

SHRINE SOUNDINGS Jubilee Family Shrine & Retreat Center

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The Journey of the Holy Family in the Midwest in the Next Three Years

The Journey of the Holy Family Statue has begun.

The hallmark of the Jubilee Family Shrine is the wooden statue of Joseph and Mary standing behind their Child Jesus. At some of my couples meetings, a discussion centered around how we can get more people to visit the Schoenstatt Shrine as a true Pilgrimage Place of Grace for themselves and for all their friends and family members. The loving idea was suggested – let's have a piece of the shrine visit the families, urging each individual and family then to "return the visit" and go to the Jubilee Family Shrine on the shores of Lake Sleepy Eye.

Bishop John LeVoir from the home Diocese of New Ulm, MN, as well as Father Kasel blessed the small wooden statue. October 23, 2011, at our Founding Day Celebration, the statue began its journey to visit every Schoenstatt Family in Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota, and North Dakota in this three-year countdown to the Centennial of Schoenstatt on October 18, 2014. Our Mother Thrice Admirable wants to bring the shrine graces to strengthen family life and love.

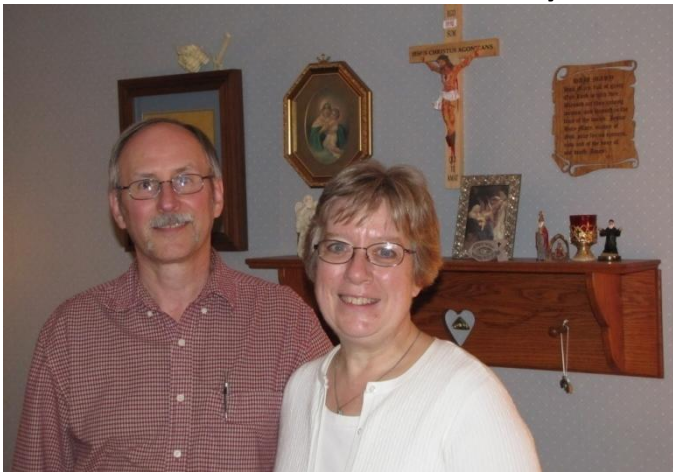
A notebook will be accompanying the statue in its plastic carrying case. As the Holy Family Statue visits your home, please welcome it warmly and pray together. Kindly write a petition, inspiration, or experience you can share in the book. A photo is welcome. The schedule for the first year is by Schoenstatt groups. The group will share the statue for a week or five days with each family in the group. If you would also like to be visited by the Holy Family Statue and are not in a monthly Schoenstatt group, call 612-618-9334.

Wishing you each a Thanksgiving filled with blessings, joy, and safety from Our Mother Thrice Admirable from her shrine, *Sister M Jessica*



Happy Thanksgiving!

Featured Schoenstatter: Mike & Sherry Hittle



July 4th 1998, was a grand celebration in Ida Grove, Iowa. That date marked the dedication of our home shrine to the MTA.

Schoenstatt was brought to us by the Dan and Ruth Ellis family when they moved to Ida Grove. Sister Marie got us on board with meetings and helped us become more familiar with the Schoenstatt spirituality.

The Upper Room was the name chosen for our home shrine. Mary was present to the apostles on that first Pentecost and we reasoned that we would need her to be present to us in our home, in this shrine dedicated to her, leading and guiding us into the church of the future. We were given the understanding of the importance of Our Lady's work in this age, and we hoped that as a result of the collaboration between us, she would create a finished product better than we could accomplish alone. Although we at times have not always done the best at holding up our end of the bargain, she has not disappointed us.

Apparently it was an appropriate name for our home shrine; the day before our dedication, a white dove appeared in our back yard and lingered here for several days. On one occasion it flew onto our deck and we were able to get within arms length of it, without it flying away.

