

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CAPITAL OF GRACE

Our Devotion to Mary and Contributions to the Capital of Grace

Sonderideen (20 April 1935) in: TzVerstSch, 46-50

When we talk about our form of devotion to Mary, we have to differentiate between the way we pass it on in very general terms in our courses, and the way we foster it in our own circles. If I see things correctly, we are concerned with the second point. However, for the sake of completeness, I shall list all the essential characteristics – there are four of them. Our devotion to Mary is organic, exceptional, pedagogically effective and attached to a place.

1. When we call it **organic**, it means that it is not an entity on its own that is mechanistically kept apart from other actions and attitudes, but a living member within an organic – natural and supernatural – matrix of the religious life.

The dogmatic reason for this [form of devotion to Mary] is to be found in the reality and organic unity of the whole supernatural life, and in the law governing the harmony between nature and grace. These two laws have to be at work at all times, but need to be observed in a special way in an era of fading mechanistic thinking and living.

2. The fact that our Marian devotion has to be **exceptional?** can be deduced from the fact that the Movement originated from the Marian Sodality and took over its degree and form of devotion to Mary, in the manner laid down by the official pronouncements of the Church.

The dogmatic foundation for this is the Mariologically proven and unique position of the Mother of God in the order of salvation.

3. Since we are a distinctive Movement of education and educators we have from the first emphasised central dogmatic truths as simply as possible, in order to make them **pedagogically effective**.

So it should surprise no one that a whole host of important dogmatic truths have been translated into practical, everyday life in our **contributions to the capital of grace**, or the MTA's treasure of grace. Let me remind you in passing that we understand these contributions as our good works, whose merits we humbly and chivalrously place at the disposal of the Mother of God, so that, as the Suppliant Omnipotence, she may inwardly transform as many people as possible from here and help to educate them to become mature and active apostles.

What is more important is knowledge of the **dogmatic foundations**. It is not difficult for an unprejudiced teacher of dogmatics to discover in these simple contributions an effective way to popularise and give new life to truths that are happily distorted or forgotten. In a time of crass intellectual and spiritual contradictions this presents a great obstacle to the endeavour to transform Catholic people in a timely and profound way. I am thinking here of the teaching on the importance and necessity of grace, and our own enlightened and active co-operation with it; on the merits of good works; on the communion of saints; on the mediation of the Mother of God; on the possibility to offer up the merits of our good works for others, and the effectiveness of these merits; as well as the teaching that we are children of God and members of Christ.

The **religious psychologist and pedagogue** knows that all these thoughts, and this matrix of values, cannot be rendered effective in one fell swoop. He carefully observes a person's receptivity for values and tries to take up the present-day feeling for life in the way he formulates things. It therefore happens that when we talk about the contributions to the capital of grace, now one point, now another is more strongly emphasised. However, they have always been effectively at work in the Movement as an outstanding central ideal. At present they have been given new life through the double motto: Nothing may happen in the whole Movement without us, but also nothing without the Mother of God! The two graves of our heroes¹ next to the shrine can be seen as a symbol of the first imperative, while the shrine itself reminds us constantly that, as the Suppliant Omnipotence, the Mother of God has to mediate all the great blessings that proceed from the Family.

4. It is easy for strangers to misinterpret the fourth quality of our devotion to Mary – its **attachment to a place**. Those who are in the know, however, are aware that here – in much the same way as with the capital of grace, or the MTA's treasure of grace – dogmatic, philosophical and psychological truths and laws have been brought to vital life in a surprisingly simple way.

Leading Catholic men and women have often looked for the **secret of our success**. This secret must lie to a very large extent in the extremely simple way in which great and important Catholic truths are correlated and vitally impressed on people's conscious awareness, so as to form life today. This also applies to being attached to a place. I do not want to dwell on the philosophical and psychological laws, although they have been incorporated here to an eminent degree, I only want to draw attention to the most important dogmatic context.

