

# SCHOENSTATT MOVEMENT



**The Month of December is dedicated to The Immaculate Conception**

## WA NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2022

**Schoenstatt Shrine a Pilgrimage Place**

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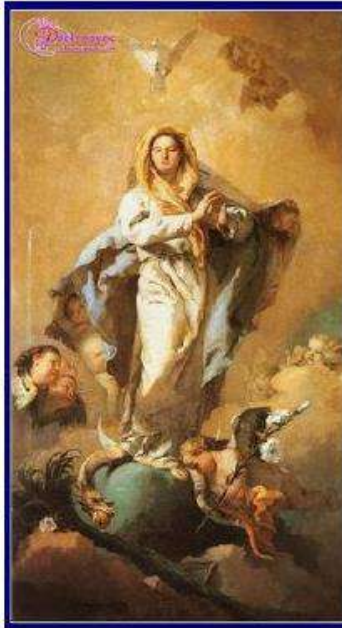
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### Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

in the first instance of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace granted by **GOD**, in view of the merits of **Jesus Christ**, the **Savior** of the human race, was preserved from all stain of original sin....

The first 24 days of December fall during the liturgical season known as of **Advent** and are represented by the liturgical colour purple—a symbol of penance, mortification and the sorrow of a contrite heart. The remaining days of December mark the beginning of the **Christmas** season. The

liturgical colour changes to white or gold — a symbol of joy, purity and innocence.

## MESSAGE FROM POPE FRANCIS

**The Holy Father's Intentions for the Month of December 2022** For **volunteer not-for-profit organizations**: We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

## LITURGICAL FOCUS

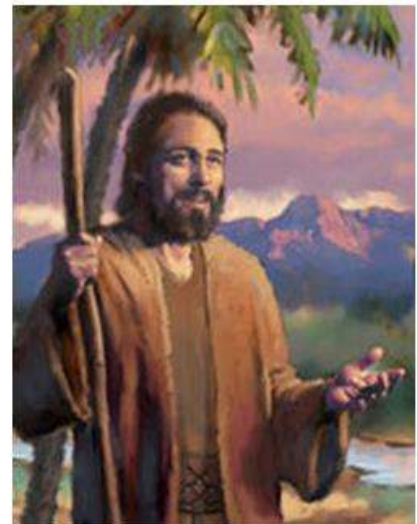
The Gospels for the four Sundays in December 2022, taken from St. Matthew are from Cycle A. The Weekday readings are from Year 1  
**December 4th—2nd Sunday in Advent** The Gospel is about John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness. <sup>1</sup>In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea <sup>2</sup>and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." <sup>3</sup>This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: **Page 2**





**December 11th—3rd Sunday in Advent** The Gospel today recounts the story of St. John the Baptist telling his followers about the coming Messiah.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup>Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. <sup>9</sup>And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. <sup>10</sup>The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup>"I baptize you with <sup>b</sup> water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with <sup>c</sup> the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup>His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."



**December 18th—4th Sunday of Advent** The Gospel is about the revelation to St. Joseph of Mary's virginal conception.

St. Joseph, the just man, fears the Lord, as did his forefather King David. And so, the Angel encourages him with these words: *Do not be afraid, Joseph, son of David, to take Mary as your wife* (Mt 1:20).

Acknowledging his unworthiness before the awesome Divine Presence, now incarnate within the womb of Mary his spouse, St. Joseph does not presume on his own to receive the Ark of the Covenant into his dwelling. He is thus, truly, the son of David by blood and by heart. Such is called the "reverential fear" theory, to explain St. Joseph's dilemma. And here we have a strong, Scriptural endorsement of the same. **Page 3**





The angel of the Lord appeared in a dream and said to him:

**"Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit"** (Mt 1:20).

Thus he received confirmation that he was called to live his marriage in a completely special way.

**December 25th—Solemnity of Christmas** The Gospel at Night recounts the birth of Christ in Bethlehem and the visit of the shepherds.

