

**100th Anniversary of the first Solemn Consecration  
of 20 Women in the Apostolic Federation**

**April 16, 2025 in the Original Shrine  
Schoenstatt**

*Melody: „O Maria, Gnadenvolle ...*

Welcome by the leader of the Schoenstatt Women's Federation,  
Ms Dr Geni Hoss

### **How did the consecration on 16 April 1925 come about?**

In the 1920s, more and more women became interested in the Apostolic Federation. Building up the women's movement was a great risk for Father Kentenich. However, the renewal of the Church and the world cannot happen without women.

In their hearts, the small mustard seed of consecration to the Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt began to take root. The women who came to Schoenstatt were confronted with a prophetic mission. They sensed a divine awakening. They experienced a young founder who was looking for allies. The Blessed Mother, who entrusted him with this mission, also ensured that the hearts of the women opened to this new message and that their willingness to make themselves fully available has grown.

The report about the leaders' conference in August 1924 states: “Still late into the evening, the significance of that day was made clear to the Federation Elders, whose solemn admittance is imminent next year. It will be a high point in our lives, comparable to the day of priestly ordination, the perpetual profession of sisters, the death on the cross in the life of the Saviour. We must, under all circumstances, rise above mediocrity. The standard for us is not duty, but magnanimity; we must be willing to ascend the cross with the Saviour ...”

*Instrumental music:*

We want to be, O Mother, the seed for a new world. You place us in the ground, we die and we abound as holy springtime's fruit.

## Who were the 20 women, and what became of them?

On this plaque, we see the group photo of that event: the candidates for consecration, the leader of the Federation, Father Kentenich, the Provincial Father Laqua, who received the consecration, and Father Kolb, who accompanied the women's movement in Schoenstatt from its beginning.



1. Reihe: Gertraud von Bullion, Maria Kronemeyer, Pater Kentenich, Pater Laqua, Pater Kolb, Maria Sauer.
2. Reihe: Gertrud Quandt, Ernestine Gerster, Toni Oesterle, Klara Weber, Maria Hilfrich, Helene Meschede, Maria Weber, Anna Booz, Maria Christmann.
3. Reihe: Franziska Ettle, Anna Pries, Maria Vogel, Emilie Engel, Maria Schmitt, Rosa Bauer, Gertrud Breuers, Hilde Zenker.

At the celebration of the 25th anniversary of this consecration, Father Kentenich took the opportunity to speak about the 20 women in more detail. He said:

“I will now read the names of the twenty Sisters of the Federation and briefly add what has become of them. ...

The first five are in the eternal Schoenstatt. ... Maria Sauer, ... Gertraud von Bullion, ... Klara Weber, Mrs Kronemayer and Ernestine Gerster. So, five who apparently have a very original face, who fulfilled their task as those ready to die.

Then five Sisters of Mary:

Sister Anna, Magdalena, Toni-Maria, Emilie, Gertraud.

[The Ladies of Schoenstatt] ...: Maria Hilfrich, Maria Weber, Rosa Bauer. Sisters of the Federation: Maria Vogel. Member of the League: Maria Schmidt. Five are said to no longer be in close contact with Schoenstatt: Franziska Ettle, Anna Booz, Hilde Zenker, Helene Meschede, Gertrud Quandt.”

### **Let us now immerse ourselves in the atmosphere of that time.**

Before the candidates went to the shrine on the morning of 16 April for their consecration, Gertraud von Bullion and Klara Weber asked Father Kentenich to bless the first fruits of the women's movement, who were now about to make the solemn consecration, ‘as the father of the Apostolic Movement’. Gertraud von Bullion noted in her report:

“He came and granted our request. It was like parents blessing their children before they take the most important step in life.”

During the ceremony, each Sister of the Federation was called by name. Four Sisters of the Federation at a time went to the communion rail. After the names were read, they prayed the consecration together and then presented the consecration prayer, which each one had written and signed, to the provincial Father Laqua. He placed the consecration prayers on the altar. Each sister received a lighted candle. Gertraud writes:

“We had given everything away and received the Saviour in return. What an unequal and blessed exchange! The ceremony was repeated five times as there were 20 sisters in all... It was 9.30 am when we went to breakfast. The retreat, including the silence, was supposed to end with the celebration, but all of us had asked to be allowed to keep the silence until lunch. We were all so glad we did, because that way the profound impressions of the last hours wouldn't be immediately obscured by all kinds of superfluous chatter. Everyone gradually gathered in the shrine, and just as, at our request, the twenty candles burned all day in front of the tabernacle and at the feet of our Mother, so twenty hearts burned towards their God.”