As life throws us curve balls from time to time, we have more than once depended on the Schoenstatt spirituality to get us through those challenging moments. We have only to look to Our Mother to recall the great and heroic acts of faith. In spite of difficulties, in spite of circumstances disclosing something completely opposite, our Mother always displayed courage in the wake of trials. If we have the eyes of faith that she has, we too can have great hope that she is the one who will accomplish the greatest works through us when we believe. Our Mother is the image and likeness of the Holy Spirit, so gathering around her in the Upper Room, we learn from her how to await the promises of God.

A fun turn of events in Schoenstatt occurred one weekend as we were hosting a missionary priest from Poland who is stationed in Africa. He came to our home one evening and as he walked through the front door, he saw the picture of the MTA on our wall. With great excitement in his voice he turned to us and said, "I did not know you knew Our Lady of Schoenstatt." How perfectly she unites all of her children.

From our home shrine to yours, *Ora pro nobis!*
Sherry and Mike Hittle, Ida Grove, Iowa

Founding Day Celebration at Shrine



Founding Day, October 23, 2011, in Sleepy Eye, MN, was a glorious day. It was attended by 250 people from 55 different cities. God gave us beautiful sunshine, good fellowship, and good food for our minds, bodies, and souls. There were so many things to celebrate! It is the 35th anniversary of the Jubilee Family Shrine, the closing of the Year of the Father, and the opening of the Year of the Shrine.

Sister M. Petra was our honored guest speaker. Her topics were an overview of Schoenstatt and an in-depth view of Father Kentenich. She was his secretary for three of his 13 years of exile in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Sister outlined some key traits that he possessed: tranquility, contemplative prayer, radiant joy, love, and compassion. She gave us examples of his inner joy, the reality of the Blessed Mother, the depth of his prayers, and how he could understand people and turn this into a learning experience, bringing comfort and joy to them.

Sister Petra emphasized how joyful and radiant Father was. He had been through a terminal illness, the Nazis concentration camp at Dachau, Germany, and suffered 14 years of exile from his beloved Schoenstatt. Through all of his intense suffering, he had complete trust in our Mother Thrice Admirable and in Divine Providence. He said that God is not only a God of love, but also of joy.

His prayer was a time for concentrated attention, total focus, ready to live in God's presence. He admonished Sister Petra when she had a short petition to Mary, by asking her, "And what did the Blessed Mother say? Did you leave her before she had a chance to speak to you?" He taught us that we should expect nothing, give away everything, and that difficulties enable us to learn detachment. Also, that we solve the global problems in our own homes by loving our families.

Father's compassionate love overflowed because he had experienced and understood suffering. He had the ability to take on others' suffering. He taught that the more we admit our smallness and weaknesses, the more we can receive God's mercy.

We were very blessed to have Sister Petra, who was able to give a first-hand account of our wonderful founder. The more we learn of Father Kentenich, the more we see what a great gift he is! Through Father Kentenich, we have a man who reflects God the Father to us, and through him we have received the priceless gift of the covenant of love and our shrine.

Lunch was catered by Hardees, with Sr. Rita Marie's wonderful desserts, followed by an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation with Father Steffl, and then Mass concelebrated by Father Kasel and Father Steffl.



Father Kasel shared his joy to be a part of Schoenstatt. He blessed the small Holy Family Statue which will travel to every Schoenstatt family in the Midwest until October 18, 2014. Next we processed to the shrine for benediction, renewal of the covenant of love, and to receive a beautiful magnet designed by Mark Rockers to commemorate the day.

Special thanks to Sister Petra, Fathers Kasel and Steffl, the sisters for their hospitality, Gloria and Tim Wolf for emceeding the day, Lorie Spear for decorating, the Schoenstatt Youth for singing, and everyone who helped make this day so rewarding. It was a tremendous day to begin our year's motto: **Build Family Shrines of Life and Love!** *Jenny and Dave Baker, Farmington, MN*



JOURNEY TO THE JUBILEE FAMILY SHRINE ON THE SHORES OF LAKE SLEEPY EYE

This October 2011 we began striving with the **Year of the Shrine** in the international countdown to the 100th anniversary of the founding of Schoenstatt. On October 18, 1914, the covenant of love with the Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen, and Victress of Schoenstatt was made by Father Joseph Kentenich and the young Pallottine seminarians in the Original Shrine near Koblenz, Germany.

