

**Sermon at the First Mass of Fr. Günther Boll in the Exile Shrine,
November 1, 1963**

ASPM 1, 203-223

Fr. Joseph Kentenich

To the New *Pars Motrix* (1963-65)

Various excerpts from

P. Kentenich an seine Pars Motrix (red volumes)

Fr. Jonathan Niehaus, 2005, 2011

{217} But with this I have not yet reached the end. If you take another look at the text¹ you immediately sense the second fundamental form and fundamental norm of our Family. The first is to constantly draw from our source of knowledge: practical faith in Divine Providence. And the second fundamental form, the second foundation is the *covenant of love*.

Father-love has led us, mysteriously led us, has done it² through the covenant of love with our dear Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt. This is the second secret of his life.

If we pause to do some genuine Catholic reflection, and see and verbalize the larger perspectives, then for us it is self-understood that every priest can say in one way or another: I owe my priesthood to our dear Blessed Mother.

We only need to recall something which is more or less an accepted opinion of the Church: “*Ecce mater tua – ecce filius tuus*” [Behold your Mother – Behold your son] (Jn 19,25). The words, in the most direct sense, are directed to John personally. But it is also in keeping with the text’s meaning to apply it to the priesthood, indeed to all God’s creatures, to everyone called by God. Our Lady – the Mother of priests, Mother of the Priesthood.

Mother of priests – if Mary’s mission is to be the permanent and official helpmate and companion of Christ in the entire work of redemption, then she must clearly exercise special motherly power toward [Christ’s] leaders in the world and in the Church, the priests. That is something we simply take as self-understood. As a result, every priest could say, if he pays attention to the order of being: I clearly owe, in one way or another, my vocation and my way to the priesthood to the Mother of God.

¹ A text which sums up the priestly vocation of Fr. Boll.

² The miracle of Fr. Boll’s ordination.

But for him³ it goes farther. Here it says: who led him {218} these many years, especially the years of struggle? It is our Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt, who, as we believe, has the mission to educate leaders, educate priests, educate a people for the modern transformation of the world to Christ. This young priest has been led via the covenant of love to the priesthood but at the same time to [the charism of] *paternitas divina* [divine fatherliness].

Indeed, this is something remarkable about our family: as the Great Educator, Mary has led Schoenstatt in a most singular way not only to Christ, but also in Christ to the Father. Through Mary and from Schoenstatt, the Eternal, Infinite Love wants to establish a great Father Kingdom in the world of today.

³ For Günther Boll, the newly ordained priest who was celebrating this first Mass and to whom this sermon was directed.

Night of October 17-18, 1964 (midnight) “Zentral-Akt”

ASPM 2

Excerpts from the consecration prayer of the members of the anticipated new pars motrix et centralis

{61} Dear Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt!

Today the great Jubilee Year of our Schoenstatt Family reaches its climax. Filled with joy and inner gratitude we celebrate that day 50 years ago when you sealed the covenant of love with our father and through him the Schoenstatt Family of all times in the Original Shrine. This is the moment of origin in our sacred history from which the great Schoenstatt Work came about. Our father is the living center point; through him we have matured into a pronounced Father Kingdom. We are thus permitted to help solve the urgent problems of our day within ourselves as image and prototype of the Church and to seek the way to the new shore. Through our Family you want to initiate a profound father current, such as already exists in our ranks, for the world and Church.

For this work, however, you need a community of priests that is totally available for this task. For 50 years our father has longingly waited for it. He has not yet had the chance to form this, his *pars motrix*. In the tragic hour of the failure of the Society [of the Pallottines], for whom he reserved this task for so many years out of his faith in the mission of Vincent Pallotti, you yourself intervened again and in manifold ways called to life the various communities striving for this one goal: the new *pars motrix et centralis principalis* for the Schoenstatt Work and the planned Apostolic World Confederation. Guided by you through much darkness and many difficulties we have grown, until last year the supratemporal ideal of the *pars motrix et centralis* of the Work was ultimately and unmistakably given to us: to be Father’s priestly community of fathers.