(Nikolaus Lauer, Gertraud von Bullion, *SERVIAM – Answer of Love*, pages 132-133)

#### *HYMN*

***Refr. To you, my dear Mother, I give my life.***

*To you, my dear Mother, I give my whole self.*

1. I give you my eyes, Mother let me see!  
I give you my eyes, let me see with you. *Refr.*
  
2. I give you my ears, let me hear God's words.  
I give you my ears, let me hear with you. *Refr.*
  
3. I give you my mouth, let me speak about you.  
I give you my mouth, let me speak with you. *Refr.*
  
4. I give you my heart, let it burn with love.  
I give you my heart, let me love with you. *Refr.*

## **What did these 20 women solemnly offer through their consecration?**

During the days of the retreat, they had been introduced to the imitation of Christ and were ready to go to the cross with the Saviour for the salvation of souls. Their basic attitude was: 'The love of Christ compels us' (2 Cor 5:14) – 'For the Federation let myself be crucified.'

They were ready to give themselves completely through Mary to the Triune God for his kingdom.

In retrospect, Father Kentenich wrote in 1953:

"The consecration prayer that emerged can be understood as an expression of the basic spiritual attitude of that time and as a model that – similarly to Joseph Engling – consciously or unconsciously – guided all subsequent consecrations. It is proof of how faithfully our educator always stood by the covenant duty she had assumed, ... and how seriously she always took the powerful proof of her first love.

The prayer reaches such a height that cannot easily be surpassed. It originated independently of Joseph Engling, but not independently of the motherly educator, who bore the first fruits of the men's and women's movements in her heart and, with a loyal and caring mother's hand, formed them in an original and individual way according to a secret model – visible to all following generations. Thus we remained alert to the clear calls and challenges to courageously dare the ascent to the heights that we subsequently experienced in the revolution and the Second World War and that were actually answered by the Blank Cheque and the Inscriptio of the entire family." (Letter to Fr. General Turowski)

*Silence*

**Let us allow the text of the consecration prayer addressed to Mary and Jesus, to take effect on us.**

“Lady, Queen, Mother Thrice Admirable!

I, ..., consecrate myself to you today before the whole world and in the most solemn manner, completely, forever and ever. To you I surrender my heart, my mind, my entire will, everything that is and will be mine, of earthly possessions as well as the abilities and gifts of my soul. From this hour onwards, I want to be with all that I have and for all time, as your absolute property, at your complete disposal in the battle for the Kingdom of your Son, to which you are leading us.

I am yours now, oh Queen, irrevocably yours! But now also know that I desire nothing more fervently than to give myself to Jesus, your crucified Son, through you in the most perfect way, as only you can. He calls me into his closest proximity. I am to fight with him in a distinguished way against the kingdom of Satan within the ranks of our Apostolic Federation. Mother, I long to follow this call, to learn to love the spirit of poverty, to joyfully embrace contempt as its portion, to practice the spirit of obedience and community, and to renounce earthly pleasures in holy, virginal love. Yes – with all my heart, with all my soul, I long to commit myself to these highest goals. But when I look at myself, oh Mother, I am seized with fear and trepidation. I am nothing but wretchedness and weakness. Therefore, oh strong woman, offer me your hand and lead me to the cross, on which I desire to die with my Saviour, because I love him and because I want to conquer the whole world with his love.

And now, my Jesus, accept me as a gift of your Blessed Mother. Mark me with the cross as your bride and champion. Through the intercession of the Mother Thrice Admirable, grant me your abundant

grace. Give me what you intend to ask of me, and then, Lord, ask of me what you will. Behold, here I am! Amen.”<sup>1</sup>

*HYMN - Sung version in the back*

1 **Accept, O Lord**, through my Mother’s hands,  
the entire gift of my royal freedom.  
Accept my memory, my senses and my mind,  
accept everything as a pledge of love.

2 Accept my whole heart and my whole will  
and thus let my genuine love find satisfaction.  
My greatest joy is to return to you  
everything you have given me without reserve.

3 Use all of it in whichever way you please;  
I only ask that you let me love you.  
Help me to believe both far and near  
that you love me as the cherished apple of your eye.

7 My Lord and my God, take everything that hinders me  
and everything that diminishes my great love for you.  
Give everything that increases my love for you  
and take from me my very self if it disturbs this love. Amen.

### **Thanks and requests**

Triune God, today we come to you with joyful hearts to thank you for the readiness and courage of the first women in Schoenstatt. At the same time, we bring our requests before you:

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<sup>1</sup> Author: Gertrud von Bullion (1897 – 1930)



*We pray, Lord, hear us; we thank you that you hear us.*

We thank you for the 20 women who gave themselves completely to you in the first consecration and who, in doing so, have brought with them the willingness to become fruitful as seeds for Schoenstatt.

Prepare young women also today to offer themselves to you without reservation so that a new spring will come in the Church and the world.

*We pray, Lord, hear us; we thank you that you hear us.*

We say a heartfelt thank you that Father Kentenich was willing to offer the women in Schoenstatt a home and a mission despite external resistance.

Help all women's communities in Schoenstatt to continue to contribute to the fruitfulness of the Movement.