¹ In 1934 the remains of two of the co-founders of the first Marian Sodality were brought home to Schoenstatt – Hans Wormer and Max Brunner. They had given their lives during the First World War on the battlefields of France for the goals of new Schoenstatt. Their mortal remains were laid to rest next to the shrine of our Lady of Schoenstatt.

Allow me, to start with, to explain what we mean by being attached to a place. We are only saying that we love our little shrine and its picture of Mary very strongly. This gives expression to two things.

Firstly, and in very general terms, our chapel is the Family shrine of our religious Movement. We love to pray there as individuals and as communities, a great many of us have arrived at significant religious decisions there, and we love to think of it when we are far away.

It is the same process that has given rise to the saying in the Young Men's Association: "The heart of the Young Men's Association beats in Altenberg."²

Besides this, we have a very special reason for loving our shrine. We believe that the Mother of God is at work there in a special way in the spirit of the Movement.

You know what proof we have given for this belief. Think only of 1914 and the Founding Document, which we envisaged and worked towards from the first as a 'contractus bilateralis'³. That is why we, on our part, made the offer: "We want to place ourselves wholly at your [Mary's] disposal with our prayers, sacrifices, and indeed our lives; in return we ask you to work here in a special way to bring about the spiritual transformation and apostolic re-formation of the people of today. At the same time use us as instruments in your hand for this great task."

What was our Lady's reply? We did not expect or receive an answer to this request and offer through a mysterious dream, or a vision, or a tangible miracle in the physical order. From the very beginning we were extremely objective, and consciously kept ourselves away from everything that was strange or extraordinary. Our knowledge and presentiment about the approaching spiritual upheavals was simply based on the foundation of sound dogmatic, philosophical and psychological teaching, and this was the basis on which we wanted to help transform the modern world into Christ. So it did not take long for the generation of that time to become convinced – it is the same vital conviction alive in the Movement today – that the Mother of God had accepted our request, our offer and the contract.

We interpreted what our young people were able to do at that time during the War to spread and deepen the kingdom of God as the first answer. Professor

² Altenberg with its Marian Cathedral, near Dusseldorf, was the local and spiritual centre for Germany's Association of Young Men. Monsignor Ludwig Wolker, its president, knew Schoenstatt, but he stated that he had not got behind the Schoenstatt Movement's "secret" of success.

³ A bilateral contract.

Rademacher evaluated it partly in a scientific study that can be found as a talk in Mosterts "Juenglingsseelsorge"⁴. It should be easily understandable that to start with we only saw it as a probability that heaven had agreed with our plans. This probability urged us to undertake greater and more daring projects, both during and after the war. We told ourselves: If the Blessed Mother has really recognised and affirmed our whole work as her own, it means that she has also taken over responsibility for it. In actual fact everything we undertook succeeded, and it showed great and manifold fruitfulness. So, as time went by, the probability increasingly became a moral certainty for the Family.

The expert will not find it difficult to discover the basis for this proof in the teaching on the discernment of spirits and works. Both – spirits and work – have to be seen together in this instance. Whoever wants to examine whether the offer we made at that time originated from good spirits, or from nature, or from the devil, should read about the discernment of spirits in "The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola"⁵. However, if someone wants to lay special emphasis on the proof that the whole work, as it has developed historically, is a special work of God and hence can be seen as a real answer from heaven, should consider the apologetic criteria for the divine origin of a work. They will find three: the insufficiency of the instruments, the magnitude of the difficulties and the magnitude of the success. It will not be difficult for them to discover all three criteria in the history of the Movement, provided they take the time to go into it sufficiently. Perhaps they will feel, as have so many others who have undertaken similar objective studies, but with good will and a spirit of prayer, that they cannot close their minds to the conviction that this faith is based on a sound foundation. Of course, the proofs are not compelling, nor is the certainty physical or metaphysical. They are not really necessary.