Our national striving (please note that Texas has its separate Schoenstatt leadership and striving) to the Schoenstatt Centennial 2014, is an ongoing nine-year countdown, emphasizing one of the different Schoenstatt Shrines in the USA each year. Our motto, which is formed at the annual leaders convention the second Sunday in October at Waukesha, WI, reads: **Build Family Shrines of Life and Love.** The shrine in focus until October 2012 is the Jubilee Family Shrine in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota. Let us journey to this sixth Schoenstatt Shrine built in America, 35 years ago.

This journey begins and continues each day anew with a penetrating, practical love of the Blessed Mother and her Son for her growing Schoenstatt Family. From a historical sense, Schoenstatt first came to Minnesota and the land "West of the Mississippi" in 1921. Father Lambert Hoffmann had gotten to know Schoenstatt in 1920 while still a young seminarian in Munich and made his covenant of love, joining the Apostolic Federation. He had come to the U.S. in January 1921 to continue his studies at the St. Paul Seminary and join the archdiocese of St. Paul, MN. This gave Father Hoffmann the remarkable distinction of being the first Schoenstatt member to come to and live in the US.

When Father Kentenich made his historic visit to the USA in 1948, Father Hoffmann asked him to hold a triduum to introduce Schoenstatt to his St. Mathias Parish at Hampton. There Father Kentenich even heard confessions for the first time in English. The two priests spent two days in St. Paul at the end of August and visited St. Paul Seminary, Nazareth Hall, and St. Mary's Home for the Aged. This is a special gift for all of us in Minnesota – to know our founder came to visit and thank Father Hoffman.

Father Hoffmann's pioneer efforts must have brought him many disappointments. His hopes to start Schoenstatt in the St. Paul Seminary were not crowned with success; yet his enthusiasm for Schoenstatt remained undimmed throughout this life. Even his death in 1963 gave seed to the next chapter in Minnesota's Schoenstatt History. *Further reading page 97ff, Visit to America by Fr Jonathan Niehaus.*

Father Cletus Altermatt, the pastor in the Ivanhoe parish of Sts. Peter and Paul, visited the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary at their provincial house in Madison, WI, on January 20, 1963. He made the trip of 430 miles

to ask for Schoenstatt Sisters to staff a hospital and home, which the small rural community of 800 dreamed of building in order to attract good medical care for their families. Father Cletus had an outstanding devotion to St Joseph, who must have had a good hand in the decision of the sisters to come on board (when there were only 35 sisters and, of these, only four were nurses at the time!). A site southeast of town received building permit approval and was called Divine Providence Hospital and Home. Divine Providence was needed immediately. Only through "a divine hand constantly providing" did the mighty efforts of the whole community and area raise enough funds, in less than five years, for the 28-bed hospital, 51-bed nursing home, chapel for 50, and a spacious wing for the Schoenstatt Sisters to call home. September 10, 1967, was the happy date of dedication, and the date when the relentless scheduling of fund-raisers could ease up. Fund-raisers which Father Jonathan notes in *A History of Schoenstatt in the United States*, were held in the form of fishing derbies, auction sales, breakfasts, concerts, and fox hunts.

With the establishment of our hospital and home at Ivanhoe, solid, prayerful, and apostolic groups began for the couples, mothers, youth, and apostolate of the sick through the dedicated Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary. The nine Pioneer Couples made their covenant of love in the hospital chapel on August 17, 1969, with Father Joseph Haas, a Schoenstatt Father who drove over from Milwaukee. One year later, on November 18, 1969, the first North American branch of the Schoenstatt Apostolate of the Sick began under the guidance of Sister M. Juliana. Within three years, over 500 people were in the Apostolate (meeting the requirements of love for Mary and willingness to offer contributions to the capital of grace) in a dozen nearby towns. Sister Juliana spread the Movement as far as the Twin Cities and the Dakotas. Adoration on the 18th of each month, such as held at the Founder Shrine in Madison, WI, began. From 1970-1975, an annual bus pilgrimage went to the International Schoenstatt Center in Waukesha, WI.