After the angels disappeared, the shepherds looked for and found the cave where Jesus was born. In their act of adoration, the shepherds simply and directly gazed into the mystery of the Christ Child. Angels guided their perceptions. They saw a God who could hold the world in his hands, now unable to even enfold the heads of the cattle with his tiny hands. They beheld the God, upon whom they depended on for life, turn to his mother's breast for the milk of survival. They stared at the author of the sun's heat, and noticed he felt a chill until the swaddling robes were tucked around him again. The all-powerful one looked helpless. The very source of life accepted the shadows imposed by the night. Reality's greatest free-spirit put up with the annoyances of human limits. The shepherds contemplated this mystery and rested in it. Their life experiences had taught them to be at ease with spiritual reality. This is why they were open to new sources of light and love. This is why the shepherds' scene was so relaxing and appropriate. Their capacity to absorb these amazing contrasts is the secret of the



Christmas story. That is their Christmas gift to us. If we forget the God in the cave, we reduce the Bethlehem event to a charming birth scene with no special meaning.





**The liturgy of Advent** focuses on remembering Christ's first coming at Bethlehem which then directs our mind to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. The readings focus on the people of the Old Testament awaiting the Messiah, John the Baptist, heralding the way for Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary and her maternal

preparations.

The main feasts of Advent are **St. Francis Xavier** (December 3), **St. Nicholas** (December 6), **St. Ambrose** (December 7), **Immaculate Conception** (December 8), **St. Juan Diego** (December 9), **Our Lady of Guadalupe** (December 12), **St. Lucy** (December 13), **St. John of the Cross** (December 14), **St. Peter Canisius** (December 21) and **St. John of Kanty** (December 23). Christmastide begins with the First Vespers (Evening Prayer) of Christmas on December 24th and ends on the Sunday after Epiphany, which is transferred to January 8 Christmas and Easter are the only solemnities with octaves attached in the current calendar. The Christmas octave differs from Easter in that it includes some major feasts: **St. Stephen, Protomartyr** (December 26), **St. John the Evangelist** (December 27), the **Holy Innocents** (December 28), **St. Thomas Becket** (December 29) and **St. Sylvester I** (December 31). The octave closes on January 1, **the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God**. The optional memorials of **St. John Damascene** (December 4) and **St. Damasus I** (December 11) are superseded by the Sunday liturgy.





### Vale Sister M Lucy Ann

It is with great sadness that I pass on to you the news that, following the accident a couple of weeks ago, Sr. M. Lucy Ann Piel passed away early on Sunday morning. The other sisters are doing well and have no major injuries. The sisters asked me to pass on their sincere gratitude for all your prayers for them at this time.



Since her arrival in Australia in 1964, Sister M. Lucy Ann was actively involved in working in the movement. She worked in Perth, Sydney and for eight years in the Philippines

Many of you will know Sister Lucy Ann from her involvement in the Girls Groups and the Family Branch. After her retirement from Movement work she spent her last years at Mt. Schoenstatt although she was still eager to be involved and was interested in all that was taking place in our Schoenstatt Movement.

Sister M. Lucy Ann held a number of leadership roles within the Sisters Community, including as Novice Mistress, Province Superior and Superior in the Philippines.

At this time the Sisters do not know when the funeral Mass will take place for Sister M. Lucy Ann, but as soon as these arrangements are made, we will let you know. In the meantime the Sisters wanted to let you know of Sister's death. Please pray for the repose of her soul, for her family and all who mourn her loss. I would be grateful if you could also include in your prayers the Sisters' community who are also coming to terms with her loss. Her gentle, smiling face will be missed by all who knew her. May she rest in peace.

United in our covenant, Shirley Hall



## Living Advent Together – Mother-Daughter Time of Reflection

Saturday, 19 November  
2022



In preparation for Advent, mothers and their daughters were invited for a time of reflection. 10 participants gathered at the Perth Schoenstatt Shrine to spend some time together getting

their hearts and minds ready for the birth of our Lord.

This was an initiative of our mother & daughter group which meets monthly at the Shrine. Led by Sr M Luka, an event especially set aside to help mums bond with their daughters through song, worship, and hands-on activities.

The focus was to think about making Advent a meaningful season for the whole family, through mother-daughter teamwork. The two daughters' teams, led by Tina Ambrose and Shelby D'Souza, thoughtfully walked the girls, aged between 10 and 13 years old, through activity sheets exploring how to give their love and hearts to Jesus their King and Mary their Queen by loving others, especially their families.

