

## **In the Shadow of the Shrine**

Talk for the Consecration of High School Boys, Low Sunday, April 7, 1929

*In the course of his life, Fr. Kentenich referred again and again to the saying “in the shadow of the Shrine.” It was in the following text that it was first coined and proclaimed.*

*When one realizes that he coined this word in 1929, just 15 years after the founding and at a very early stage in the movement’s growth, one can sense what kind of a leap of faith it took for the founder to declare, “In the shadow of the Shrine the destiny of the Church in Germany, yes, even farther afield, will be essentially decided for centuries to come!” For him the movement’s subsequent development would serve to gradually confirm this prophetic word. Hence the frequent repetition of this quote.*

*The word was spoken in the context of a talk for high school boys about to make their “consecration,” the word used at that time for the covenant of love. It comes at the end of the talk, almost like an afterthought. The talk is reprinted here in essentially unabridged form, however, not only because its most famous quote, but for two other reasons.*

*The first is that it captures the nearly astonishing warmth and enthusiasm of Fr. Kentenich when he spoke to young people about giving their all to Mary in the covenant of love. The radical nature of some statements could strike some modern readers as practically alarming. One might suppose that the founder would have expressed himself more moderately if he were speaking today. But the times were challenging youth to such radicality – for or against God. And the essence of his message is always valid: Whoever consecrates himself to Mary should give himself to her completely and place himself entirely at her disposal.*

*The second is that the text as a whole can also serve today’s youth as a motivation for the covenant of love.*

*The following is taken from “An seine Jungen” (mimeographed manuscript), page 5 - 31.*

Seeing you here before me, reminds me spontaneously of fifteen years ago. It was also a Low Sunday in 1914. A young group of noble, pure “sons of leisure” wanted exactly what you want. They wanted to solemnly give themselves to the Mother of God for time and eternity. What grew out of this seed? A movement which extends to nearly all of Germany today, and has members in nearly every walk of life.

I think still farther back – 325 years. It was a Saturday, April 6, late in the evening at about 8 o’clock. Fr. Rem was kneeling in his chapel, his shrine, before his picture. His expectation was great that our dear Lady would give a great grace to him and those in his care.

And that evening at about 8 o’clock our dear Lady appeared and told him what her favorite title is, and her wish. What jubilation and singing must have been there among the Ingolstadt sodalists 325 years ago today! For they knew for the first time today that the Blessed Mother wanted to be venerated as the Mother Thrice Admirable and that in this way she wished to reveal her glories to the world. We know and believe that the same Mother of God has come to dwell here in our Shrine, in order to reveal from here her glories to the sorely afflicted human race and to radiate them into the world.

At this moment it almost seems to me as if Our Lady were taking words from the mouth of St. Paul and calling out to us: “*Vos estis corona mea!* – You are my crown! (cf. Phil 4,1). As my crown I want to give you today to the Apostolic Movement, to the high school movement.” It seems to me as if she were taking the words of the Roman mothers on her lips... Several women were

talking about their greatest treasures. One said this, another said something else. Then one spoke with a joyful heart about her sons: “They are my greatest treasures!” My dear candidates for consecration, today you may consider yourselves Mary’s greatest gift to our family. Is this saying too much?

Am I exaggerating the significance of the present hour? Do you not feel that what is going on at this moment is (I) a deep turning point in your personal life, indeed (II) in the life of the entire movement?

*[I. Significance of the Consecration for our Personal Life]*

May I interpret your thoughts and feelings? I have often received the consecrations here in the name of the Church. Each time it took on a special aspect according to the preparation and mood of the moment. When we knelt here last Easter, it was my task to prepare the candidates for the consecration, to place the last hand on them. This time it is not necessary. You already know the meaning of the consecration. It has been the topic of the entire workshop and its great ideas. Nothing more is left for me to do than to speak your thoughts and feelings. And I believe I can read in your eyes the readiness to profess: “We stand at a turning point in our lives!” Or am I mistaken?