This brings me to a conclusion. The result of all that has been said can be put in this way: our Marian devotion is to the last detail in keeping with the spirit of the Church and is soundly based.

FatSch (1944), in: TzVerstSch, 83-86

I have been told that it is being said that we are not faithful to the Church. What answer can we give to that?

Two things:

⁴ Carl Mosters, Juenglingsseelsorge, Freiburg 1923. I have no knowledge of a translation. The title could be translated as: Pastoral work with young men.

⁵ See Appendix A and B in The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola, 1989, p109ff. There are many modern translations available in English.

1. If by faithfulness they mean the 'sensus catholicus', a sound Catholic instinct, or – as Klemens Maria Hofbauer put it – a 'Catholic nose', the present official trends in the Church prove the opposite. To a great extent they confirm our institutions and teachings. I shall highlight a few.

The canonisation of Blessed Grignion de Montfort⁶ (which is in preparation) is an official legitimisation of his devotion to Mary, which has become known as the "Grignion Act". We have adopted it through the capital of grace in its various forms, starting with simple contributions and proceeding up to the Blank Cheque and Inscriptio. However, there are two differences – a certain localisation and a distinctive and concrete apostolic goal.

In his Encyclical Letter "Mystici Corporis" of 1943, our Holy Father [Pius XII] has publicly defended the teaching on our God-willed and active participation. This thought can be followed like a golden thread through the whole Encyclical. So, for example, it sates in §44, to quote only one passage:

" Because Christ the Head holds such an eminent position, one must not think that he does not require the help of the Body. What Paul said of the human organism is to be applied likewise to the Mystical Body: "The head cannot say to the feet: I have no need of you." It is manifestly clear that the faithful need the help of the Divine Redeemer, for He has said: "Without me you can do nothing," and according to the teaching of the Apostle every advance of this Mystical Body towards its perfection derives from Christ the Head. Yet this, also, must be held, marvellous though it may seem: Christ has need of His members. First, because the person of Jesus Christ is represented by the Supreme Pontiff, who in turn must call on others to share much of his solicitude lest he be overwhelmed by the burden of his pastoral office, and must be helped daily by the prayers of the Church. Moreover as our Saviour does not rule the Church directly in a visible manner, He wills to be helped by the members of His Body in carrying out the work of redemption. That is not because He is indigent and weak, but rather because He has so willed it for the greater glory of His spotless Spouse. Dying on the Cross He left to His Church the immense treasury of the Redemption, towards which she contributed nothing. But when those graces come to be distributed, not only does He share this work of sanctification with His Church, but He wills that in some way it be due to her action. This is a deep mystery, and

⁶ For Grignion (who was canonised in 1947) two teachings of our faith were important. He connected them inwardly and rendered them pedagogically fruitful: firstly, Mary's place in the work of redemption of the New Covenant, secondly, the conviction that human co-operation with the work of God's grace bears fruit for the good of the whole Church. The "Grignion Act" is the believers' free offer to hand over all the fruitfulness of their spiritual actions to Mary, the Mother of the Church, so that she can make use of it for the good of the Church in the "blood circulating" in the Mystical Body of Christ (see also p.62, footnote 21).

an inexhaustible subject of meditation, that the salvation of many depends on the prayers and voluntary penances which the members of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ offer for this intention and on the cooperation of pastors of souls and of the faithful, especially of fathers and mothers of families, a cooperation which they must offer to our Divine Saviour as though they were His associates.”

It is not difficult to hear our favourite saying echoing from this and from many other parts of the Encyclical – nothing without me, nothing without you. It speaks constantly to us through the symbolism of the shrine and the crosses. Involuntarily we are reminded of those serious words: If the contributions stop, the place of grace and the educational trend will gradually die out. This casts new light on the responsibility we have taken upon ourselves if our work is hindered on its secure flight through the world by our narrow-minded and half-hearted selfishness.

