

**Fr. Joseph Kentenich**

## **Schoenstatt Office (1944)**

*Rhymed version  
with added hours  
in the spirit of Fr. Kentenich*

Fr. Jonathan Niehaus, 1985, 1988

### ***Introduction***

*The following is a rhymed English translation of the Schoenstatt Office which appears in Father Joseph Kentenich's book of prayers written in Dachau, Heavenwards.*

*This translation is intentionally written in rhyme to try and give a feel of the verse effect. Father William Brell's translation (1968) was the starting point of this version which tries to give the best rendering of the original German in a meaningful verse. The loss of some of the finer points in the original meaning must be reckoned with, but with the understanding that the goal of this project is different than that of an official translation.*

*Finally, I have included five additional "hours" in the spirit of creative loyalty. They are from my own hand but in close contact to both the structure of the other hours and Father Kentenich's mariology. Denoted with a (JN), they are merely offered as additional viewpoints for personal prayer.*

*Jonathan Niehaus  
May 22, 1988*

### ***Introductory Prayer***

(to be said before each hour)

In the Spirit now and in your Shrine I kneel,  
You three times admirable, strong and kind ideal,  
United with all who in the covenant  
Are ready to die that your great realm be sent.

We want to make your great ideal our mirror  
And so reseal that covenant so dear;  
Make us, your instrument, in everything like you;  
Build everywhere through us your kingdom true.

MATINS  
(at midnight)

Your Shrine's our *Nazareth* in time's dark night,  
A place concealed, yes hidden out of sight.

‰

There you contend in ardent prayer, deep longing,  
Immaculate Virgin, for salvation's dawning;  
'Tis there that Gabr'el voices God's request,  
There by your Fiat all the world is blessed.

Again I hear your Fiat, see your light  
Proceed from Schoenstatt, breaking through the night,  
Because God chose it in his gracious way  
As brilliant lighthouse for our modern day.

Like you let me be to the blank check true,  
The ancient dragon battle e'er anew,  
That as your instrument with all my soul  
I'll gladly spend my life for Schoenstatt's goal.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

*or*

First glow of coming dawn is manifest  
In *Zechariah's house* where John is blessed.

‰

You hastened with all speed upon the word  
That within your cousin's womb new life had stirred.  
Journey hard and long did end with greeting mild  
That brought blessing to both mother and the child.

Such blessings you now speak again in greeting,  
Our hidden graces Schoenstatt's work completing.  
Healing words you gently speak for ailing times  
As you hasten to the nations from the Shrine.

O Blessed among women, help me dare  
To reach out to those who need my love and care.  
Let my every word be instrument of him  
Who is treasure of my deepest life within.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

(JN)

LAUDS  
(at 3:00 am)

Your Shrine, which is our *Bethlehem*, has won  
God's favor through Our Lord, his rising Sun.

‰

There, as a virgin, you gave birth to Christ,  
Who chose you both as Mother and as Bride;  
There you brought forth in wondrous fruitfulness  
The Sun of Justice and of Righteousness.

You graciously let Schoenstatt be built bright,  
That there our times can see th'Eternal Light.  
From there you want to brighten our dark world  
As bearer, sent by God, of Christ our Lord.

Sink Christ into my soul with joy anew  
That I reflect him perfectly, like you;  
Let me a modern Christ-bearer become,  
That our own age might bask in Christ the Sun.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

*or*

Your Shrine as *Bethlehem* receives the nations  
Who with the rising sun bring adoration.

‰

You, daughter of Abraham, are not the least  
Who marvel at such visitors from the East.  
Like Christ, your mission will advance, take birth,  
As the mother of all nations of the earth.

In Schoenstatt you have set a new-born star;  
To the Shrine you draw the nations from afar,  
That the gifts they have to offer come to play  
In the sanctification of our modern day.

Let new adoration rise within each heart,  
So that of the nations all may have a part  
In your task of forming a new world of love  
That is given wholly to the Father above.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

(JN)

PRIME  
(at 6:00 am)

Your Shrine is for us *Nazareth*, our home,  
Where Christ the Sun gives warmth to all who come.

‰

This light so clear and bright is known to form  
The family's history and wake the norm  
Of quiet, mighty workday sanctity  
With root in blessed family unity.

To Nazareth, 'gainst homeless desolation,  
God wants to draw all families to salvation,  
And gracious workday sanctity present  
To those who come in Schoenstatt's covenant.

Grant, Mother, that within us Christ shine bright,  
In holy, family oneness we unite,  
Each moment ready for each sacrifice  
Our holy mission may demand as price.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

*or*

Your Shrine as *Cana* nourishes the soul,  
A sunshine that enlivens faith untold.

‰

In concern you saw the couple in their need,  
From your mother-heart implored Christ's wondrous deed.  
Your Son said, "Woman, this is not my time."  
But your confident instruction brought the wine.

In the hour of need God wills that you become  
The Bread Mother who provides when we have none.  
The covenant embraces body, soul,  
Stands as surety for strength to reach the goal.