Sister M. Candace Fier was a member of the first MN Schoenstatt Girls Youth Group who dared and ordered the MTA picture for the future Schoenstatt Shrine by May 1971. Yes, our journey is taking us via a relatively small Schoenstatt Family. Each member, covenant, and home shrine, as you can imagine, was joyously celebrated by the hospital staff.

An incredible turning point in the history of the Jubilee Family Shrine was the Coronation of our Mother, Queen, and VICTRESS on December 7, 1974. The year 1974 commemorated the 60th diamond anniversary of Schoenstatt's founding. The Schoenstatt Sisters had worked thoroughly with the movement to participate in the international crowning stream. The official title of our Blessed Mother for the Schoenstatt Work was to be extended to a third and final address;

namely, VICTRESS of Schoenstatt. (MOTHER was there from the very beginning in the 1910s and QUEEN was added on December 10, 1939, as the Second World War was beginning. Father Kentenich had proclaimed her VICTRESS on his visit to the Crown Church near Stuttgart in 1966. Eight years later it would be officially proclaimed by his entire International Schoenstatt Family.)

In the February-March 1974 issue, *Schoenstatt Apostolate of the Sick Newsletter*, Editor Sister Juliana urged all to work with this coronation stream by 1) building home shrines and crowning our MTA pictures 2) preparing to make a covenant of love and 3) working on our Cross Project of little sacrifices during Lent. The small Minnesota Family prepared for this day with much love. They would dare to ask the Mother Thrice Admirable to receive the crown and show them the place where she wanted her Schoenstatt Shrine to be built. Countless times a day the petition in song flowed to her heart: Filled with love and confidence, we want to build your shrine; give us your grace, show us the place as planned in Father's design.

Many little crowns were offered to our Victress on this day when Bishop Schadweiler came and crowned the octagonal MTA picture for the future MN Shrine. These are a few sentences from his compelling sermon: "...So then, 15 out of the 95 churches in our diocese have the name of Mary. Isn't that enough? Never! I would regard it as a singular favor, a privilege for the diocese of New Ulm, if Mary had another structure named for her. I know the Schoenstatt Sisters do not really feel completely at home at one of their foundations, unless they have a replica of the Original Schoenstatt Chapel...I invite such a Chapel of Mary to be built here...We need Mary's help and protection more than ever in these troubled times. Mary, Queen of Heaven, intercede for us! Mother Thrice Admirable, pray for us! All Hail, Mary Victress!"

The petition of the Schoenstatt Girls Youth rang out with particular urgency: "Dear Blessed Mother, we ask you to show us where you want your Shrine in Minnesota...Show us the place, and forgive our youthful impatience, but please do it NOW!" This went straight to the heart of the Bishop, who had not only given his approval to build the shrine in his diocese, but was reminded by Father Robert Goblirsch, pastor of Wilno, of a possible land site near Lake Sleepy Eye. Hearts were on fire! Schoenstatters had worked for one intense year of striving and now at the banquet after the Mass and Coronation of our MTA, she gave us the first inkling of land. This land was on the shores of one of Minnesota's 10,000 lakes, located exactly between the first Ivanhoe Center and the growing metro area of the state capital, St. Paul, with its twin city, Minneapolis.

Intense striving began with the hospital sisters: Sr M Elizabeth, Sr M Ann, Sr M Christmaris, Sr Maripaula, Sr

Mariette, Sr M Mildred, Sr M Juliana, Sr M Jean, Sr M Jacquelyn, Sr M Cynthia, Sr M Judith, Sr M Angelita, and Sr Marybeth who urged on the movement, friends, and benefactors.

The acquisition of the land was not an easy process. It took over a year of negotiations overcoming legal technicalities before the 32-acre Schoenstatt on the Lake was gifted by Divine Providence to our MTA's MN family via the Diocese of New Ulm. Mrs. Emma Sommerfeld had purchased a 200 acre farm site in 1963, donating it to the diocese in 1968 for a seminary or spiritual formation center for boys and men. She dedicated the land as a memorial to her mother, Anna M. Hillesheim. On May 10, 1975, three Schoenstatt Sisters had a fruitful visit with Father Robert Wyffels, who was pastor at St. Mary's in town. He noted that 1976 would be the Centennial of their parish and was very welcoming to the Sisters, who helped with formation at religion classes.