The way in which this Encyclical combines institutions from the early Church with medieval intellectual developments, its whole attitude to the Liturgy and popular devotions, which is something we have known for years, is a full confirmation of our thinking and intentions. The same applies in a quite outstanding way to the brilliant explanation of the place of the Blessed Mother in the plan of salvation. The *Consors* and *Sponsa* courses⁷ can discover themselves in it. What the “*Mirror*”⁸ has to say in all detail about the Mother of God has been briefly summarised at the end of the Encyclical. I would like to highlight some sections.

DW (1945) in: Hug, Hier war Gott, 246-260

My dear Schoenstatt Family, yesterday we were able to savour and digest **the victory of Schoenstatt, as a place**, over all its enemies. [...] Schoenstatt, the place, is for us the embodiment of all that is great and beautiful. The place Schoenstatt, in as far as it is a place of grace, is for us a home, a spiritual home with all the experiences of a religious-moral and generous nature we have been privileged to have in the course of the years. Schoenstatt is the place where the Mother of God dwells and reigns, in order to call a large army, an ‘*acies bene ordinata*’, into existence, to train it and lead it into battle. [...]

⁷ Two courses of the Sisters of Mary which saw the Mother of God as Christ’s “*Helpmate*” and “*Bride*” in his entire work of redemption.

⁸ A reference to the “*Hirtenspiegel*” (Shepherd’s Mirror) – a handbook written in verse, while Fr Kentenich was in Dachau, for the leaders and educators of the Sisters of Mary.

If you have quietly and reflectively taken in and digested all that you heard yesterday, you will not find it difficult to repeatedly give expression to feelings of gratitude. We should be grateful; we should thank God time and again. We take it for granted that in future we will not just uphold our old and well-loved praxis, which has given us so much joy and offered our lives so much meaning and content, but foster it even more carefully: Schoenstatt has come closer to us in the course of the past years through the district shrines and the Schoenstatt corner in our own homes. All this is a symbol of our attachment to the place [Schoenstatt]. Do we not take it for granted that, in much the same way as before, we will give and consecrate our entire love and strength to preserving this place, to making it more beautiful, to making the whole place more beautiful in a meaningful way?

[The victory of the community]

This second day should be spent in once more savouring a second victory. It is the victory that Schoenstatt, as a community, has won. As a community it has won a victory over all difficulties, whether they came from within or without, above all from the Gestapo. Did the community spirit really triumph completely? Please try to feel it. Hardly was it possible to come here, despite all the difficulties of the journey⁹, hardly had we given out the call to gather, than Schoenstatt, the house¹⁰, could hardly take in the numbers of children¹¹ who arrived. Since we knew this, and in expectation of this joyful fact, we warned people that numbers would have to be strictly limited. Only a certain number could come from each region. The priests could send two, the women two – and look how this worked, look at how we really are a community that has become and remained a Family! Has the Family stood the test?

[A look into our times – the community endangered]

We know how greatly the inner communion of family-like communities is endangered at present. People can and may come onto outwardly friendly terms very quickly today, and yet there is hardly an era in which human society has been so atomised as it is today. One is even inclined to say that an atomic bomb has torn apart human society as a whole, despite the extraordinary ease with which we can contact each other. Please notice how rarely we can talk today about a true triumph of the community.

⁹ The Second World War only ended in Europe in May 1945 and Germany was divided into areas governed by the various allies. It was very difficult to travel, not just because the means of transport had largely been destroyed, but also because people needed special travel documents to move from one sphere of influence to another.

¹⁰ The “Bundesheim” or Movement House near the original shrine.

¹¹ Since they were members of the Schoenstatt Family, Father Kentenich called everyone its children.

Schoenstatt my register this triumph now, and we want to make use of the whole of today to savour this triumph fully with grateful hearts. Please recall all that you heard yesterday evening. Is it not a single, great triumph of the community? We know that the community, in the same way as love itself, celebrates its greatest triumph in sacrifice.