*[1.1 The Consecration as Confirmation of our Mission]*

So far the law has applied in our movement: “What you have inherited from your fathers, acquire it to make it your possession!”

Those who knelt here before you, those who stood here before you, how much did they long for this day, how much they held fast to its memory their whole life through! How many were the tears that flowed before the consecration, tears of joy – tears of sorrow, depending on whether the candidate was accepted or rejected. In these days a letter came into my hands written by the first young man from a high school accepted in May 1915. He wrote to his federation brothers in the battlefields and barracks: “Now the die is cast; now I know what I want. Now the turning point of my life has come!”

During these days did you, too, acquire this enthusiasm, did the significance of the day deeply penetrate you? For a time it seemed as if the word would have to be applied to our high school movement: “Those who saw far and wrought great deeds are now resting in their tombs. We who walk on their graves are a generation of dwarves!” But it only seemed this way. The present workshop with its beginning, middle, and end showed what God and the Blessed Mother have done in our little community in the last years.

For me the most important thing is that its effects have been so profound even though the Central Office<sup>1</sup> deliberately neglected the high school movement. With great gratitude we harvest today what others sowed. I am especially thinking of our federation priests working in boarding schools. From now on you have a knowledgeable and steady leader. The new seeds which he has so richly sown will certainly bear much fruit.

“What you have inherited from your fathers, acquire it to make it your possession!” Someone told me how high are the demands that you placed on yourselves in these days for the consecration. That proves to me that the old traditions, that the inherited heroic spirit is also alive in you, that your spirit is of the spirit of our hero sodalists.

Shall I guide you more deeply, tell you more clearly, what is alive in your souls? Shall I be

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<sup>1</sup> German: *Zentrale* – at that time the central team of priests coordinating the movement, led by Fr. Kentenich.

the interpreter of your deepest thoughts? At this moment your heart is burning; the significance of this hour has penetrated your whole being, because the consecration includes:

- *a definitive confirmation of your personal mission and*
- *a total surrender to this mission.*

### *[1.1.1 A Definitive Confirmation]*

Yes, I have guessed correctly! The entire workshop was inspired by the idea of mission. How this great idea swept you away! Today's liturgy sheds new light on its meaning. Before us we see our Master, Lord, and King. He breathes on the Apostles and speaks world-motivating words: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you. What you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Jn 20,21.23). And a few days later we see him before us again. It is as if he were holding the pillars of the world in his hands: "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and teach all nations!" (Mt 28,18f). This was 2,000 years ago.

The breath of his mouth has blown toward Schoenstatt, created a family, our movement. We believe in our supernatural mission, in the mission of our movement. Above all, we believe in the **supernatural mission of our high school movement**. After all, this is how you solemnly promised it at your consecration:

"Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen of Apostles, it is God's wise plan that the world be renewed in Christ through you, the Patroness of the Church. I firmly believe that you, as the Dispensatrix of Graces, have established your throne in your Shrine in Schoenstatt in a totally special way, allowing you to realize today, through the community of the Catholic Apostolate, what you inspired your servant Vincent Pallotti to begin for you."

What did he begin? World renewal. He shouldered, shaped, and passed on to us the imperative of mission from his own time. We believe in the mission of our Family. We also hold unshakeably fast to our dear Blessed Mother's need for **instruments for this mighty task**. We believe that the breath from the mouth of the Savior touches and must touch individual persons in today's world.

"I firmly believe that you are calling as many zealous people as you can to carry the boundaries of your kingdom to the end of the world and win the world over to Christ."

Do I also belong to this people? May we believe in our personal mission, that the breath from the mouth of the God-Man is also meant for us? At times this seemed to be the case. But then came other times. We doubted, we wavered in our courage. And how often did we pray in those hours what we just said:

"I ask you – Choose me! – even though I am unworthy and weak – to help carry out this great work, and accept me into the community of your sons and servants."

