Let us abide in holy three-in-oneness  
and thus go in the Holy Sprit to the Father<sup>17</sup>!"

---

<sup>16</sup> See page 128f and 154-156 above

<sup>17</sup> *Hirtenspiegel*, v. 4751ff, and *Heavenwards*, p. 45.

Because of the multifaceted unity of love which the covenant of love establishes and safeguards, the fourth essential {222} element of the consecration is easy to grasp: mutual claims of love. After all, true love knows an exchange of hearts and goods. By virtue of the consecration we share in the power of our covenant partner, in the power of Our Lady, of Christ, and of the Triune God. Through it we have influence over their hearts. We should be aware of it and make frequent use of it.

When such a pronounced covenant consciousness, that means the consciousness of a mutual being given and accepted, is so alive in the soul and has grasped and filled it even into its subconscious levels, it is not difficult to imitate the attitude and practice of the Blessed Mother at the wedding feast [at Cana] and to repeat in every circumstance with calm and security, faith and trust, "They have no more wine!" (Jn 2,3).

This strong personal character of the [Schoenstatt] consecration deals a death blow to the widespread religious impersonalism and collectivism of our times. It presents Mary in her supremely personal way and in her autonomous, personally carried out cooperation in the order of salvation, especially in overcoming the current demonism of mass-mindedness. But it also demands a profoundly personal decision of the partner in personal self-surrender to the partner of love and in perfect unity of purpose, work, and life.