[The community as a sacrificing community]

A sacrificing community is the greatest and deepest community! No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends (Jn 15,13). How many dangers we braved for one another, how many sacrifices we made for one another! Please study in detail how this sacrificing community showed in the course of the past years and how it has won the most brilliant victories.

Even though the reports given last night were very objective, they clearly showed the magnitude of the difficulties that had to be overcome to remain in contact with Dachau. You will have picked up where the greatest difficulties lay: They were trying to separate me completely from Schoenstatt, they wanted to prevent any contact with me. I have here before me the Gestapo protocols of their cross-examination of Sister A and Sister K. Sister A had to cope with thirteen cross-examinations, and each one of them shows how much they wanted to separate the Family from me. That was obviously their intention – to split the Family – so they said: If the head is gone, the whole of Schoenstatt will sooner or later collapse. They miscalculated badly, as you can see. It is not just that nothing collapsed during this time, the opposite happened. There is an elemental strength in the Movement. Instead of collapse, burgeoning, flourishing life has broken through everywhere and has overcome all these obstacles and difficulties.

[...]

[The sacrificing community of the Youth: 'Ver sacrum']

Please examine what sort of sacrificing community has broken through here. Read the consecration prayers of the young men. I have only been able to see those of the young men in Swabia. Almost the whole of the Youth Branch was motivated by the idea of the Ver sacrum, and the Ver sacrum existed and brought strengths out into the open.

[The history of the 'Holy Springtime']

Let me tell you briefly what is meant by the Ver sacrum. You will have to reach back into ancient pagan history. When danger threatened the ancient, pagan people, the leaders believed very simply that the gods were dissatisfied with their state. So they looked for ways of satisfying their gods once more. They gave and dedicated a Ver sacrum to their gods. These were the firstborn of their young people, as well as the first fruits of their stables and fields. Healthy young people

were dedicated to the gods, and were given a rigorous education. Once they had grown up, they were expected to go out and conquer a foreign land, so that they could lay it at the feet of their gods. The gods should be placated by the Hecatomb [the great numbers of sacrifices].

That is the basic attitude that has motivated our Schoenstatt Youth and inspired them to make the greatest sacrifices. A poet has captured such events as the Ver sacrum most brilliantly. "God does not give up his prey!" I think we can apply these words to the past years: "God does not give up his prey!" How many young people gave the best of their strength and abilities to the Blessed Mother and dedicated them to Schoenstatt! How many gave their lives for it!

[The sacrificing community of the Pallottine students]

I think, my dear Schoenstatt Family, since we spoke yesterday and the day before about the espousal between Pallotti and Schoenstatt, it is only right and just for us to consciously accept our Brothers, that is, our Pallottine students, into our Family, and make them more aware in future that we have taken them in and that we are one, great community. Please do not forget what these Schoenstatt young people, who are to a great extent motivated by the idea of the Ver sacrum, have sacrificed for Schoenstatt! We have a special celebration. It should start today with the heading: Ver sacrum! [...]

[The sacrificing community of our soldiers in the Second World War]

Our soldiers have also made the greatest sacrifices for Schoenstatt. That is equally a triumph of the sacrificing community. The Ver sacrum influenced them and continues to do so. Today we want to remember – remember the living, but above all the dead. Today we will have a Requiem Mass. What would have happened without them? How proud we were at the end of the First World War to be able to say: He and he - a number of them - have offered their lives to our Lady for Schoenstatt. Measured against those we may remember today, it was a tiny number. This fact may make us inwardly happy; it should convince us that, despite the battles before us, Schoenstatt has set out on a march of victory. To use our way of saying things: **The capital of grace is constantly overflowing.** The community graces, the graces that flow to the community from the shrine, must be endlessly greater and more manifold than in the past. The reason: The triumph of the community as a result of the countless sacrifices, the difficult and most difficult sacrifices, that have been made for Schoenstatt as the most natural thing in the world.

