
Germany: Federation of Catholic Youth, 170,000 volunteers in action. Mgr Batzing, “witnesses of commitment and creativity”

About 170,000 people participated in the “72 Hours” initiative, a project by the National Federation of German Catholic Youth (BDKJ), which every year organises a large mobilisation of young volunteers aged 9 to 27 under the motto “Sent from Heaven”. The 72 Hours began on Friday 19 April and ended yesterday, Sunday 21 April. Thanks to the young people from the BDKJ as well as from parishes, communities and associations, Germany has been buzzing with activities. According to data released by the BDKJ, more than 2,700 groups have been personally involved in activities aimed at promoting a “society based on solidarity”. From garbage collection and the cleaning of public spaces, to work and activities in facilities for the elderly, in the neighbourhood, in schools or with refugees. “Over three days, we have seen what young people are able to achieve if they are given the space. They defend others, they want and can actively shape their social environment, and they are therefore role models for everyone”, said the presidents of the BDKJ Lena Bloemacher and Gregor Podschun. “We were very impressed by the children, teenagers and young adults we met. Not even the heavy rain or snow stopped them from carrying out their projects for a good cause”. “This is a powerful witness to how young people, with their commitment and creativity, can make positive changes in our society. Together, they show that society can count on us as a Church”, commented the president of the German Bishops, Mgr Georg Bätzing. According to the BDKJ website, there were also 40 groups linked to the German initiative that “have made the world a little better in America, Asia, Africa, and other European countries”.

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