



The Garden of Mary - Talk THREE

We can read the in the Book of Genesis: “Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A river watering the garden flowed from Eden.” (Genesis 2:8-10)

The restlessness in our hearts, our feelings of loneliness, and our dreams and aspirations are, at the end of the day, dreams of paradise. They represent the yearning for the lost paradise. Paradise is when each one of us, and our world is completely transformed in God, and full of God.

In the New Testament, Jesus prepares himself for his passion in a garden – the Garden of Gethsemane. From the Cross, he turns to one of the two thieves and promises: “Today you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43). Death, suffering and injustice are overcome for ever through the sacrifice of the cross. In the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are set free. In the Gospel of John is written: (John 19:41f)

Mary Magdalene, the first to encounter the Risen Lord, thinks that Jesus is the gardener at first sight.

St Paul writes to the Corinthians: “I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth” (1 Corinthians 3:6)

Outline of the Talk for this Evening

- The Image of the Garden
- The “horizontal” Dimension
- Solidarity with Father Kentenich
- The Body of Christ
- People who want to love
- Solidarity with each other



In literature, one of the most famous stories about a garden is the "Secret Garden", written by Frances Hodgson Burnett (born on November 24, 1849, in Manchester). She writes, how in 1911, two young children – each with their own wounds – discover the wonderful world of a secret garden. They find there healing for body and soul. The story actually reflects our basic human longing for the lost paradise; for a place of healing, peace and harmony. Let's look a bit closer at the message of the Secret Garden. Mary Lennox has no one left in the world when she arrives at Misselthwaite Manor, her mysterious uncle's enormous, drafty mansion looming on the edge of the moors. A cholera epidemic has ravaged the Indian village in which she was born, killing both her parents and the "Ayah," or Indian servant, who cared for her. Not that being alone is new to her. Her socialite mother had no time between parties for Mary, and her father was both too ill and too occupied by his work to raise his daughter. Not long after coming to live with her uncle, Mr. Craven, Mary discovers a walled garden, neglected and in ruins. Soon she meets her servant Martha's brother Dickon, a robust country boy nourished both by his mother's love and by the natural surroundings of the countryside; and her tyrannical cousin Colin, whose mother died giving birth to him. So traumatized was Mr. Craven by the

sudden death of his beloved wife that he effectively abandoned the infant Colin and buried the keys to the garden that she adored. His son has grown into a self-loathing hypochondriacal child whose tantrums strike fear into the hearts of servants.

The lush garden is now overgrown and all are forbidden to enter it. No one can even remember where the door is, until a robin leads Mary to its hidden key. It is in the "secret garden," and with the help of Dickon, that Mary and Colin find the path to physical and spiritual health. Mary arrives at Misselthwaite in winter a dour and unhealthy child. She begins her gardening in the spring, and as crocuses and daffodils push up through the warming earth, her body begins to bloom and her manners to soften. Summer sees the complete regeneration of both Mary and Colin, and by the time Craven returns to Misselthwaite in autumn, the children are harvesting the fruits of their labour—health and happiness.

Finally, the overarching symbol of the book is the secret garden, a lost paradise of love and happiness—a version, perhaps, of the Garden of Eden, now reclaimed and rejuvenated.

"Look there," he said, "if tha's curious. Look what's comin' across th' grass.

When Mrs. Medlock looked she threw up her hands and gave a little shriek and every man and woman servant within hearing bolted across the servants' hall and stood looking through the window with their eyes almost starting out of their heads.

Across the lawn came the Master of Misselthwaite and he looked as many of them had never seen him. And by his side with his head up in the air and his eyes full of laughter walked as strongly and steadily as any boy in Yorkshire-- Master Colin."



WELCOME TO THE KENTENICH TALKS FOR THIS YEAR This year's Kentenich Talks in June 2011 are about the "Garden of Mary" Vision - how it came about in Schoenstatt and its meaning for our spiritual lives today. The Garden of Mary is a symbol for a means of evangelisation, where the relationship to God and to each other becomes the platform for faith. It has a horizontal and vertical dimension. The horizontal dimension is reflected in the symbolism of a garden that is full of every kind of tree, and flower, pathway and river. However, this great diversity does not diminish the unity of the Garden. The significance for living our faith today is that the Church is made up of very different and unique people, each bringing their own originality and talents, but together make up the one Body of Christ. The vertical dimension is symbolised by answering the question: "To whom does the Garden belong?" The Garden belongs to our Blessed Lady, who educates us "with, through and in Christ to adore and praise God, the Father".