Today's consecration gives an unmistakable, sure, firm answer to this wish of our hearts. After all, our federation is woven into the crown of the Church's communities. And what the Church binds on earth is also bound in heaven. If your consecration is received at the altar by a deputized priest, if your consecration is received after mature deliberation on all sides, you can be certain: I am called! From now on I may no longer doubt!

Do you see the deep significance which lies in this act of consecration? In the future it will send a quiver of victorious awareness through our inmost being. **Power** must stand behind it, but also a stirring humility. How often do the words of the Apostle Paul resonate in our ears: "*Apostolus*

*Jesu Christi missus!*” “*Missus sum!*” “I am send out, an apostle of Jesus Christ!” “I am sent!”<sup>2</sup> In the future each one of you can say with the Federation: I am sent, I have received a personal mission. *Civis Romanus sum!* [I am a Roman citizen!]<sup>3</sup> What does this say in the mouth of a Roman! These words opened to him the whole world, let him victoriously overcome every obstacle he might encounter on land or sea.

Can you not also say: *Sodalis apostolicus sum!*<sup>4</sup>? In the future, what a sound these words will have in the mouth of those who make this solemn consecration! The others can beg and pray to be given a special mission. We already have one. Do we not want to sincerely thank the Blessed Mother for it? Indeed, we know that our awareness of vocation must not be empty talk. As we know all too well, there was a Judas among the first apostles of God. We can lose our vocation. We know: “It is not you who have chosen me, but I who have chosen you” (Jn 15,16). We did not first chose Mary, nor did we draw the breath of the God-man down upon ourselves. We have been chosen from among millions. We therefore fold our hands in humility and gratitude.

My dear brothers in the Federation! When I interpret your feelings and when I sum up everything going on in your hearts in this way, is it right for me to say that this solemn act solemnly confirms our mission? We believe in the communion of saints. Do you not feel how the entire Family is interested in us, the high school youth? We see our Fathers and Fraters: the *pars motrix* of the movement<sup>5</sup>. And we see so many Federation priests, especially your educators and leaders. In the background we see our Sisters of Mary and the Federation Sisters...

Communion of saints! Yes, the whole heavenly court looks down on you with joy! How hell may be quaking down below when we consciously speak the words:

“I choose you today to be my Mother and Queen. But whatever graces and strengths I possess – gifts of nature and of grace, indeed, my entire self without reserve – I consecrate to you forever, for time and eternity!”

Yes, fulfill your promise. This is why we are here. This is why we are knights. We have received our personal mission from the hands of the Blessed Mother, to do battle in her service. The movement is her work – this is what matters.

### [1.2 The Consecration as Total Surrender to Our Personal Mission]

I have said a second word, and this word opens up an incomparably wider and deeper world of ideas and feelings. The word is: The solemn consecration means the *total surrender* to our personal mission.

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<sup>2</sup> Reference to the typical opening of Paul’s letters, such as 1 Cor 1,1: “Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus...”

<sup>3</sup> See the story of St. Paul in Acts 22, where (v. 25ff) he causes a stir by letting the agents of Rome know he is a Roman citizen.

<sup>4</sup> I am an apostolic sodalist!

<sup>5</sup> Meant are the priests and seminarians of the Pallottines, at that time the *pars motrix et centralis* of the Schoenstatt Work.

### [1.2.1 A Resolute Surrender]

Surrender, total surrender! Have we not already made the gift of self<sup>6</sup>? Without a doubt. This was demonstrated in the workshop. And it is proven by the history of the movement. After all, it is your work. We are the movement, that is, under far-sighted leadership we have sprung from the Church, from below, from within. Surrender! How often have you already made this gift of self!

How have you already worked for the groups, applied yourselves in every difficulty! The law has always been at work: When a mustard seed sprouted, it was because the seed was planted by leaders of the movement. But will you contradict me if I state that a *total* surrender was lacking? It is something different, here hesitation and vacillation, here fretting back and forth, here something lackluster – and there a vigorous masculine “Here I stand, I shall not be moved!”

