

Internationale
Bewegung
Christlicher
Frauen

GRAL
GERMANY



“Community is where humility and glory
touch.”

“However, community is first of all a
quality of the heart.

It grows from the spiritual knowledge
that we are alive not for ourselves but
for one another”

Henry Nouwen

*The Grail in Germany is only a small enterprize,
compared with the communities world wide, yet,
the members and the group left a footprint
national and international*

Already among the so called **FIRSTLINGS** was one German woman:

Agnes Feldhege



History of the Grail

- **1932** the Grail came to Berlin – with some experienced members from Holland – invited to build up a youth work in the Diocese, joined by Germans, full of enthusiasm, presenting their uniforms in public. 5 Grailcentres were established and many young women joined.
- **1933, 1934, 1936** Mass plays were performed in the Sports palace, plus religious education, outings, singing and dancing was on the agenda – happy times

Present Situation

- None of them is anymore existing – and a trial after the war to reestablish failed. From the many members of that time only 2 remained.
- The Naziregime obstructed the work of the Grail badly
- **1937** Dutch members had to leave the country and **1939** the Gestapo searched the remaining Centres – they were finally closed

The 2nd World War persecuted, destructed

- **1945** young working women gathered around Alberta Lückner in Bonn. Spiritual deepening to be able to cope with the situation. The „KLEINE KREIS“- the small circle – was formed.
- **1955** Two Grail women went to Münster – got 1956/57 a house, as Grail Centre, and lived there as „small Church“ – young women and international students joined – Mission work was born.
- **1961 – 1967** Magdalene Oberhoffer, before and after working in Uganda, was chosen International President.
- **1962** A house in Mülheim was converted to a national Grail Centre. Courses for development volunteers were trained and prepared for a service in Third World Countries.
- Der „KLEINE KREIS“ was active till end the 1980 – remaining members joined the group in Mülheim
- 1962 the Centre was closed
- 1954 till 2001 Experts among the Germany Grail group went to countries in Africa to serve thousands in the medical, education, social field and found GRAIL communities in Ghana, Uganda, Kenya.
- Till 1994 the Centre in Mülheim was used for community living experience, for meetings, celebrations, trainings, as place for interreligious dialog, meditations, gatherings national and international.



Grail Centre Mülheim - Uganda



We are still on the way with a promise

- **1964** Grail Centre and affinity Group in Munich was founded with many projects socially, politically and church related.
- **1969** Hilde Derksen and Silvana Ferraguti started to work with women and children of foreign workers and the **International Initiative Hochfeld (IIH)** was founded.
- **1989** the Berlin wall fell – Grailwomen, as many times before, adapted to the signs of the time, founded meetings and discussions with women from the eastern part for peace and justice.
- **Gerda Kaufmann, Marita Estor, Christa Werner** – were members of the ILTs over the years.
- **1990** Offenbach group – combining members around Frankfurt and Marburg was established
- The Munich Group is still active. The Centre, flat of Irmgard Bsteh was dissolved after her death in 2018. Ingolstadt acts as Centre for the South of Germany.
- Until now, together with Diakonia and many initiatives around, women are trained in language, practical skills, children get help for school demands. The centre in the middle of a multi cultural part of Duisburg, is a blessing.
- The gatherings were changed into a regular programme „EFFATA“ for spiritual renewal and take still place (if corona is not interfering)
- Present members are still in contact, but regular meetings are not possible anymore due to age and sickness.



The Grail in Germany in the 21st Century

- Life, work, sharing, projects, involvement in social, political, churchfounded groups, grew and went on in the new Century – and **still a lot of good service is done.**
- The affinity groups Mülheim, Munich, meet monthly and **celebrate liturgical feasts**
- **National meetings** are planned and realized (if the pandemy allows) yearly: **Effata, Arbeitskreis (Work Circle)**, and a thematic meeting, plus the annual meeting of the Grail Academy e.V.
- Presently **Silvana Ferraguti, Maria Kaiml and Christa Werner** function as **Leadership Team**
- 28 death since 1983 (13 nucleus members) plus many Friends, who had participated actively – **left a small group of aged and partly sick women: 3 nucleus, 13 members, and 3 active friends** shoulder the tasks and the responsibilities



What will a new Century bring for the Grail in Germany?

- Also as small community we will function and be part of the International Grail - might be in a different form as now, surely with a smaller organisation and administration - but alive!*
- We are convinced to make the Grail vision and mission visible and grow - if not in numbers, so hopefully in wisdom and faith, in love to GOD our Grail sisters and everybody touching our life.*