With the assistance of Father Stephen Adrian, former pastor at St. Mary's in Sleepy Eye, and then in St Peter, the long-awaited day arrived on January 22, 1976, just as the bicentennial year of American Independence began. One has to sit back and marvel at the love poured over us from the MTA! The property drastically needed to be cleaned up, crumbling barns removed, and the dozens of dutch elm diseased trees destroyed. Helping hands from Ivanhoe made the two hour journey on weekends. Despite teaching 5th & 6th grades at Our Lady of Victory School in Lucan, Sister M. Jean Frisk also began clean-up work at the farmyard with many of her newly made friends. At the beginning stages, some may have had only a few months of meetings in Schoenstatt spirituality before the entire group was whisked away into helping at the shrine site in Sleepy Eye!

The first official gathering of the Schoenstatt Family was May 2, 1976, for the ground-breaking ceremony. Snow, wind, and cold didn't dampen the 200 eager hearts gathered. Mr. Jerry Weiss took on the renovations of the farmhouse. By June 1976, under his masterful touch, this became the first home for the small group of Shrine Builders. These were namely four to six college-aged women who helped Sr Jean in whatever capacity they could: to clear the land, plant a garden, and beautify the shrine area while welcoming guests, workers, and

pilgrims, along with spreading the mission of Schoenstatt to the rural families and nearby communities. Mr. Richard Mathowitz was very helpful with the land moving parts and making a feasible driveway, as well as suggesting a construction company.

Under the able talent of foreman, Mr. Al Tietel of the Heyman Construction Company from New Ulm, the spiritual striving and exterior foundation and bricks were so far that cornerstone laying was held on Sunday, July 18th. Symbols of the crown (symbolic of the Adoration Church where Father Kentenich finds his last resting place and his canonization process was opened on February 10, 1975), the Father Eye, and the covenant rings with the date, 1976, adorn the granite stone to the right of the shrine door. If you have a chance ask some time to read the notes from Sr Jean and you'll find each day was exciting, enriching, often exhausting, and truly filled with little "miracles" as our MTA provided everything needed! As "builders" we tried to scramble after our MTA and her desire to finish her home among the rich family life found in rural Minnesota during the turbulent mid 1970s!

The big day arrived on October 3, 1976. Shrine Dedication Attended by 1,000 was the front page coverage of the Sleepy Eye Herald-dispatch: "With 1,000 people in attendance, the shrine on the Schoenstatt Sisters property, just west of Sleepy Eye, was dedicated Sunday afternoon. The shrine was dedicated by Bishop Raymond Lucker. He was the principal concelebrant at the outdoor Mass. Also taking part were Bishop Alphonse Schladweiler and 14 priests from a wide area. The property was turned over to the Schoenstatt Sisters last winter by the diocese of New Ulm. The area was obtained from the diocese through the efforts of Reverend Stephen J. Adrian. The Emma Sommerfeld Estate had donated the area to the diocese in memory of Mrs. Sommerfeld's mother, Mrs. Anna Hillesheim.

The chapel is part of a development on about 30 acres on the southwest corner of Sleepy Eye Lake. 'It will be a place of pilgrimage to the Blessed Mother for moral and religious renewal,' said Sister M. Jean Frisk, a member of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary. A place of retreat for the entire Diocese of New Ulm will eventually be built there. 'We will have here a center of renewal where people will come for strength,' said Bishop Lucker. 'We dedicate this shrine to the service of Almighty God and to one another. The Schoenstatt Movement is dedicated to the training of youth and as Christ said: All of us must be like little children.'"

The New Ulm Diocesan Paper, *The Prairie Catholic*, continues coverage: "The offertory procession at the Mass featured people from New York, Arizona, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Illinois, Washington, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. Priests from many of the parishes in the diocese were also in attendance at the services.