Let my confidence exceed the "fair" and "just";  
Let it turn like you to Christ with childlike trust.  
For despite the hard words you from Christ received,  
Your faith was firm: The disciples did believe.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

(JN)

TERCE  
(at 9:00 am)

Your Shrine sends forth into our times the rays,  
The glory which the *Tabor* sun displays.

‰

Where Christ the sun reveals his radiant splendor  
As he once with vict'rious raiment did on Tabor.  
'Tis good to be there, paradise so fair,  
For the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling there.

Enveloped wholly by bright Tabor's light,  
The Holy Spirit's vessel, his delight:  
So you now mediate in Schoenstatt's Shrine  
And lead us kindly to the Spirit's shine.

Let Christ's own Spirit deeply penetrate  
And give us tongues of love commensurate,  
That as you, the Mirror of Justice, ever do,  
Christ's bright glory radiate through our lives, too.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

SEXT  
(at noon)

The sun has reached its midday brilliancy:  
We recollect our hearts in *Bethany*.

‰

With eagerness you seized each precious word  
And sentiment proceeding from the Lord,  
And so acquired contemplation's art,  
Surrendering self to God with all your heart.

Within your Shrine you wish to form a corps  
Of praying men on somber earthly shore  
And lead us to love's highest heights awide,  
That in the strife we're loyal at your side.

Help me to better learn prayer's art and love,  
Lift up my spirit to the stars above;  
Let me discover Christ, the Sun, each day,  
And trust in him in all life sends my way.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

NONE  
(at 3:00 pm)

The sun describes its orbit silently;  
The Spirit leads us on to *Calvary*.

‰

I see your mother-heart renounce with might,  
Courageously forego each mother-right;  
With Christ, your Son, you offer all you own  
For man's salvation at the Father's throne.

It is your longing in your Shrine to form  
Souls who will always keep the priestly norm,  
Who will as deacons stand beneath the cross  
And go with Christ the way of pain and loss.

Through life of sacrifice let me replace –  
Befitting laws eternal, valid grace,  
Befitting too Inscriptio's spirit plain –  
What's lacking still in Christ's own cross and pain.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

*or*

The sun once dark enkindles with new fire  
For the *Resurrection's* glow makes it entire.

‰

With hope undying you withstood the night  
And saw with joy the dawning of new light;  
Though intellect was plunged into the deep,  
Great vict'ry followed faith's entrusting leap.

Like sunshine you awaken in the Shrine  
The sign of greatness needed for our time.  
You show the way concealed to all the world:  
How love becomes perfected for the Lord.

Let the hours of faith and darkness that I meet  
Be reminders of the dying grains of wheat  
Which in Christ have died and then again are born  
To the warming radiance of each Easter morn.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

(JN)

VESPERS  
(at 6:00 pm)

The sun prepares to slip into the gloam,  
Invites us to the *Cenacle*, our home.

‰

From there your prayer drew down the Spirit blessed  
Who cleansed the Church of all half-heartedness,  
Who shed his light on all that Christ had taught,  
Gave apostle strength with martyr's "yes" well wrought.

This is your wish in working from the Shrine,  
To strengthen our weak eyes with faith divine,  
That we may ever walk by heaven's light  
And view all earthly things with God's own sight.

By light of faith let me behold the ray  
That Father's love sheds on my path today;  
My thanks for boundless gifts received shall be  
To live my mission with fidelity.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

*or*

The sun, in flaming red, is orb aglow;  
*Jerusalem* is now the home you know.

‰

With John and the disciples you now build  
The foundation for the Church as Christ had willed.  
Though quiet in the background, your great task  
As educator expends you to the last.

For the Church today you seek the forming place  
Where your educator's hand can work with grace,  
Where as master pupil of your only Son  
You make apostles of God's chosen ones.

Take us, inept and fragile, and perform  
Your work preparing us for sun and storm;  
Take and make us glow with true apostle flame,  
That our fruitfulness be solely in your name.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

(JN)

COMPLINE

(at 9:00 pm)

The sun has run its course and gone to bed,  
And *Sion* beckons, smiling far ahead.

‰

Your raptured longing brought the death you saw,  
Your body does not know corruption's law;  
The Holy City God did open wide;  
You are enthroned on *Sion*, glorified.

Through the Shrine our eyes you constantly do raise  
To th'Eternal *Schoenstatt*, where our God we'll praise;  
You show how fleeting earthly glory's heights  
Until on heaven we have fixed our sights.

Teach me to live each day so that my dying  
As heaven's heir is fitting, edifying,  
Each night before the judgment seat to trod  
That after death I may see you and God.

To our Father, God, let joyful praises soar,  
Through Christ with Mary, blessed forevermore,  
In God the Spirit full of majesty,  
From all the world for all eternity. Amen.

*Concluding Prayer*

(to be said after Compline)

O Triune God, receive eternal praises  
for all your great and wondrous gifts and graces,  
for choosing *Schoenstatt* as our Mother's throne,  
there to unite us deeply with your Son.

Our thanks to you, in Mary you are giving  
to every man the pattern for his living;  
she is of all your creatures barring none  
the only jeweled mirror of your Son.

With joy we offer you the jubilation,  
the burning love and praise of all creation;  
in Jesus' name, with Mary, we adore  
you, Blessed Trinity, forevermore. Amen.