

**Questions from Anna Fries (kna) and Felix Neumann (katholisch.de)
on the decision in the Kentenich case
with the request for an answer by Bishop Dr. Stephan Ackermann
by Monday, May 2, 2022 with the deadline Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 9 a.m.**

1) Why is the beatification process only suspended and not ended, and under what conditions would you resume the process?

After consulting with the experts and speaking with representatives of the Schoenstatt Movement, I have come to the conclusion that I cannot continue the process at the present time. There are unresolved questions. In my opinion, we cannot clarify these questions within the process.

If there are allegations of abuse, the process must be different from that of a beatification. If there are new findings that satisfactorily answer all the open questions, it is not impossible for the process to be resumed.

2) What results came out of the investigations carried out by the experts commissioned by the diocese last year?

There have been no investigations yet, we have not gotten that far. Up until now, I have been talking to experts from various disciplines, looking for ways of proceeding correctly in this situation. For example, I had to abandon the idea of setting up a further historical commission, because it would not be able to do what is required here: free and transparent research. And after further consultations, it was also clear that this could not be done within the framework of a process led and commissioned by me, but had to take place independently.

3) Along with the accusations, documents became public that incriminate Father Kentenich. Why is it that the testimonies that have emerged so far are not sufficient for a judgment about the founder of Schoenstatt?

I think that particularly the discussions of the last two years, but also the documents that have become available show that we have not yet exhausted what there is to know about the life, work and spirituality of Father Kentenich. Therefore, much more research needs to be done.

At the same time, however, I cannot continue a process of beatification for a person against whom there are accusations that at present cannot be definitively refuted.

4) Do you consider the testimony of Sister Georgia Wagner in the canonization process of June 5, 1986 as credible?

I cannot and do not wish to comment on individual testimonies in the beatification process. In principle, however, I can say that I take the testimony of Sister Georgia Wagner seriously.

However, your question shows the dilemma in the proceedings: The testimony is part of a "puzzle" and cannot be evaluated in isolation. The question is, in what context was it made? Are there other statements made by the person? Are there other references elsewhere concerning what Sr. Georgia addresses here? And I have come to realize in the course of the past consultations that this "puzzle" cannot be put together within the framework of the beatification process in such a way that we obtain the necessary overall picture. We need individual studies from various disciplines, whose findings can then be compiled. For this very reason, I encourage research to address these questions.

5) In what way will the diocese accompany further research on Father Kentenich, and contribute to answering the question of whether Father Kentenich was a perpetrator of abuse?

With the suspension of the process, there will be no further action on the part of the diocese. Of course, I will follow with interest whether there will be an independent, interdisciplinary research on the person of Kentenich and what it produces. I myself will not participate in it.

At the same time, it is important for me to say that the suspension of the process of beatification is not a negative judgement on the worldwide work of all those who are involved in the various groups and institutes of the Schoenstatt Movement. The families, the young people, the many women and men are working on behalf of the Gospel and are witnesses to the Lord of the Church, whose resurrection we have just had the privilege of celebrating again.