Our soldiers who have come here must see themselves as completely superfluous now that the Germany they were working for has collapsed. Who talks of them or knows them? Thanks be to God, our members have not just fought for the glory of the nation, but in order that the Mother of God can set out on a victorious march from here into the present-day world, into the German

people and Fatherland. They may not lose confidence in this great goal, it remains unchanged. Others may not know what to do with their ideals, we remain united in our outlook, united in our personalities.

All the countless great and small sacrifices demanded by military life have flowed here like a single river, and flow back to wherever Schoenstatt members strive, live and die. How many of our soldiers are returning home wounded – with broken bones, nerves destroyed, limbs paralysed... A living capital of grace, a sacrificing community! What did they sacrifice all this for? Not for an illusion, but for a realm¹², the Schoenstatt realm, to which we believe we owe our allegiance. That is the Schoenstatt world and work for which we live and die. How many have quite literally given their lives until now! Sacrifice, not just as an attitude, but as action. We want to mention them all by name. We can prove that most of them secretly intended to give their lives for Schoenstatt.

We may all say: We are resting today on the shoulders of the whole Family.

[Father Kentenich's liberation the work of a united community]

For my part I can prove that I owe my freedom to the Family. I don't need to enlarge on this, you have already heard about it. At the time an opportunity arose to save me from going to the concentration camp. I rejected it, because I consciously based myself on the thought: If God wants to give me my freedom, I want to owe it to the Family alone. Hence the condition: If the Family makes the Inscriptio, and lives the Inscriptio, when the contributions to the capital of grace overflow, I can take it that God will give me back my personal freedom. That was the price. The condition was set, the effect has become a reality, so it must be the cause. Notice what a tremendous triumph of the sacrificing community we are celebrating together. Please ask yourselves whether we would be able to celebrate today if we had not been such a sacrificing community in the background?

[The Sisters of Mary: The Garden of Mary as a symbol of the community]

Our house in Koblenz¹³ set up contact with me relatively quickly while I was in prison. I was sent a letter – it was a childlike poem in which the wish was expressed that the miracle of the Holy Night might come to pass at Christmas 1941. How was it to show? An angel should come to me in the Holy Night and undo my fetters. The miracle of the Holy Night! I answered this letter – in the middle of the Holy Night – that the miracle of the Holy Night would only become a reality if it was alive in them. The miracle of the Holy Night! They should first live the Inscriptio fully. I took up the thoughts raised in the child's letter. Only when

¹² The word used is 'Reich' – a conscious reference to the Third Reich, hence giving it another, higher meaning.

¹³ The house of the Sisters of Mary attached to St Joseph's Hospital in Koblenz

the house community had become a glorious Garden of Mary would the moment of my freedom have arrived. The miracle of the Holy Night! That is the ideal that is constantly alive there. Now that I have returned the miracle of the Holy Night has become the miracle of little Marys.

The sacrificing community is celebrating its greatest triumph. You should tell yourselves all the time: the sacrificing community is celebrating its greatest triumph! If we want to savour this triumph today, the victory won by the community, we have a fullness of material at hand. Let us reflect quietly on the last thoughts, but also tell ourselves: Conquer what you have inherited from your fathers in order to possess it.

There is one thing I may not forget when I speak about our **men**, our young men: Please take note of what our men have managed to achieve, for example, in Gelsenkirchen. They have made the greatest sacrifices, they repeatedly sacrificed themselves for the Family. History will one day fill in the details.

Please do not forget **the Institute of our Lady of Schoenstatt**¹⁴. After the Sisters of Mary they were the most persecuted. Two were in the concentration camp, one died. Consider the strength shown by the way the community lives and works. Despite all the sanctions from here they collected in the background and built up a new world, completed their Constitutions, and now appear as a flourishing community. All this is the triumph of the community.