Because we believe that you have called us to this and because we want to place ourselves at your disposal for this aim, we now kneel

here before you. For the first time we want to seal the covenant of love with you together from the different [founding] circles, and are convinced that by so doing we follow a call of your love. In real life you want to lay the foundations for a *pars motrix* that is fully ready to take up its task. It is to be our Jubilee gift to our father: in the covenant of love, united with you and joined together under the commonly adopted ideal of Father's priestly community of fathers, we stand ready for him when he comes home to lead his Work once more to its final full maturity. (...)

{62} Dear Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt!

In deep faith in the reality of our vocation and our holy interwovenness of fates with our father and with one another, we now seal together the covenant of love with you. We consecrate ourselves to you as your future *pars motrix* and solemnly take upon ourselves for ever the ideal of Father's priestly community of fathers. (...)

Excerpts from the talk by Fr. Kentenich which followed the consecration prayer:

{63} My dear confreres!

You are looking for me to put into words the feelings that fill our hearts and souls at this moment. I say our hearts. With that I not only mean those here tonight, but also all those who form a single great phalanx with us [who make the same act] today and tomorrow, be it as part of the community that we like to call the "New Community," or our old and seasoned veterans in the Family, or also the other confreres in the individual countries who are carried and driven by the same spirit as we.

What shall I put into words? Two things are evident:

(1) First, the inner attitude which is the source from which this act flows which we have made today, united with all those who belong to us.

(2) Second, something of the act itself.

(1) When we think of the *inner attitude*, then I think we – at least those of us here present, who differ in at least some ways from the branches following the same line – ought to first share the awareness that our lives and actions belong to a spiritual lifestream where supernatural powers and natural powers brush close together in a singular "entanglement." I do not think I need to explain that. This is probably one of the things that has gripped us the most: being allowed to peer so deeply into the background of God's wisdom, being led on paths which are not the normal way and which only very few people ever go.

When I ask which is the attitude – an attitude that presupposes a world governed by supernatural powers and natural powers, just as we {64} have seen right down to the very root – that carries us, then I think I have to put it this way:

It is, first of all, the inner attitude of being gripped, being *genuinely convicted* [by the evident power of God]. After all, we are no longer children, we are not from yesterday. In our midst are also confreres who have lived the greater portion of their life and know all the ups and downs of everyday reality, including in priestly life. Truly a genuine attitude of conviction.

Secondly, the *strong sense of being elected* [by God for a great work]. More precisely, we sense and feel a great dignity.

Along with this goes a *remarkable sense of being unworthy*.

And finally, an unsurpassed *readiness to be used*. (...)

{68} (2) This brings me to the second line of thought. I was to reflect briefly on *the act as such*.

It is really superfluous to do so. Your prayer has expressed everything so clearly. It has been our long-held conviction that we are called to be the *pars motrix* for this mammoth work which (such is our faith) lives in the plans of the Eternal God.

Pars motrix – what is new about this act is that God has called you to join together. There were three little flocks, three little troops which so far have gone their way independent of each other. They are now joined together in a single front, a single battle array. That

is how we stand today in God's plan, and before the face of God.

{69} Hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder we want to be a united phalanx. And what act do we set today? We place ourselves anew at the disposal of the Eternal Father God, of Christ, of the Blessed Mother. How great is the work meant here! How great is the work whose sheer size causes us interiorly to tremble – not only because God shows such mercy on us by drawing us this way into his mysteries and into the mission of Mary, no, the toweringly great, gigantic size of the work also causes us to tremble. And I think, if we are honest, there is scarcely any other feeling that, next to a mysterious interior joy in being called by God, so deeply fills our souls like the feeling of being weak, of manifold weakness in the face of such a gigantic mission.

As the words of your prayer reveal, God's ways have led each circle [of the community] in a remarkable fashion. It is worth marveling at. Although the Church leaned so heavily upon us (...) we did not break. I am not thinking now of the whole [Schoenstatt] Family, but of our circle of priests! It is remarkable how all of this has developed in the background with an enormous courage and, on the other hand, a singular accuracy in hitting the mark. Who will write all of this down later? Who will be able to trace in detail the unique ways of God, how he guided and intervened? Alone – this is a thought which has moved me interiorly yesterday and today – if I think of all the acts and attitudes which at least some of us have made (...) and compare it with what has gone on in the kingdom of the Family, {70} how often it is exactly the same words, and at its root the same great, gigantic spirit! Of course the will was very often weaker than the ideal. But the basic attitude was the same. (...)