Do you want to know what the difference is between a lackluster self-giving and a total gift of self? Then let me tell you about the man who found the *El Dorado*, the Gold Land, of Peru. He wanted to be counted among his nation’s “sons of fame.” He manned a ship, put out to sea. But soon difficulties came in on him from all sides. Part of his crew mutinied. As leader he stood there, helpless. Then a saving idea flashed in his mind. He stepped in front of the mutinous band and drew a line in the sand with his sword: “Whoever stands to the right of this line is permitted to continue on with me, but cannot look back. Whoever does not want to continue can go home. A comfortable life may await him there, but he will not be counted among the heroes.” Twelve joined Pizarro<sup>7</sup> on the righthand side. They were determined: We will never go back! Their hearts may have trembled, but their resolve was strong as iron. And so they became their nation’s great “sons of fame” and the discoverers of Peru.

This is also how it should be today in your hearts. Set aside all vacillation! Now or never! Or should I remind you of another story? Then let me mention today’s Gospel. We know that Thomas was also sent. He had received a personal mission, a vocation, a call. And after he was immersed in the world of Christ, he fought zealously, at first, for his Lord and Master. But then came the moment when doubt entered his heart. The whole edifice of his surrender began to quake. Today’s Gospel shows how the Lord adapted to his weakness: “Touch the wounds in my hands and lay your finger in the wound in my side...” (Jn 20,27). And now Thomas was ready. He answered the call to his mission with *total* surrender. He could now speak into the world: “My Lord and my All!” (Jn 20,28).

You see, this is how I view *total* surrender, the total gift of self to your personal mission. *Total*, that is: Away with every doubt and vacillation! Let them flutter in the wind one last time today, those symbols of divergent world views and contemporary trends. *We* enter the camp of Our Lady! With this we take the definitive stand on what our life’s task will be.

There are two banners around which the masses of humanity have aligned themselves in world history – the banner of the Devil and the banner of Our Lady. This is how it was prophesied from the beginning of the world and human history. “I will set enmity between you and the woman, between your offspring and her offspring!” (Gen 3,15a). This is a banner of war, to which we dedicate ourselves, upon which we swear the banner oath. A banner of war, but also a banner of victory! “She will crush your head while you strike at her heel” (Gen 3,15b). From now on we

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<sup>6</sup> Because the German *Hingabe* means both surrender and self-giving, the translation will use both variations to convey the right tone of this passage.

<sup>7</sup> Francisco Pizarro (about 1471-1541), Spanish conquistador. The event depicted here took place in 1527.

declare wherever we go: “We belong to Mary!” Whoever says Mary, says grace. “Hail Mary, full of grace!” (Lk 1,28). This is how we hear it from the mouth of the angel. Whoever says Mary, says the interior life. “She treasured all these things in her heart” (Lk 2,19.51). Whoever says Mary, says the word of readiness to make sacrifices: “*Stabat mater iuxta crucem!*” [The Mother of Mary stood beneath the cross (cf Jn 19,25)].

### [1.2.2 *An Unconditional and Permanent Surrender*]

Today’s act is therefore a decisive and resolute gift of self to our mission. Furthermore, total means **unconditional and permanent!** We will hold back nothing.

“I choose you today... But whatever graces and strengths I possess – gifts of nature and of grace, indeed, my entire self without reserve – I consecrate to you forever, for time and eternity!”

It is therefore an unconditional and permanent surrender. Understand me correctly! What I say to you, you have probably read or heard many times. But this time every word sounds different, because they all apply to you and you speak them solemnly at the altar. *You* have made this consecration.

### [1.3 *The Consecration as Renewal of the Baptismal Promises*]

But we have not yet exhausted this point. What is the range of this gift of self? I see a threefold answer. A threefold “I renounce” and a threefold “I promise!” This is as it is in the renewal of our baptismal promises. In fact, today’s act reminds with a certain self-evidence and necessity of our baptism and the renewal of our promises at our First Holy Communion. What baptism and Communion with its renewal of our promises [mean] for our childhood, is what today must mean for us in our adolescence.

