



We are Church

KirchenVolksBewegung

Movement We Are Church, Germany

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The 10th year of We are Church has begun

Message of greeting by Bishop Gaillot

"Bishop Gaillot [appointed titular bishop of Partenia on 13th January 1995] and also myself thank all of We Are Church for the kind message of greeting. 10 years of Partenia, that is also the celebration of We Are Church, so it is our common celebration. We are very closely united. Your important working, all the commitment and the friendship have enriched and animated also the way of Partenia to a large extent. Thus we look optimistically and full of energy into the coming years. Cordially,
Katharina Haller and Jacques Gaillot."

In the year 2005 it is ten years ago that the church referendum was started in Austria. So the Austrian "Platform We Are Church" is organizing a symposium **in Vienna on 23rd April 2005**: "10 years ' church referendum ' – a critical defining of our position" with a message of greeting from Bishop Jacques Gaillot. The presentation of the internationality of *We Are Church* will take place **in Innsbruck on 25/26th June 2005**, the birthplace of the church referendum, among other things with a Eucharist under the topic "break the bread and not the humans". The 10th anniversary of *We Are Church, Germany* will be celebrated **in Cologne from 28th to 30th October 2005** during the 18th national meeting, in the very town where the German church referendum was started. Everybody is very welcome to join. Additionally, many other activities are already planned for this year again:

National Meeting of We Are Church: March 18th –20th in Erfurt

The 17th public national meeting of *We Are Church, Germany* takes place in Erfurt from 18th till 20th March, a town in the newly-formed German states. The motto of this year's meeting is: "What has western Germany failed to learn from eastern Germany?" Further items are: Planning the programme for 10 years of *We Are Church, Germany*, involvement in the Protestant Church Congress, critical accompanying of the Catholic World Youth Day, statement on the Eucharist-Synod, service on the World Day of Prayer for Women's Ordination and other topics.

Appeal to give lay people the opportunity to preach on 17th April 2005

On the Sunday of religious vocation *We Are Church, Germany* is encouraging parishes again to give female and male members of the congregation the opportunity to preach.

Forum of German-speaking base communities from 5th till 8th May 2005 in Herbrechtingen

We Are Church, Germany is actively involved in this year's forum of German-speaking base communities in Herbrechtingen; the motto is: "Sharing our daily bread". Contact: Siegbert Maier-Borst, Tel: 07032-21562 email: S.Maier.Borst@t-online.de

Protestant Church Congress in Hanover from 25th till 29th May, 2005

We Are Church, Germany will take actively part in the 30th Protestant Church Congress with the motto "When your child asks you tomorrow". *We Are Church* will have a large information stand and will offer "talks at Jacob's well". People who would like to help please contact Annegret Laakmann, Tel.: ++49-2364-5588, email: laakmann@ic-marl.de

Further activities of We Are Church, Germany since October 2004:

"Cardinal Meisner must take back his untenable reproach against Bishop Gaillot !"

With great astonishment the national meeting of *We Are Church, Germany* in Regensburg had to realize that Cardinal Meisner prevented the public appearance of Bishop Jacques Gaillot on October 28th in the Beethovenhalle in Bonn. This decision led to a wide reporting in the media including numerous protests against the cardinal. In a widely read serial letter and per email the Cardinal of Cologne slandered his Episcopal brother with the following statement: "When Bishop Gaillot was removed from office in 1995 in Evreux, this did not happen as consequence of his commitment for needy people, but because of his deviation from the church teachings." *We Are Church, Germany* has requested Cardinal Meisner to retract this untenable reproach immediately and to apologize to Gaillot. In the opinion of the Reform Movement Cardinal Meisner's behaviour augurs badly for the Catholic World Youth Day next year in the Cologne diocese.

