

St. Boniface 4th Graders Visit the Schoenstatt Wayside Shrine

By Eileen Thompson

On Tuesday, May 22nd, a group of fourth grade students from St. Boniface Catholic School in Lafayette and their teachers, Mrs. Amber Reece and Mrs. Marybeth Fabian, learned a little bit about the Schoenstatt movement and its founder, Father Joseph Kentenich, on a field trip to the Wayside Shrine of our Mother Thrice Admirable (MTA) in Delphi, Indiana.



At left, Suzanne Gardiner, the current President of Schoenstatt of Indiana, explained how the organization was able to acquire 20 acres of land (through gifts and purchases) to erect the current wayside shrine. In 2004, the Delphi area experienced widespread flooding, and Suzanne and her husband's home was in danger of being submerged in the flood waters. She prayed fervently to our Mother Thrice Admirable to protect her home. She promised our Blessed Mother if she would hear and answer her prayer, she would build a home for her in thanksgiving. When the flood waters receded and their home was intact, she asked her Uncle Bob if he would sell her the property where the current wayside shrine is located. He told her, "No, but I will give it to you!"

Later, Schoenstatt of Indiana was able to purchase additional land from Suzanne's son which was adjacent to the gifted land and acquired even more acreage from the estate of her Uncle Bob once he went to his reward. With the additional land (which is above the flood plain), Schoenstatt of Indiana members plan, with the continued help and blessing of our Mother Thrice Admirable, to build a Schoenstatt Community Center and a Daughter shrine in honor of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, modeled upon the original shrine located in Schoenstatt, Germany.



After the introduction, the children processed along the path which marks the Way of the Cross (*above right*) praying the Rosary and carrying the pictures of our Mother Thrice Admirable and Father Kentenich.

As the children gathered around the wayside shrine, they learned in Schoenstatt we fall in love with Mother and she with us. When you love someone, it is important to greet them properly, and we greet Mary by saying "My Queen, My Mother" and offer



ourselves to her each day. She educates us about her divine Son and showers us with graces and blessings. In turn, we educate others and by so doing bring them into the divine family of God.



Later, the children learned about the life of Schoenstatt founder, Father Joseph Kentenich, by way of talks and skits. At left, St. Boniface students reenact the ordination of Father Kentenich on July 8, 1910 in Limburg, Germany who had to overcome many obstacles on his way to becoming a priest.



At the end of the program, the fourth graders climbed the hill and searched for treasures in Mother's Garden ... because Mother and Father Kentenich always gave gifts to visitors.

In an email to Schoenstatt of Indiana board members, Mrs. Amber Reece thanked the organization for a wonderful visit and expressed her hope that a field trip to the Schoenstatt Wayside Shrine would become an annual pilgrimage for St. Boniface fourth graders.

For more information about the Schoenstatt movement, you may contact Julie Haskell at jhas821@aol.com or Rosemary Speaker at speaker@lion-lamb.com or visit the Schoenstatt International Retreat Center website at <http://schoenstattwisconsin.org/retreat-center/>.