What do we want? We want to place ourselves at the disposal of God the Eternal Father as a united phalanx literally for the new *pars motrix*. And that in a time when we expect that the Church, tomorrow or the day after, will speak its Yes, (...) a heartfelt Yes to us. And so we stand ready for that day.

**Conversation with Fr. Thomas Haag and Hans Kulgemeyer,
Milwaukee, November 20, 1964**

ASPM 2, 109ff

{109} There is much to be said [about lifestreams]. As you have already put it so nicely, as movements of life a lifestream ought to have staying power. It cannot just be an idea that creates a momentary “buzz.” (...) When something becomes a movement of life, a lifestream, it must naturally be repeated again and again. Everything should be brought into connection with it – the events of the year or whatever time span these things are in the foreground. {110} If this does not happen, then it will ultimately only be an intellectual discussion and falter unless it finds a certain resting point. Then you have a movement of ideas, but not a movement of life.

Example: if the superior jumps around too much in his or her thinking, always coming up with something new. Here a lifestream is not possible. It is crucial that the leaders: 1) “read” their ideas from the needs and longings of the community, and 1) meticulously and consistently maintain and nourish [the lifestream].

Consider how I give retreats, and how I lead the people here [in Milwaukee]. The others may not notice, but I always have a central thought and come back to it again and again. At first many people complained, “We have heard all that already.” Why? Because I was always repeating the central word. “But we know that already!” “Of course you do. But you are only taking it in right now with your head.” You see, it will take a long time until you can correctly understand this and apply this to your own preaching. What is unique is that everything we do in Schoenstatt is so far ahead of the times. The retreats which I held always focused on a central thought. And the first talks were always the most important. They contain what is alive in the times, leading to the “reading” of the central thought from the times. {111} This corresponds exactly to the theology of the personal ideal and the community ideal – and can be applied to a parish ideal. It is built on the fact that we live in an era when even the finest threads of the fabric of human existence are breaking down. At a

later time this was called “discontinuity of thinking.” It is the nature of man today. Discontinuity – thoughts just coexist [but aren’t tested to see if they connect with each other].

Years ago I liked to illustrate this by inviting [my listeners] to imagine a family, an enclave, (...) which is still deeply religious. If the [family’s] fundamental attitude is still essentially Catholic, then one can say, “It’s Lent, and that means it is time for...” The attitude is already there and the actions flow from the attitude. But today one can no longer assume that this is true in the broader population. Certain actions must first be created; then the attitude is formed by repeating the act⁴. This is why everything must be connected, again and again, to the central thought, until a living attitude has been formed. And then one can use the attitude to take the next step. You see, applied to your question: If something is only a fascinating idea which captivates but quickly passes, it will only be an intellectual pursuit. One will eventually exhaust the topic and need another, not generating any movement of life. But if it becomes a movement of life, then [we must] feed all the little streams which awaken during that time into the larger stream.

(...)

{114} You see, there is an effort in our times to rediscover the value of symbols. A symbol is always the sign of a higher reality, and when religious symbols are involved, they ultimately point to the supernatural reality. {115} Now if you remember what I already said on the subject, you will recall that modern man has largely abandoned the otherworldly, seeing secondary causes only from the standpoint of natural science. He does not think supernaturally enough, and so the objects [of earth] no longer point to another reality.

This is something we must reconquer today. If we do not, symbols will no longer speak to us. At the very most they might enkindle

⁴ Consider the rule of thumb that for an action to become a habit, it must be repeated daily for 14 days.

in the masses a certain enthusiasm or fascination, but they will not convey any deeper meaning. This, like so many other things in education today, must be reconquered from the ground up! I will only be able to gain ground a little at a time. Women still have more of a sense for symbols, but are losing it too. Our modern times, because they are simply so natural and nature-bound, so materialistic, so cued in on how something has developed, or indeed experientially oriented, do not see the symbol, the meaning behind the symbol, but only the outward object (...). If I do not acknowledge the value behind the symbol and interiorly live what it means, then they have no meaning.

Excerpts from the Thanksgiving Act in the Exile Shrine
June 23, 1965
ASPM, Vol. 2

{259} [Allow me] to interpret a little what is going on in the still recesses of our souls.