Withdrawal of permit to teach from Professor Hans Küng 25 years ago

On 18th December, the 25th anniversary of the withdrawing of the church permit from Professor DDr. Hans Küng by the Congregation of Faith, *We Are Church* reminded of the numerous other cases in which the Vatican has prevented a fruitful working together of ecclesiastical and academical religious institutions by withdrawing permits to teach or not granting the "nihil obstat". Küng's questioning of the papacy in its present form is still important, as can be seen by the growing number of conflicts between Rome and the local churches and the paralysing of the bishops' synods.

Solidarity with partners of *We Are Church* in Indonesia and Sri Lanka

After the Tsunami disaster *We Are Church* has declared its solidarity with partners in Indonesia und Sri Lanka, with which there have been contacts for several years. Our partners are **Fr. Tissa Balasuriya** OMI in Colombo/Sri Lanka in the *Centre for Society and Religion (CSR)* and **Theophilus Bela**, M.A. in Indonesia, Secretary General of *Indonesian Committee on Religion and Peace (IComRP)* and *Jakarta Christian Communication Forum (FKKJ)* and Co-founder of *Catholic Solidarity for Democracy*. Due to the fact that beyond the emergency relief, means are urgently needed for the recovery *We Are Church* has asked for financial solidarity for two organizations.

***We Are Church* welcomes raid concerning the question if an ill Pope is still able to work**

We Are Church, Germany and the International Movement *We Are Church* (IMWAC) has welcomed the raid of Cardinal Achille Silvestrini to find new arrangements for the case of the pope's inability to work, after the end of the current pontificate. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the pontificate of John Paul II the German Reform Movement had already declared that the Pope's resignation would be a sign of wisdom and serving the church.

International movement *We Are Church*

On 1st January 2005 it was Germany's turn to take on the chair of the International Movement *We Are Church*. Christian Weisner is also responsible for the international media work of *We Are Church* before and during the Conclave.

Conferring Haag-award on 90th birthday of reform theologian

This year the award of the Herbert-Haag-donation "For liberty in our church" was conferred to the Franciscan theologian Josef Imbach, whose permit to teach has been taken away from him by the Vatican for an indefinite period of time, to the Synod of Lucerne for their declaration on doing away with forced celibacy for priests and on women ordination, as well as to the former religious man Sepp Riedener to honour his very humane drugs politics. – Eva-Maria Kiklas and Karl Graml took part in the ceremony on 11th February, the 90th birthday of Herbert Haag, as representatives of *We Are Church, Germany*, who had received the award together with the Austrian Church Referendum in 1996.

Statement on the Bishops' synod in 2005 on the Eucharist sent to the Vatican

We Are Church, Germany sent on 31st December 2004 their own statement (www.we-are-church.org/de/wsk/doku/d_2005_eucharistie/index.htm) for the world bishops's synod (2nd- 29th October 2005, with the motto: "The Eucharist: Well and peak of the life and mission of the Church") as the German bishops did not involve the people, although Rome had asked to do so

Second Ecumenical Church Congress likely to take place in Munich in 2010

On a discussion in Hanover at the end of January the vice president of the ZdK ("National Committee of Catholics"), Heinz-Wilhelm Brockmann, mentioned briefly that the archdiocese of Munich-Freising will soon agree publicly to co-hosting the 2nd Ecumenical Church Congress in 2010. The final decisions would be made in the course of 2005. Dr. Elisabeth Raiser, presidency of the DEKT ("German Protestant Church Congress") as well as Christian Weisner from *We Are Church* were also on the panel.

New publications which can be ordered from the national contact address:

- ➔ Pfr. Gerhard Debbrecht: "Die Pfarrgemeinde lebt - mit und ohne Priester" €6,- zuzüglich Versandkosten €2,-
- ➔ Sabine Demel: "Sensus fidelium: Der Glaubenssinn des ganzen Gottesvolkes: Fromme Floskel oder erfahrbare Wirklichkeit?" (Manuskript des Referats auf der Bundesversammlung Oktober 2004 in Regensburg € 6,- zuzüglich Versandkosten €2,-

Detailed information on all points can be requested from the national contact address:

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National donations account:

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Translated from German by Sabine Hamm (Hanover) and Renate Holmes (Dachau)