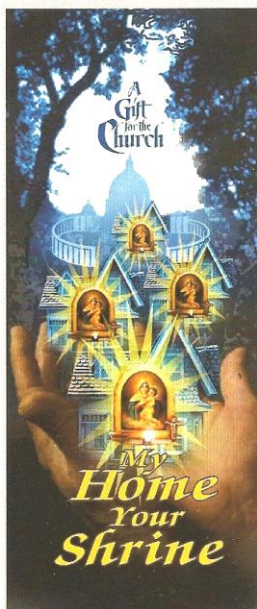


## INTRODUCTION TO THE HOME SHRINE (My Home, A Shrine pages 1-14)



### Historical development – God’s Work

- Original Shrine – Germany, October 18, 1914
  - Daughter Shrines – First Daughter Shrine built in Uruguay in 1943
  - Home Shrines – First Home Shrine dedicated November 18, 1963 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Our Home Shrines are Living Shrines where our Mother Thrice Admirable educates and dispenses graces and where she forms strong free personalities to live in our world.

### A special place of prayer in our home

In the vastness of life, we all need a place, a place to belong – a place where we can feel comfortably a part of things, but also where we can have some privacy and be alone. Jesus had his special places. He frequently went out to a deserted place to pray to his Father and encouraged his apostles to do the same. “Come by yourselves to an out-of-the-way place and rest a little” (Mk. 6:31). The desert was the place where he conversed with the Father. He also frequently visited friends who welcomed him in their homes.

In the Old Testament the Israelites wandered for years in search of the place which God had chosen for them to take roots, to be themselves, to express their faith in God.

In the New Testament, Jesus secured his permanent presence among us in the tabernacle of our churches, ‘an out-of-the-way place’ where we can go to pray, where we can rest and converse with God, our Savior.

We need special places in life; without such places we are, on the emotional level, nomads – isolated and unattached, without bonds. For most people such a place is home, the place where they can relax and be themselves, where they can grow in love and maturity, where they can obtain new strength for life. Home should be a place of security and peace, and yet it oftentimes seems to be the most hectic place on earth. It is the place where life comes forth and where life returns, filled with all sorts of impressions, anxieties and fears, hopes and joys. All the events of the world leave their traces in the family. And in this very place, the Kingdom of God should be built up. Pope Saint John Paul II tells us, ***Among the fundamental tasks of the Christian family is its ecclesial task: The family is placed at the service of the building up of the Kingdom of God in history by participating in the life and mission of the Church. (Familiaris Consortio, #49)***

If we as a family want to fulfill this great task, we need – right in the home – ‘a deserted place,’ a special place of prayer; a place of rest, of peace and quiet; a place where we can bring our concerns and worries and joys to God; a place where we can go to think, to meditate and meet God in a very personal and real way; a place where we as a family can unite and receive strength to fulfill our great task; a place where we can grow more and more into the realities of the supernatural world. These places of prayer in a home can become a powerhouse of grace for the entire family, securing God’s presence in our everyday life.

### A special place to honor Mary in our home

Jesus, while dying on the cross, entrusted his Mother to his disciple John. “In turn he said to the disciple: ‘There is your mother.’ From that hour onward, the disciple took her into his own home” (Jn. 19:26-27). Like St. John we, too, can offer Mary our home, a place where she can dwell, where she can live and become an active member of our family. What a great blessing it would be to experience the permanent presence of the Mother of God in our home, as Pope Saint John Paul II proclaimed with firm conviction:

***The words ‘he took her into his own home’ can be taken in the literal sense as referring to the place where he lived. Mary’s motherhood in our regard is manifested in a particular way in the places where she meets us: her dwelling places; places in which a special presence of the Mother is felt. There are many such dwelling places. They are of all kinds: from a special corner in the home or little wayside shrines adorned with an image of the Mother of God, to chapels and churches built in her honor. However, in certain places the Mother’s presence is felt in a particularly vivid way. These places sometimes radiate their light over a great distance and draw people from afar. Their radiance may extend over a diocese, a whole nation, or at times over several countries and even continents. These places are the Marian sanctuaries or shrines.***

***In all these places that unique testament of the Crucified Lord is wonderfully actualized: in them a person feels that he is entrusted and confided to Mary; he goes there in order to be with her, as with his Mother; he opens his heart to her and speaks to her about everything: he ‘takes her to his own home,’ that is to say, he draws her into all his problems, which at times are difficult – his own problems and those of others, the problems of the family, of societies, of nations and of the whole of humanity. (L’Osservatore Romano, May 13, 1982)***



And what will Mary do with all the problems that we place before her? She will intercede for us unceasingly and take perfect care that we receive whatever we need. She will bring us closer to the Father and our Savior.