Noting that many of the local people had placed themselves, their time, and their resources at the disposal of the Sisters in the building of the shrine and the refurbishing of the original farm house which had stood on the property, Bishop Lucker commended them for their support and extended to them his thanks and the thanks of the Sisters. Following the dedicatory program, about 800 people attended a luncheon in St. Mary's dining hall."

In deep gratitude that one dream had become a reality, another dream took its place; namely, the dream of a larger local center. By 1980, as the movement now grew in this area of the state, and the ever popular Girls' Summer Camps continued growing year by year, the need was acute. Once again the generosity of the Blessed Mother produced "chills of awe." When the Sisters' Province saw the needs of the movement in MN, they took the money that had been in savings for a future provincial house and invested it instead in the new home for the movement by the Jubilee Family Shrine. Before its dedication on June 28, 1981, a Marshall woman changed her will and gave twice the amount of money spent to build Schoenstatt on the Lake. The Sisters truly see this as their second crowning miracle, since they had crowned the MTA in 1977 with the petition that the MTA help with building the movement center. One happy Sister M. Helma will never forget that phone call!

The laws of organic growth that Father Kentenich explained can be applied to the growth of the movement in Minnesota. For example, it grows from within, it grows slowly, all of the parts grow at once although not all at the same rate. The MTA calls each and every member specifically, specially to join her in bringing hearts and homes closer to her Son. She needs willing and able instruments to bring society back home to the heart of God. The gift for the Centennial of the Birth of Fr. Kentenich in November 1985 was the attachment of the Father Eye Symbol in the shrine. In October 1986, at the tenth anniversary of the shrine, the first full-time movement sister, Sr Marie Day, arrived in Sleepy Eye. The new bedroom wing and further expansion of the conference hall areas and dining rooms was completed by May 28, 2004. We now have 24 bunk beds with 25 single or double bedrooms available for groups.

In view of the coming legislative fight for God's gift of marriage between one man and one woman in next year's election, there are many signs of hope from our Jubilee Family Shrine. This summer set a record breaking seven weeks of girls' camp (55 girls, aged 10-14 years of age, per week with 28 older girls working on the Spanish Mission Week). Two hundred fifty attended the Founding Celebration on October 23rd coming from 55 towns in Minnesota and Iowa. We have a Directory for the groups in MN, IA, SD, & ND; as well as a quarterly *Shrine Soundings Newsletter*. Our website receives many visits at www.SchoenstattMN.com. With

over 60 girls groups, four Father/Son weekends; 15 mothers groups and 20 couples groups, our monthly Schoenstatt weekends are quickly filled.



Photo of Shrine Groundbreaking on May 2, 1976

As I type this article, a flock of Canada geese is peacefully paddling "upstream" on Lake Sleepy Eye; the church bells are ringing from St Mary's towers, and we'll be starting a new couples group from the area at 4 pm. Do let Our Lady touch your life this coming year! Prayerfully consider a pilgrimage to her shrine for the special jubilee family graces. That would be the best 35th anniversary gift our Mother Thrice Admirable could receive – if all those family members who have been touched in some way by her stream of grace during these past decades, would answer her call of: Come to the Shrine. If in some way all of us, who have come in contact with her little shrine, would make a return pilgrimage to her, what a joy and gift it would be. Even if it is only spiritually with greatest longing of the heart, do come to visit our Mother and her Son in the shrine!

Dear Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen, and Victress of Schoenstatt,

We need you and your Son, Jesus. As we make a spiritual pilgrimage to your Jubilee Family Shrine, we beg you to shower us with these graces: of *being at home* in God's holy will, of *spiritual transformation* into saintly families who give selflessly, and of *apostolic zeal* to live this day as true Catholic families.

This will not be easy. Grant us courage and joy, honesty and understanding. Let us see Divine Providence present in our tasks. Help us be your instruments to bring society closer to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. From our home shrines, may we model our lives following the example of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Mold us into everyday saints to renew our parishes and country. Amen.