I renounce, first of all, halfheartedness and promise the highest radicalism!

I renounce, secondly, every disordered attachment to created things and to myself, and I promise heartfelt, faithful surrender to the Beloved of my heart.

I renounce, thirdly, the youthful impulse to drift and promise to find my home here in Schoenstatt.

**1. I renounce halfheartedness and promise the highest radicalism.** I renounce halfheartedness!

“What you have inherited...” It has always been this way. The mottos have changed but the object remains the same. At one time the call to arms was “Break free from mediocrity!” At another: “No one may go to the grave without accomplishing something great according to his means!” Or: “*Aut Caesar aut nihil!*” [Either Caesar or nothing!] It was always the same idea, the reach for the stars, for radicality. And when in the past, things blossomed and bore fruit, it was always from this spirit of heroism, this conviction, “To belong to the Federation is something extraordinary and special!” Only those who want to stand out may find a home in our family. Either with this spirit to victory – or without it to decay and death! This is the right way. And whoever cannot bring himself to do this, for whom a cheap “That’s good enough” suffices, does not belong in our family.

Is this not how it is expressed in the formula of the consecration? “Only out of love for you and in deepest union with my Federation brothers, I will never stop, according to my abilities, to strive for the heights of perfection and to expend my strength for the fulfillment of the aims for

which you have chosen us.” In the future we must therefore orient ourselves on the stars. Think that the die is being cast for your whole life!

## **2. I renounce the disordered attachment to created things and to myself! I promise total surrender to the Beloved of my heart!**

My dear brothers in the Federation! Here I ask for angelic tongues – to say what moves the Blessed Mother in this moment. Do you know how our poor, youthful heart often pounds so fretfully when the created things call out, “I am the lord, your god” and another voice resists, “You shall have no other gods besides me!” How often is this false god a female creature. [...] We promise: The only Beloved of our heart is our dear Blessed Mother.

Do you know what you are saying with this? “I choose you to be my Mother and Queen!” Yes, my Mother, Queen, and Defender. This is how she stands before us. Can I really choose her? According to God’s wise plan she is from all eternity my Mother, Queen, and Protectress. After all, it says in Sacred Scripture that those who are carried by the Spirit of God must be conformed to the image of his Son<sup>8</sup>. And the Son of God has a human mother and a divine Father. He is a child of his Mother and his Father. It is therefore self-understood: Every Christian must and may say to Our Lady: You are my Mother, Queen, Defender!

How can we choose her today? Through our consecration we want to solemnly **ratify** what has already been the truth and reality from all eternity. Moreover, from overflowing hearts we say, “And if you had not been my Mother, Queen, and Defender before today, and if God had not appointed you such, today I would choose you of my own free will. I want no one else. And if I could have thousands of others, I only wish to have one: you, the only Beloved and Chosen [of my heart]!”

What does all of this mean? In the future the words will apply to my life: **Our self-surrender to our Queen!** We are her knights. “Mother Thrice Admirable, teach us to fight as your knights...” You are our Queen, we are your knights. The knight is expected to **open wide** his heart through the consecration to the Queen of Hearts and to take in all her glory. The knight is expected to defend his Queen and do battle for her.

In the future it will be our favorite task: **To give form and shape to the wonder world of the Thrice Admirable in us.** She stands before us as the **Immaculata**, the symbol of our **knightly honor**. If any of us follows his disordered drives and passions in the future, follows his heart, he will do harm to the consecration and his oath: “This is the banner which I have chosen, I will not abandon it, I swear to Mary!”

Consecrations are encounters with our dear Lady! Today’s is a solemn one. In the future we want to experience it, day by day. Think of how John the Baptist became a true man by his first meeting with the Blessed Mother! She traveled through the hill country. And it is said of Elizabeth, “The child leapt in her womb!” (Lk 1,41). And Catholic sensitivity and tradition says that in this moment John was freed from original sin. Here we have the strong man, the masculine man, made strong by the encounter with Mary. We read so much about him that impresses us: his strength, his austerity, his loyalty to his principles, his unselfishness, his penitential zeal, and his love of Christ! How did this all come about in him?

