



**Secular Institute of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary
Statement on Allegations of Abuse against Father Joseph Kentenich**

The General Presidium of the International Schoenstatt Work has already commented on the accusations against Father Joseph Kentenich, which were first published in an article by Alexandra von Teuffenbach in the weekly newspaper "Die Tagespost" on July 2, 2020, and in subsequent press releases worldwide. (Cf. General Presidium of the International Schoenstatt Work. Statement on abuse accusations against Fr. Joseph Kentenich (July 2, 2020), URL <https://www.schoenstatt.de/de/uploads/2020news/20200701StellungnahmeGeneralpraesidiumSchoenstatt.pdf>)

As Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary, we have collaborated on this statement of this federative leading body of the international Schoenstatt Work. Since the accusations against Fr. Joseph Kentenich concern our community in particular, it is a matter of importance for us to strongly reaffirm the statements made in the joint statement of the General Presidium.

The content and style of Dr. von Teuffenbach's statements hurt us and we emphatically reject them. What the author reflects from the point of view of the Visitor at that time, Fr. Tromp SJ, in no way corresponds to all that has had a lasting effect on our history, how we experience ourselves as a community and what we strive for.

Successive generations of our community have experienced the founder as an authentic and credible personality. From the very beginning of his work, it was his concern to help form interiorly firm and free personalities. Not least of all through his experiences in the Dachau concentration camp, Joseph Kentenich was extremely sensitive to the high values of dignity and personal freedom.

The fact that there were accusations against Father Kentenich from within our own community during the time of the visitations and that these concerned his position as founder and spiritual father is part of the general knowledge of our history. After all decrees against him had been lifted and he was able to resume his founding activity in the last three years of his life, there was no reason to assume that there were accusations against his moral integrity which had not yet been refuted.

The old accusations, which Dr. von Teuffenbach is bringing forward anew, now come into a social climate in which one reacts with extreme sensitivity to any kind of abuse, and rightly so. It is entirely in our interest to come as closely as possible to the historical truth. It goes without saying that we will endeavor to answer open questions to the best of our knowledge. It seems important to us that the answers are not only given defensively on a point by point basis, but

that the background and context are also understandable. Such an understanding also includes considering the overall spiritual and pastoral intention of Joseph Kentenich.

In the interest of a scientific analysis of the history of Schoenstatt and our Institute, it is important to us that all aspects of the events of that time are taken into consideration. We are ready to contribute to this goal.



Dr. Bernd Biberger
General Director



Sr. M. Aleja Slaughter
General Superior

Berg Schönstatt, 4. Juli 2020