

SCHOENSTATT MOVEMENT



**The month of December is dedicated
to the Immaculate Conception.**

WA NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2024

Schoenstatt Shrine Pilgrimage Place

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The first twenty four days of December fall during the liturgical season 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 color changes to white or gold — a symbol of joy, purity and innocence.

POPE FRANCIS INTENTIONS

The Holy Father's Intentions for the Month of December 2024.

For Pilgrims of Hope We pray that this Jubilee Year strengthens our faith, helping us to recognize the Risen Christ in our daily lives and that it may transform us into pilgrims of Christian hope.



Focus of the Liturgy

The Gospels for the four Sundays in December 2024 are taken from St. Luke, Year C in the Lectionary Cycle. The Weekday readings are from Year I.

December 1st First Sunday of Advent

Luke 21:25-28, 34-36: Jesus warns that your redemption is at hand.

December 8th Second Sunday of Advent

Luke 3:1-6: All flesh shall see the salvation of God

December 15th Third Sunday of Advent

Luke 3:10-18: What should we do?

December 22nd Fourth Sunday of Advent

Luke 1:39-45, And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

December 25th Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord

Vigil: Matthew 1:1-25: The genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David

Mass During the Night: Luke 2:1-14: Today a Savior has been born for you.

Mass at Dawn: Luke 2:15-20: The shepherds found Mary and Joseph and the infant.

Mass During the Day: John 1:1-18: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

December 29th Feast of the Holy Family

Luke 2:41-52: His parents found Jesus sitting in the midst of the teachers.

Highlights of the Month

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. John Damascene (December 4), St. Nicholas (December 6), St. Ambrose (December 7), Immaculate Conception (moved to December 9), Our Lady of Loreto (December 10), St. Damasus I (December 11),

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. . 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 and minor 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 day is on January 1, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.

The optional memorial of St. Juan Diego (December 9) is superseded by the Sunday liturgy. The feast of the Immaculate Conception (December 8) has been transferred to December 9 because of the Sunday Liturgy.

The Reason for the Season

The month of December is filled with expectation and celebration. Preparation is the key word for the first 24 days of December. Everyone is getting ready for Christmas — shopping and decorating, baking and cleaning. Too often, however, we are so busy with the material preparations that we lose sight of the real reason for our activity.



Christmas is a Christian feast — and we must reclaim it as such! In the same way that a family eagerly prepares for a baby, so in Advent should we prepare for the coming of the Christ Child.



We should keep Advent as a season of waiting and longing, of conversion and of hope and keep our thoughts on the incredible love and humility of our God in taking on the flesh of the Virgin Mary. Let us not forget to prepare a peaceful place in our hearts wherein our Savior may come to dwell.

The best person we can turn to for help during Advent is Mary, Christ's and our Mother. She awaited the day of His birth with more eagerness than any other human being. Her preparation was complete in every respect. Let's crown our preparation and borrow something of Mary's prayerfulness, her purity and whole-hearted submission to God's will.

SCHOENSTATT INTERNATIONAL

The "Mariengarten" or "Garden of Mary"

On 20 January 1942 our founder took the far - reaching decision not to undertake any further actions to prevent him being sent to the concentration camp. This decision has set its stamp on the whole of Schoenstatt's history. In the run - up to this important event



something happened in connection with Christmas Eve 1941: **The origin of the "Mariengarten"**, ("Mariengarten" or "Garden of Mary") is an important life stream within the Schoenstatt Family rooted in a historical event of Christmas 1941. Although the event took place

before January 20, 1942, it is considered a concrete realization and unique embodiment of the spirit of the second milestone. In the context of the first Christmas after Fr. Kentenich's arrest (1941), one of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary living at Saint Joseph's Hospital in Koblenz wrote a Christmas letter to the Christ Child, expressing her desire that Fr. Kentenich be freed. She then left it for her superior to do with as she pleased. The superior was so impressed by the letter that she smuggled it into Fr. Kentenich in prison. Fr. Kentenich, sensing the genuine spirit of faith behind this request, replied and was able to smuggle out a "letter from the Christ Child" to Sr. Mariengard. In it he alluded to the name of the young Sister and its meaning: Mariengarten, **that is, Garden of Mary:**

"My dear little Mariengard,

"I shall grant your wish when your heart and the heart of our entire Family has become a blossoming Garden of Mary. Thus, the fulfillment of your request for the 'miracle of the Holy Night' is placed in your hands and in the hands of all Schoenstatt children.

"That Christmas the letter became the central Christmas message for the entire Sisters' community in Koblenz. They immediately set out



to create this "Garden of Mary" through their strivings, so that Fr. Kentenich would soon be free. It was the beginning of a lifestream that eventually encompassed the entire Sisters' community and finally spread into the entire Schoenstatt Family. Until today this lifestream plays an important role,

especially in the women's communities. Groups and communities prepare by working on spiritual strivings and choosing an appropriate symbol for themselves to be "implanted" in the Mariengarten. The act is done with the MTA in special connection to the person and mission of Fr. Kentenich.