And what will Mary do when we take her into our home? "She will, so to say, fill the whole house with grace after grace in endlessly rich measure.... She will see to it that a religious atmosphere penetrates also the heart of every child and grandchild... She will fulfill her task of forming and shaping your family into an ideal family, into a Nazareth family... She also wants to be effective as a teacher in our home" (The Home Shrine)

### **A special place of grace in our home**

Already in 1948, the founder of Schoenstatt advised the Schoenstatt families:

***Take the picture of the Blessed Mother with you and enshrine it in your homes. Then your homes will become little shrines where the venerable picture will prove to be a source of grace; it will create a holy family atmosphere and form holy family members. (The Home Shrine)***

Our home can become a Schoenstatt shrine, a place of grace, when we make or renew and deepen our covenant of love with Mary and offer her our home as a place of her special activity. In our home she will fulfill her covenant promises: She will come to dwell in our midst, work miracles of grace and bestow upon us gifts and favors in abundance. In our home she will do exactly what she does in the Original Shrine and in all the daughter shrines throughout the world. Thus, our home shrine is an extension of the Original Shrine, adapted to the situation of each family. ***Everything that holds true for the Original Shrine and for the daughter shrines also holds true for the home shrine. (The Home Shrine)***



Our Blessed Mother will intercede for us **the three pilgrimage graces** of the Shrine:

- A home in the heart of God and the Blessed Mother – secure, sheltered, good to be here in our home.
- Inner transformation – grow in holiness, to change, become another Christ and Mary.
- Apostolic zeal – fruitfulness in our home and family.

**THROUGH THIS ENCOUNTER**, with thanksgiving and gratitude, let us pray to be open and to receive the **GRACE** to have in our homes a **HOME SHRINE, a PLACE OF GRACE** dedicated to our Mother Thrice Admirable of Schoenstatt from which she, the Mother of God, can intercede for us the three pilgrimage graces of the shrine and all the graces we need to be holy families and holy family members who can fulfill our mission in the Church.

### **REFLECTION - A realization of the 'domestic Church'**

The home shrine is a religious center in a home; from there the family receives countless blessings and graces for its everyday life. It is continuously exposed to a never-ending stream of grace – the grace of renewal and inner transformation. When the family thus becomes renewed from within and becomes sound and wholesome, the world and Church can also partake of this blessing and become renewed and strengthened. **Pope Saint John Paul II believed that "the future of humanity passes by way of the family."** The fate of humanity will largely be determined by the success or failure of each individual family. Vatican II spoke of the family as the 'domestic Church.' The good news of the gospel has first to be taught and lived in the family if it is ever to have an influence on society and world. ***Every effort should be made to strengthen and develop pastoral care for the family in the certainty that future evangelization depends largely on the domestic Church. (Pope Saint John Paul II, Familiaris Consortio, #65)***

In the beginning of Christianity, Christ's teaching was brought from family to family and through them to wider and wider circles. It seems that the renewal of the modern world and Church has to proceed in a similar way. The home shrine is an excellent means to make the family truly a 'small scale Church' as Pope Saint John Paul II called it.

### **COMMIT:**

**Read pages 8-12 from MY HOME, A SHRINE** to understand more about the historical development of the Home Shrine and how the Home Shrine renders the effects of the Original Shrine more fruitful by channeling its special graces to all corners of the world.

### **PRAY with Father Kentenich - Home Shrine Prayer from Heavenwards**

"My room (home) is your Shrine where you work for the Father's glory. There He transforms my whole being into the Trinity's most beloved Shrine, where the sanctuary light continuously burns and the glowing fire of love never dies; where the fire of sacrifice upon sacrifice banishes all selfishness from the heart; where roses decorate the altar and lilies never cease to bloom; where paradisaal breezes waft and raise heart and mind to heaven; where the spirit of the world cannot enter as in the eternal city of Sion; where peace reigns and happiness laughs because God's angel keeps diligent watch; where Christ rules and is triumphant and leads the whole world to the Father."