[The sacrificial strength of the priests: Franz Reinisch]

We also owe great respect to **our diocesan priests and Fathers**: Look at how they led and built up the Family. God alone knows all they did. They were also persecuted. They constantly discovered new ways of keeping contact and providing inspiration. You can see the sacrificial death of our Franz Reinisch as a symbol of our priests. Read what he wrote: "My dying smile shall whisper: O dearest MTA!" While you are here listen to accounts of his life. He consciously went to his death for Schoenstatt. "When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all people to myself" (Jn 12,32). The seed has to die, then it will yield a rich, a very rich harvest¹⁵. Is it not necessary for a kingdom – such as our Schoenstatt realm - that lives and strives in keeping with these principles to experience an unparalleled victory sooner or later?

If the sacrificing community flourishes, we can say something similar of the community that is united in spirit, attitude and tasks.

¹⁴ Known as the Frauen von Schoenstatt in Germany, they are the other Secular Institute for women.

¹⁵ See John 12, 24.

“Conquer what you have inherited from your fathers in order to possess it.” The whole capital of grace - our contributions to the capital of grace, which have always been seen as a contribution to our Family history, and which were always seen in principle as an expression of profound love for the Family – has triumphed.

[Prayers that express this community spirit]

The attitude expressed here is reflected in a few poems that were initially addressed to our Sisters. I think I should read them to you with the expressed intention of offering you an opportunity to make the attitude they express your permanent possession. The largest part of our prayers is not aimed at presenting new thoughts, but should inspire you to savour and digest. What more could we aspire to today than a triumph of the community spirit?

Let me start with a prayer that has the following refrain: **“May my right hand wither, O God, if I do not remember you, O Schoenstatt!”** (The whole prayer from Heavenwards follows, p149ff.)

[Striving for holiness as an expression of love for the community]

What you find expressed here is an ancient heritage. It can be traced back to the Colloquium Marianum. Also in Ingolstadt you will find the serious endeavour to be noble-minded and good in order to serve the community. This gave rise to the condition: Whoever commits a serious sin has to leave the community, because otherwise the Blessed Mother and the Triune God cannot look down on the community with pleasure. At the meeting in Hoerde, the question was therefore raised: Should we make the same condition? No, we are all striving for the heights of holiness in order to draw down God’s good pleasure upon us. We strive for holiness out of love for the community!

Another poem expresses these thoughts even more strongly. I think I should also read it to you with the expressed intention of consolidating a world in ourselves that God has given us in such rich measure, and that should remain a permanent possession until the end of our lives.

(The whole of “Father, look upon our Family” follows, p122ff.)

Throughout this poem we are shown what tremendous strength is generated by the ideal of the community [for which we are striving].

If we want to make full use of this day to savour the triumph of the community, let us not forget two main thoughts. First of all, the great love for the community, the Family. In keeping with woman’s nature it is the triumph of the community of hearts.

[A communion of hearts and tasks]

A communion of hearts must become a communion of tasks. Communities for women are primarily an expression of a communion of hearts. For men the opposite is true. By nature men, especially once they have reached maturity, do not primarily seek a communion of hearts. It is seen as weakness and in the long run has this effect; it destroys their character, their initiative and heroism.

Families of men, especially among the more mature members, must always see the great communion of tasks in the first place. For a man the work is the Family, I sacrifice myself for the work. Each of us offers himself selflessly for the work. Love for the task is man's way to arrive at a deep and strong communion of hearts. You will tell me that this means tearing life processes apart. You are right. Both have to be present at the same time. For a man who wants to found a family, the communion of tasks is always in the foreground. The communion of hearts may also be fostered at the same time. It may be fostered moderately without speaking a great deal about it, but it is usually the effect of such a communion of tasks.

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So let us try to achieve the meaning and purpose of this day, and be grateful for all that God has given us. However, we also want to remember what we have been given and then go out into the future with great trust and great security.