Over the centuries how often have such encounters been repeated! How many are the men, who after this meeting stared all danger in the face, plowed a deep furrow through the world, quietly

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Rom 8,29.

bore in their hearts the image of a woman: the Immaculata. My self-surrender to the Immaculata!

She is the *Generosa*, the **Generous One!** As her knights we must take into our hearts, feature by feature, the essence of her being. The Generous One! Not only Virgin, but also Mother – this is how she stands before me. This is how she gives herself to us in grand unselfishness. I am her knight. Where is my **knightly generosity**? How must I engage this knightly virtue in the future in my interaction at home, with my classmates, with the whole world? One must be able to see that I belong to Mary, that I am her image. A psychological master stroke of the ancient Athenians was to set up images of the gods in the Acropolis, images of persons with a striking, noble bearing. Those who looked on them were to be drawn upward and made more noble. How noble and generous must we be, who take into our hearts day after day the image of the Generous One!

She is the *Mater dolorosa* [the Mother of Sorrows], and thus the symbol of our knightly strength and bravery. The sword is in the foreground of our movement's crest. It overlays the Shrine. On the handle is written: MTA – Knight of Mary! Knighthood includes knightly strength and bravery. We must draw the knight's sword against the enemies within us, must draw it when the honor of women is threatened, when God and the things of God are pushed aside.

She stands before us as *Regina*, **Queen**, the symbol of knightly nobility and knightly dignity. Today one speaks so much about a youthful lifestyle. Our lifestyle has the name: **Marian-knightly nobility!**

My self-surrender to my Queen! That is, **I do battle for her and for her honor.** When our movement stops being Marian and forming new apostles of Mary, we have dug our own grave. Give me someone who has our Marian devotion and you have given me a member of the Federation! Give me any priest, prefect, director, who is passionately attached to Mary, then you have given me a well-founded Federation group! Yes, my self-surrender to my Queen!

The **Defender** of my trust! For us this has always been true. Just leaf through the old issues of the *MTA* [Magazine]. In the war one of us entrusted to Mary his stockings hanging on the fence, and she took care... If you intend to take your consecration seriously, then any doubt in your vocation and in the ultimate victory of good in you and through you, any doubt in the victory of the Queen of Heaven, is an offence against the consecration...

**My childlike love for my Mother!** One of you said to me yesterday: He clearly feels in these days how difficult it was for him to develop a personal relationship with Our Lady. He did not even have such a relationship with his earthly mother. When I replied that he should make a contract as it were, "See here, I want to transfigure my relationship with the other sex; you work for me and then I will work for you," I received the telling answer, "Is one allowed to talk to Our Lady that way?" O yes, my dear Federation brothers, we are allowed to interact with her in such a **childlike way**, in fact, we cannot be childlike enough with her. We modern people have forgotten how to be children. And nonetheless Our Lord says, "Unless you become like children, you cannot enter the Kingdom of heaven!" (Mt 18,3).

Am I not right in saying that today's consecration says "I renounce" and "I promise"? But do not fear that you will not receive your reward! You must view the consecration like a mutual contract. You give yourselves to our dear Blessed Mother and she gives herself to you with her gifts and tasks. She gives you her Son, gives you from her fullness of grace, indeed she gives her very self. She cares for you. This is the great thought which guides my activity as an educator. When I have managed to give any of those whom God has entrusted to me to Our Lady, then my task was fulfilled. You can be equally certain: She is the Faithful One, the *virgo fidelis* [the Virgin Most Faithful]; she never breaks a contract!