(1) I think that the first thing, at least for those of us who have experienced everything so deeply, for those who have been through so many battles and trials, is a *truly reverent awe*.

Why awe? It is generally the case in all of salvation history – and one can observe it in the lives of men and women with a deeper impact on history – when one realizes that one has been touched by the breath of God, there is no other choice but to fall to one's knees, to cease to speak and think. One senses awe. (...)

{261} (2) Together with it is what we have already indicated: the sentiment, the basic attitude of {262} *humble gratitude*. (...)

If the entire work is a documentation of the divine, of the inbreak of the divine, it will not be hard for us to say as well: even if we as instruments have given everything, the work is so great and the effects, the results of the whole history are so profound that none of us can say it is the product of his own activity. Each of us – this is a truly happy and invigorating effect when we look back on our history – each one of us who was used is a stone, indeed a load-bearing stone in the building of the Family. (...)

{264} (3) All of which prepares the way for the third sentiment, that of {265} perfect, unselfish, total self-surrender. By this I especially mean the gift of self *to our Blessed Mother*. (...)

{267} I think this heartfelt surrender to Mary also ought to be the legacy we give to our successors. I think it is indeed true: the moment we stop being so decisively and specifically Marian is the moment we begin to dissolve and approach our end. (...)

{269} And I think this should interiorly renew and deepen in ourselves this attitude: a totally deep, tender, perfect gift of self to Mary, or more precisely, to our Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt. And this threefold attitude will then safeguard for us

the grace to remain faithful to the Blessed Mother, to her mission and our mission, even to our last breath.

**Excerpts from the talk of July 18, 1965
for the Founding of the Schoenstatt Fathers
International Shrine, Waukesha
ASPM, Vol. 2**

{274} I want to make use of a very plain expression right now. I want to put it this way: We are experiencing an Annunciation scene of a most noteworthy kind.

An Annunciation scene – if we dare to use this word, our imagination and memory immediately recall the Annunciation scene portrayed for us by the Angelus. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary (cf Lk 1,26-38). The great Annunciation scene in the life of our dear Blessed Mother, the great Annunciation scene in the history of salvation! If we let it work on us more precisely, we can say it is a rudimentary encounter of the divine with the human. The inbreak – {275} an elemental, tangible inbreak of the Divine into the human and therefore a breakthrough and a bursting forth of the human into the Divine. Annunciation scenes of this kind need to be interpreted as encounters between God and man. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary! A message from above! The Angel of the Lord brings the message from God. The supernatural extends into, reaches into, breaks into the earthly world, into the general history of mankind. (...)

{277} If we now think of the history of our Family, we know so well that the great Annunciation scene in Schoenstatt's history is October 18 [1914]. But I can immediately add: We are mistaken if we think that this is the only Annunciation scene. It does not stand alone. This encounter between the natural and the supernatural has repeated itself countless times in the history of our Family. (...)

{281} What am I getting at when I say Annunciation scene? Perhaps you know where my train of thought is leading. What I want to say is that we are moving in an entirely other World, without which we cannot master the world in which we move with our two

feet. (...)

{290} 1956 – the Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary! Who was the Angel of the Lord? It was Father General [Moehler] (...) What all did this do in me – I don't want to go into detail – deliberations, questions, tentatively feeling my way forward. {291} And then the answer, as clear as day: It is absolutely impossible that the Society as a whole fulfill the great task [of *pars motrix et centralis*].

And now came the start of catastrophic wrestling and a gigantic struggle, not only among the historical, exteriorly tangible players, but also between the powers behind the scenes of history. (...)

You see, since 1956 it has been unequivocally clear, at least for me. You see, when I have finally reached clarity about what God wants, then human wrangling must cease. And it was truly not easy! How easy I could have had it, if I had only accepted [the other line] and signed on the dotted line; it would have all been over. It would have been so easy. No, no! Instead, we faced the great battle leading to the separation of the Movement from the Society. We know that for this to take place was a great event!

Then today's event – how clearly it stands before us! What was now essentially and existentially necessary for the Movement – a new *pars motrix* – is established today.

Please understand all of this in the grand scheme of things: the espousal of the supernatural with the natural, the breakthrough of the divine into the earthly and breaking forth of the earthly into the divine.