SCHOENSTATT WA

A ROSARY BY CANDELIGHT

On a glorious Sunday evening as the sunset and candles began to glow in the night light, 'A Rosary by Candlelight' took place at the



Schoenstatt Shrine, Mt Richon, to honour the Virgin Mary. More than 70 people gathered outdoors in front of the Shrine alongside the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary. Fr Grant Gorddard, Priest-in-Residence from Armadale Parish was in attendance as well as members of the Schoenstatt Movement, family and friends from all over Perth.

Throughout the service, everyone took turns leading the Rosary. Each year, the month of October is dedicated to the 'Most Holy Rosary'. This celebration gave participants a gift pack on arrival, with the opportunity to write their own personal intentions/petitions and share them with their Schoenstatt community.

As each person came up to read their intentions, they first placed a glowing candle on large Rosary beads in front of the Shrine. After reading, they asked Our Mother Thrice Admirable for her intercession and guidance by leading the group in prayer. A song circle of musicians and families sang between each decade

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and meditated on the Mysteries of Faith, Hope and Charity. Images of Our Lady, prayers and scriptures were displayed on the front of the Shrine with a projector for all to see. To share our intentions and pray the Rosary in this way was a beautiful and spiritual experience. The love of the people for Mary and Jesus could be felt in the air.



**Saturday 14 December
1.30pm - 4.30pm**

- Event for Girls aged 8-11
- Venue: Schoenstatt Shrine
9 Talus Drive, Mount Richon
- Please bring along a plate to share for afternoon tea

**Inquiries and RSVP by 9/12/24
Sr M Luka 0439 537 843
srmluka@schoenstatt.org.au**

Cost: \$ 10



**Register
HERE**



Food For Thought

What does the Church teach about voting?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that it is “the duty of citizens to contribute along with the civil authorities to the good of society in a spirit of truth, justice, solidarity, and freedom.” Even Pope Francis has weighed in, quipping that one should choose “the lesser evil” when deciding.

The Catholic Church has long supported voting as part of participation in public life — as a contribution to a nation’s common good and to the flourishing of its people. What the Church does not do is dictate to Catholics whom exactly they should vote for or exactly which policies to support. However, Catholics have been given numerous guiding principles for making decisions about voting.

“The love and service of one’s country follows from the duty of gratitude and belongs to the order of charity. Submission to legitimate authorities and service of the common good require citizens to fulfill their roles in the life of the political community.” It also states that “submission to authority and co-responsibility for the common good make it morally obligatory to pay taxes, to exercise the right to vote, and to defend one’s country.”

“Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,” a guide to participation in public life, which includes a section on voting. The bishops have periodically updated it since, with the latest edition approved in late 2023. In the document, the bishops wrote that “responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation.” Quoting Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium*, the bishops also note that public service, when it seeks the common good, is a “lofty vocation.”

A Catholic's engagement in politics ought to be "shaped by the moral convictions of well-formed consciences and focused on the dignity of every human being, the pursuit of the common good, and the protection of the weak and the vulnerable. "Catholics should vote for candidates to the extent that they will promote the common good, a concept defined in the catechism as "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily."

"Catholics have a serious and lifelong obligation to form their consciences in accord with human reason and the teaching of the Church," the document continues.

"Conscience is not something that allows us to justify doing whatever we want, nor is it a mere 'feeling' about what we should or should not do. Rather, conscience is the voice of God resounding in the human heart, revealing the truth to us and calling us to do what is good while shunning what is evil. Conscience always requires serious attempts to make sound moral judgments based on the truths of our faith."

Reasons not to vote for a candidate

"Forming Consciences" states in paragraph 34: "A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who favors a policy promoting an intrinsically evil act, such as abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, deliberately subjecting workers or the poor to subhuman living conditions, redefining marriage in ways that violate its essential meaning, or racist behavior, if the voter's intent is to support that position."

Nonnegotiable issues

In a 2006 address to a European parliamentary group, Pope Benedict XVI laid out several issues related to the public good that are "not negotiable" for Catholics. Those issues as laid out by Pope Benedict are as follows:

Protection of life in all its stages, from the first moment of conception until natural death. Recognition and promotion of the natural structure of the family as a union between a man and a woman based on marriage, and its defense from attempts to make it juridically equivalent to radically different forms of union that in reality harm it and contribute to its destabilization, obscuring its particular character and its irreplaceable social role. The protection of the right of parents to educate their children. The U.S. bishops further say that abortion and euthanasia — in their words as “pre-eminent threats to human life and dignity” — weigh heavily when deciding whether it is morally acceptable to vote for a candidate.

In 2019, the bishops said: “The threat of abortion remains our pre-eminent priority because it directly attacks life itself, because it takes place within the sanctuary of the family, and because of the number of lives destroyed.”



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

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

Please forward any contributions to
Joy and John Doherty for the next edition of
"Schoenstatt WA News" by 16th December
2024