Sharne Clamp led the mums in discussion about how to make Advent a special family time. Afterwards, mums and daughters worked together on their own



creation of a stable. The event ended on a high note with a prayer and song session at the Shrine, with everyone moving down to Emilie House for a lovely afternoon tea. **By Marissa Yang**



## **Schoenstatt Family Feature**

### **David and Philomena Theseira – Family Branch Leaders**

We, David and Philomena were married in 1984 and have five wonderful daughters who are all Disney fanatics. Two are now married. We have a close and loving relationship with them all. Sadly, two of our daughters now live in Melbourne, but on Monday nights we have 'Family Dinner Night' and so those who cannot be here join in via video messenger so that we can catch up with everyone's news for the week. Our girls are funny and enjoy each other's company and banter.

Since the girls were young, we would go on family holidays together in our Tarago van, and this has continued where possible. Our last holiday altogether (including husbands) was in Esperance in December 2019 with 10 adults (now all grown up) together in one house. We had a great time together. Keeping our family together means so much to us. Our first encounter with Schoenstatt was at a Family Retreat Weekend in Jarrahdale in 1991 and we have been part of the Schoenstatt Family ever since. We were so welcomed and were so happy to be with likeminded people in a religious atmosphere. This helped us in bringing up our children to be caring and responsible adults. They loved going to other retreat weekends and events like the fetes and youth activities.



I, Philomena, was so proud to bring four of our daughters to World Youth Day in Sydney in 2008 which was an amazing time for us. Now that they are grown and have their own lives to lead, they aren't involved in Schoenstatt as much.

David and I have continued to be involved and are part of a great Family Group who meet once a month for formation and fellowship and we made our Covenant of Love in 2009.

Being a part of our Family Group, and part of the wider Schoenstatt Family, over all these years, has helped us to grow spiritually in our lives. We are so grateful to have the Schoenstatt Movement in our lives. The Graces we have received from Our Blessed Mother and Jesus Christ have truly blessed us. Coming together on Covenant Sundays and at other times is special to us.

We hope to help other families see Mary and Jesus' love for them, and the benefits of being part of the Schoenstatt Family Movement, so that they too can receive many graces and blessings in their lives.

Philomena & David



## December 24th

On this evening our eyes turn towards the manger and the little child who is born there. He is the great light that has dawned for us; he is proclaimed as *Wonder-Counsellor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace*; he is proclaimed as the Messiah and Son of David who brings to fulfillment the prophecies and hopes of the Old Testament. Yet, all these titles of praise, tell us chiefly what he does for us; we still



need to ask, with the Christmas Carol, **“What child is this, who laid to rest on Mary’s lap is sleeping?”**

The answer to that question will be given during the Mass of Christmas day when we hear the opening of St. John’s Gospel. Then veils of eternity will be drawn back and we will hear about **the Word that was in the beginning with God, the Word that was God, the Word through whom all things were made.**

As the Gospel continues, **we will hear that the same Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, that *we have beheld his glory, the glory as of the Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth*. Finally, we will learn that while no one has ever seen God, **this same eternal Word, God’s only Son, Jesus Christ, has revealed him to us**. That is the splendid truth that is hidden in the simple child sleeping on Mary’s breast. That is the light that has dawned.

That light reveals God to us, but also reveals us to ourselves.

Revealing us to ourselves that light teaches us **to reject godless ways and worldly desires and to live temperately, justly, and**

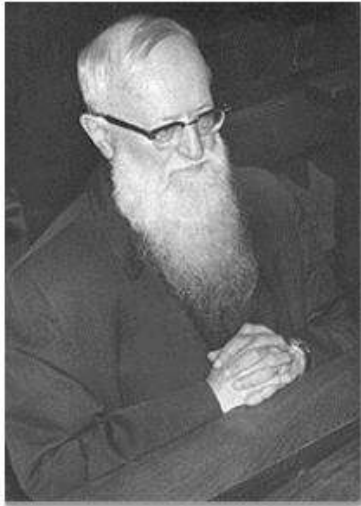
**devoutly in this age**, as we await the blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.





The most desired thing had been realized, the Miracle of the Holy Night!" All the Christmas preparations were left aside, there were telephone chains to give notice and in just a few hours hundreds of Schoenstatters had received the great news. Many families asked grandparents and neighbors to take care of their children, and they started out toward the Frankfurt airport or to Schoenstatt...to wait for Father, many only knew him through photographs and through the testimony of other persons.

