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May 1, 2020

## MESSAGE FOR 31<sup>st</sup> MAY 2020

Dear Schoenstatt Family!

We live our Covenant of Love at the time of the Coronavirus. With this title we addressed you as General Presidium at the beginning of the quarantine in many countries. We did not know and we still do not know how long the Corona pandemic will last. We have already experienced many painful consequences: the sick, the deceased, many more people affected by the economic impact and the consequences of the quarantine, who live in loneliness, fear, depression or even despair. We also admire the gestures of solidarity and generosity, even heroic gestures. Many cannot go to church together, but they turn more to God, they seek and discover in God a new meaning - the true meaning of their lives. The pain and the cross do not disappear, but we see little rays of Easter which strengthen our hope in this God who has revealed himself to us definitively as God of life in the resurrection of Christ.

These are times of uncertainty, fear and helplessness. Humanity feels powerless in the face of this invisible enemy. By experiencing our powerlessness, we acknowledge the power of God. This is what many have expressed during this time with an act very familiar to the Schoenstatt Movement: the crowning of the Mother of God, our Mother and Queen. Many persons and Schoenstatt families from different countries crowned Mary, especially as Queen of health in body and soul. During the last weeks, the Schoenstatt Families from Ecuador, Paraguay, and other countries have done so. Through the initiative "CORONAmater", many families crowned Mary in their Home Shrines on April 15, 2020: on that day there were more than 150,000 online connections to the Original Shrine! The Schoenstatt Movement in Germany did something similar on Covenant Day, April 18, 2020.

The coronation is an expression of our need and helplessness, but above all of our trust in Mary, in "her might and her kindness" - in her kindness as Mother and her might as Queen. She wants to show herself as our salvation and our health, as our life and our hope. This is how this stream - one could almost say this custom - of crowning Mary in Schoenstatt came about. This was the fruit of our powerlessness in extreme situations: The first coronation in the Original Shrine took place in 1939 at the beginning of the Second World War. At that time the song "Protect us with Your mantle" was composed. Since then we call the Blessed Mother "Mother Thrice Admirable and Queen of Schoenstatt". Today we find ourselves in a "war" against an invisible virus.

In another critical hour of our history, Father Kentenich crowned the Mother of God as Queen of our mission, precisely on the Feast of Pentecost 1949 in Bellavista, Chile, a few days after that memorable and decisive May 31st, which became the third milestone in the history of

Schoenstatt. At that time the struggle concerned Mary's mission of organic thinking, loving, and living for a new culture.

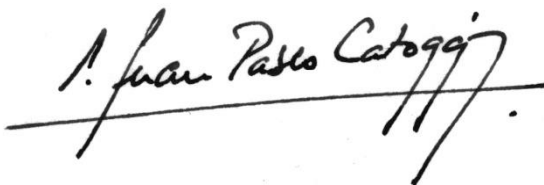
At a very special moment, on January 18, 2018, the last day of Pope Francis' visit to Chile, the crown in the Shrine of Bellavista was stolen, the same crown that Father Kentenich had installed. In the midst of a painful crisis in the Chilean Church and after the shock of the social unrest of last year, the Chilean Schoenstatt Family saw in this event the challenge, with humility and commitment, to take up the mission anew and to hand the crown back to Mary. On May 31, 2020, the Feast of Pentecost, the Chilean Schoenstatt Family wants to crown Mary as Queen of Mission again, just like Father Kentenich did.

Because this event is so closely connected with the third milestone and therefore with the worldwide Schoenstatt Family, the entire Schoenstatt Family of the world is invited to join it. The coronavirus pandemic makes this coronation more meaningful and up-to-date than ever for all of us: we all want to recognize our helplessness and renew our trust in our Queen. This pandemic has changed the world: It has shown that an old model has been exhausted. We do not know what the world and our lives will look like after the corona virus, - but they will be different. And we believe that Mary has a role to play in shaping this new world. A new mentality and a new organic and solidary lifestyle must characterize the "new normality". This is why we crown Mary, Queen of Mission, and we offer ourselves to her as partners and instruments for her mission. We are all invited to be united with one another from our respective places. On May 31, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. (local time; 9:00 p.m. German time) the coronation ceremony will take place in the Shrine of Bellavista in Chile, which we can join online (the link will be provided later). We will also be connected with the Original Shrine.

Dear brothers and sisters in the covenant of love,

we begin the month of May. In many countries it is the month of Mary. Pope Francis particularly recommends that we pray the Rosary in the family. In Schoenstatt, May was a special month from the beginning, a time of grace and a time of surrender. Let us remember the "May flowers" with which Joseph Engling expressed his contributions to the capital of grace of the MTA in the Shrine. This year we celebrate a very special May month: On May 20th, 2020, it will be 75 years since Father Kentenich returned from Dachau. On this day he was received with the "Hymn of Thanksgiving" (HW p. 164ff), which he had written some time before: "The chains have fallen..." We invite the entire Schoenstatt Family, all communities and branches in all countries, to crown Mary on Pentecost Sunday, May 31, 2020, at this difficult hour, as Queen of our lives, Queen of Mission, Queen of Health of Body and Soul, Queen of the whole world.

In the name of the International Presidency of the Schoenstatt Work,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Fr. Juan Pablo Catoggio". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Fr. Juan Pablo Catoggio