

August 11 to 17

Bethany Deaconess Foundation

Live as children of light. Light produces fruit that consists of every sort of goodness, justice and truth. (Ephesians 5:8.9 CEB)

Deeds full of light

She was well over 80 years old when I met her. A small, dainty, friendly woman, full of energy - and blind for many years. I loved listening to her tell stories, and admired the ease with which she moved around her home. She had a heavy burden to bear from an early age. Eventually she stopped bemoaning her fate and decided to do something about the daily darkness in her life. She asked God to help her find a meaningful task: one that would put light into the life of disadvantaged children.

And so she contacted a local primary school and spoke with the teachers. They decided to go along with an experiment that entailed three to four children with learning difficulties coming to her home where she taught them to read and write. Her tireless energy and the love

and patience that she showed to the children turned the experiment into a project that lasted many years. The teachers were not only grateful but also full of respect for her commitment. She was also well loved by the children.

I found this such a convincing example of a living sermon. I'd like to take this on board for my own life: to trust God to turn my efforts into deeds full of light, even in the darkest times, and to reveal his justice.

Ilonka-Franziska Leonhardt, counselor

Translation: Jacqueline Rohmann

I GIVE THANKS

- for the charitable commitment showed by many staff in health care, administration and medicine, in child-care and youth facilities and in pastoral care.
- for the recently opened Agaplesion Bethesda senior citizens' centre in Ulm.
- for the new welfare projects undertaken with churches and other partners, such as the Insel-Arche in Hamburg, the new kindergartens in Wuppertal and Dreieich, the "Star Kids" ministry in Münster/Osna-brück.

I Pray

- for insight and enlightened thoughts in the decision-making process for the General Conference.
- for hope and consolation for all the visually impaired who are suffering and in despair.
- that all the staff in our welfare facilities treat those entrusted to them with love and respect and also experience the necessary esteem for their work.

Bethany Deaconess Foundation

Bethanien runs 8 hospitals and 24 Bethesda and Bethanien retirement homes throughout Germany, mainly in cooperation with Agaplesion gAG and edia.con gGmbH. The Bethanien Foundation also has 5 kindergartens, 5 children and youth centres, 7 "Star Kids" projects and 2 addiction treatment centres. The Bethanian deaconesses live in the mother houses in Hamburg and Frankfurt.

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