In one of the most famous photographs of Father Kentenich, Father is seen kneeling in the Original Shrine in profound prayer, after 14 years...This photograph was taken by Mr. Blank, Brother of Mary, who – camera in hand – was close to the Original Shrine. Since he could not enter, he went to a window that faces the tomb of heroes, he cracked it open, he stood on tiptoes, he raised the camera and without seeing anything he took the photograph...Thanks to him and his filial "boldness" we have this photo of that dialogue of Father with his Queen on that Christmas Eve. It is Father, speaking to her; that just as that 18<sup>th</sup> of October surely she spoke to him about this family also, and of those who one day would form part of the family, sharing the mission she entrusted to Father...After the



silent meeting in the Original Shrine, Father greeted hundreds of Schoenstatters from all the branches and communities, who had rushed to Schoenstatt to welcome him, in a classroom of Marian School of the Sisters of Mary. The Sisters intoned Handel's "Alleluia" with great happiness and emotion that even now, 40 years later, when this song is heard many relive the joy of the moment of that Christmas Eve with tears of joy in which Father spoke to them as if those 14 years had never existed, recognizing people he had not seen in 14 years, asking them about things that they had told him during some conversation with him, that they themselves hardly remembered. He greeted persons that he only knew from the letters they had written to him and he also perfectly remembered what they had shared in those letters. When Father spoke to his family he did not mention the years that had passed, rather, he spoke to them about the mission that they should undertake together as a sign of eternal gratitude to the MTA.

That night of grace ended with the Christmas celebration, which became more of a reality on that occasion. At midnight, Father celebrated the two Christmas Masses (according to the pre-conciliar rite) in the Original Shrine, the new Bethlehem. It was the last time that he was in the Original Shrine. It was not ours, then. Fifty years later we still struggle to really understand that it is ours, our place of grace, the most precious place in the world... **Spread joy every where– life is so serious and there is so much suffering. J.kentenich**



Godless ways come about when the human reason – the power that lies behind our power of speech – is by a choice of the will closed off to the fullness of reality and closed in on the material world alone. When human reason becomes godless the obstacles to worldly desire and the unrestrained pursuit of pleasure, power, and prestige are removed and human life hastens downwards along the broad and easy way that leads to destruction.

**Midnight Mass for Christmas** Welcoming our Lord Jesus into our world, will be celebrated in the Shrine at Armadale on Christmas Eve. All are welcome and as a bonus you will be able to witness, from the grounds outside the Shrine, the Fireworks Display from Perth, prior to the Mass

### **Maria Fischer (Christmas 2015)**

This December 24, 2015, it is 50 years since Father Kentenich returned to his and our Original Shrine, after 14 long years of exile in Milwaukee.



Father Kentenich arrived at Schoenstatt from Rome on the afternoon of the 24<sup>th</sup> of December of 1965. He arrived at Schoenstatt, on Christmas Eve, where the Family and the Original Shrine waited to welcome him.

It was a long time of waiting that ended that 24<sup>th</sup> of December, after several weeks in Rome until the decree finally arrived on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, freeing

Father Kentenich of all the restrictions of the Holy See, that set ( or better said imposed) his place of residence, his contact with the Movement, all of his work as Founder. During the days he was in Rome Father Kentenich's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated, the cornerstone of the future Matri Ecclesiae Shrine was symbolically blessed, and the question arose again in Rome, in Schoenstatt and in all the world: Will Father Kentenich return to Schoenstatt, and to his Original Shrine? Will he return for Christmas? The morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> of December, literally at the last minute, the news spread like wild fire through all of Schoenstatt in the midst of the preparation for Christmas: "Father will return! He arrives today!



## COMING EVENTS

**Fridays** Shrine 10am **HOLY MASS**  
11am to 815pm **Silent Eucharistic Adoration**

**Third Sunday of the month**  
130pm to 245pm **Formation**  
3pm **Covenant Sunday Devotion** followed by  
social and refreshments

## NEW! NEW! NEW!

Each edition we would like to feature a  
Schoenstatt WA family.  
Please express your interest or provide other  
newsletter contributions by 16 December to:

Joy and John Doherty  
Email: [joy@jaysbus.com.au](mailto:joy@jaysbus.com.au)