3. Today surrender to our mission includes: **I renounce the youthful impulse to drift and [promise to] bind myself to Schoenstatt as my home.**

Is this not also part of the consecration formula? “I firmly believe that you, as the Dispensatrix of Graces, have established your throne in your Shrine in Schoenstatt in a totally special way.” Here she actively works as the Patroness, the Mother of our Family. It is the sure sign of election to our Family for someone to have this secret urge to the Shrine. You can read in the old issues of the *MTA* how someone enthusiastically wrote: “We must be grateful to the soldiers. They have not only defended the borders of our Fatherland, but by so doing have defended the Shrine.”

Place yourselves before the Shrine with the knight’s sword! We defend it, no one may lay a hand on it, no one may separate the Movement from the Shrine – except over my dead body.

This is also the tone of what our Federation Sisters were saying the day before yesterday. I left them to take care of the preparation of their solemn perpetual consecration all by themselves. At first they were indignant, but then they decided: Now we’ll really do it! This is how it must also be with Mary’s help. She awakens strength. And then the promise: Whoever wants to attack us must go over my dead body!

Here is our home! Yes, if our older Federation priests come year after year, not so much to hear talks or to meet people, but to get their fill of prayer, to feel sheltered, why should we not lay claim to this for ourselves, too?

## *[2. Significance of the Consecration for the Entire Movement]*

May I finally conclude my attempts at interpretation? My only intent was to interpret your thoughts and feelings. But have I hit the right chord when I assume that you, in a similar way, are convinced of the significance of this consecration for the entire movement? It would be carrying coals to Newcastle, or pouring water into the Rhine if I would speak more on this thought. After all, the entire workshop was carried by this spirit.

### *[2.1 In the Shadow of the Shrine...]*

But I cannot conclude before hammering out, crisp and austere, at least two thoughts. The one thought: **In the shadow of this Shrine the destiny of the Church will be decided in the years to come!** An earnest word! A significant word! It sounds almost mad! Nonetheless, I repeat and even extend it: **In the shadow of the Shrine the destiny of the Church in Germany, yes, even farther afield, will be essentially decided for centuries to come!**

Earlier I used other expressions to say this. I have pointed out the significance of Schoenstatt for the history of our times and world... If the signs do not deceive us, already now Schoenstatt is standing for many circles as a city on the hill, a lighthouse. I think of Catholic Action, and the youth movement... And more and more people are looking to this lighthouse. Should it not be a big piece of our task in life to lead those entrusted to our care and over whom we have influence, into contact with the movement and [on pilgrimage] to Schoenstatt?

### *[2.2 The Movement needs Leader Personalities]*

The second thought which I want to hammer out: *Every movement is in its history the history of its leaders!* If Schoenstatt is to fulfill its mission, then every walk in life must have gifted leaders. You, my dear candidates for the consecration, believe you are called to be leaders in the high school movement. Therefore a truly heavy responsibility rests on your shoulders.

I once read of Cromwell. He had a plan to reform the entire army. What did he do? He

gathered a group of the most stalwart men, “flankers.” He educated them. In this way he was able to reform the entire army in just a few years, and made himself the patron of the army. You are the born leaders of the movement. Is it not of great importance to the Movement when today 27 new young men are called to fight the battles of Our Lady?

My dear brothers in the Federation! Let what I have said continue to ring in your hearts. It is so elemental, so fundamental, so important and massive, that you cannot savor it all today. It would be good if you would have the thoughts pressed into your hands, even better if you would carry them in your hearts, and best of all if they would become the shape of your lives. I know how powerful an effect a great vocation can have. But I also know how weak we are. I know how much responsibility we bear for centuries to come, and know how unworthy we all are. Our consecration should therefore conclude with a humble, “Please! I am ready, send me! I will not boast of my own strength. Nothing based on my own power! Behold, Queen, I am here, send me!” Amen.

NOS CUM PROLE PIA - BENEDICAT VIRGO MARIA

**Further Reading:** *A Life for the Church*, p. 113-119.

*Omne Regnum*, p. 50-52.

Second Founding Document, No. 18-25.