*We pray, Lord, hear us; we thank you that you hear us.*

We are grateful that after the first solemn consecration in the Apostolic Federation/Women, the Sisters of Mary and the Ladies of Schoenstatt emerged, allowing the tree of the women's family to gradually branch out further.

We ask for the grace that each branch will live its charism ever more deeply and purely, and thus bear witness in the world and Church.

*We pray, Lord, hear us; we thank you that you hear us.*

We give thanks for the entire Movement, for all its constituent communities, and especially for our Original Shrine as a source of grace.

We ask for the grace to remain loyal to our own mission, so that we can be a leaven in today's challenging times.

*We pray, Lord, hear us; we thank you that you hear us.*

Glory be joyfully given to the Father  
through Christ with Mary, highly praised,  
in the Holy Spirit full of splendour  
from the universe now and in all eternity. Amen.

### **Magnificat / Taizé**

Dear Mother Thrice Admirable, Queen and Victress of Schoenstatt. Look upon us as we celebrate today the 100th anniversary of the first solemn consecration of the Schoenstatt Women's Federation. We marvel at the depth and fruitfulness of the surrender of these first women.

Gratefully we unite ourselves with them and now renew our Covenant of Love with you.

With great trust, we offer ourselves to you in the consecration prayer.

We pray together:

My Queen, my Mother, I give myself entirely to you, and to show my devotion to you I consecrate to you this day my eyes, my ears, my mouth, my heart, my entire self without reserve. As I am your own, my good Mother, guard me and defend me as your property and your possession. Amen.

Even in storms and dangers  
you will always remain faithful  
to the covenant you have sealed with us  
and enriched with countless graces.

You will send us vocations  
who join us in pledging themselves for your kingdom.  
You will give us work and richly bless us  
and unite your unlimited power to our powerlessness.

May God's blessing come upon all those  
who have consecrated themselves entirely to Schoenstatt  
and bring them happiness and salvation  
here and in eternity. Amen.

Before we come to the end and receive God's blessing, we would  
like to give thanks.

We, as representatives of the three women's communities - the  
Schoenstatt Women's Federation, the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary  
and the Ladies of Schoenstatt - thank you for coming here, and we  
thank everyone who joined us via livestream.

Thank you to everyone who has served here in the Original Shrine.

We therefore ask Father Werner Kuller, the priestly assistant of the  
Schoenstatt Women's Federation,  
together with Dr. Bernd Biberger, the General Director of the  
Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, and Father José Melo, the Spiritual Di-  
rector of the Ladies of Schoenstatt, to impart their blessing to us.

*HYMN*

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 all of us the pattern for our living;  
she is of all your creatures barring none,  
the only jewelled mirror of your Son.

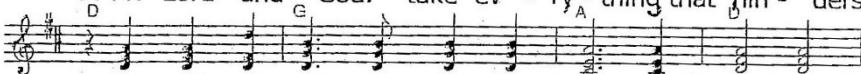
With joy we offer you the jubilation,  
the burning love and praise of all creation;  
in Jesus' name, with Mary, we adore  
you, Blessed Trinity, forevermore. Amen.

A gift is presented to those present at the original shrine. It is meant to commemorate the small seed that has grown into a mighty tree over the past 100 years and will continue to grow in the future.

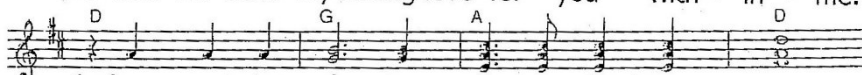
## Accept, Lord



1. Ac - cept Lord, through the hands of our dear Moth - er,
2. Ac - cept my heart, ac - cept my will com - plete - ly,
3. Dis - pose of them ac - cor - ding to your wish - es,
4. Give grace to me, which car - ries me with pow - er
5. Let me be fruit - ful for the Schoenstatt king - dom,
6. Then I am rich, in - deed, rich in a - bun - dance
7. Mv Lord and God. take ev' - ry - thing that hin - ders.



1. the gift of my en - tire, king - ly free - dom;
2. that I may still the love that is with - in me,
3. my on - ly plea is: let me real - ly love you!
4. to all that I a - lone could nev - er ven - ture,
5. And let my life be - come a read - y 'Yes' --
6. No grea - ter joy could ev - er be my por - tion;
7. That les - sens my strong love for you with - in me.



1. Ac - cept my mémo - ry, my sen - ses and my mind,
2. Let me re - turn your ma - ny gifts to me
3. Let me be - lieve that I am loved by you
4. And let me share in that great fruit - ful - ness
5. To all which in your kind - ness you have planned,
6. there's no - thing more that I could ev - er want:
7. Give all that will in - crease this love for vou.



1. Ac - cept all as a pledge of gen - uine love.
2. Quite un - re - served - ly, as my great - est joy.
3. as the most pre - cious ap - ple of your eye.
4. which, in your love, you gave your Mo - ther - Bride.
5. for souls' sal - va - tion, through the Schoen - statt - land.
6. for me, what you de - cide is good and right.
7. And take my e - go, if this mars my love.