

Greetings from 'One World Team' in Germany

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Family meeting in Essen, 180 members present

As the mailman would say, "The work must go on come rain, sleet, snow or storm!" The work has not altered much since the summer; the street is still our domain. Naturally the season's change has not gone completely unnoticed by us. For example Jack Frost paid us a friendly visit last night and obviously took an immediate liking to us, because he not only settled on our window panes, but made himself right at home on our blankets. We all agreed it would be much more to our liking if this friendship could continue on a more distant basis!

You see, we teamsters have not given up our trailers no, we go with them through thin and thick -- sweat in the summer and frosty in winter. A little inconvenience does not bother us.

Would you like to take a peek through that frost-painted window and see how things run by us? Come with me!

"Rattle Rattle!!!" Six bodies simultaneously raise themselves to a 90° angle and ask "Ooo, what time is it?" "Time to get up, come on kids, a new day is dawning.

Let us pray." Pause. "Up and then kids, get that blood circulating- a little gymnastics and you will be a few degrees warmer. Getting up is a big event every morning, because there are always those few crucial moments between the time *your* feet reach the icy floor and the time someone has flicked on the stove.

Two minutes later a group of shivering, teeth-chattering individuals gather under a street lamp to commence the morning sport. A snap, crackle, pop accompanies knee bends and toe touching. After running a few laps they all feel better.



Interior of Caravan

Someone made a joke-there is laughter, and their breath fills the air like puffs of white smoke. They then disperse and pile back into the trailers.

"We have got 40 minutes -- better hurry up if we want to be finished at 7:00 AM! Who is doing the shoes? Don't forget the flashlight if you want to see what you are doing! Two of you can wash in the sink. Has the water in the containers thawed yet? What! Not completely? Oh well, don't let a few ice cubes bother you! Someone can use the sink in the toilet too but she'll have to do without light, but never mind the toilet, only 1/2 yard square, she can't miss herself by much."

There are a few gasps as the cold water slaps against the skin but the washing ritual is soon over, and the next one starts. Meanwhile some are already dressed and tidying up.

The last one washes the floor, sets up the tables and with good luck and a lot of effort we are all sitting in our places at 7:00 AM and ready to pray.

During this time one girl is running a race against the clock to get breakfast ready. At half past eight the silence is broken as they break out in chorus "Onward Christian Soldiers."

"Kitchen service! Where is the food? According to my watch we have exactly 24 minutes and 14 seconds

left to eat!" "Coming! Oh my just a minute the water is boiling. I'll be right there!" For the girl making breakfast eating is more symbolic than reality. It consists of a couple of spoons full of porridge, a bite of bread and a gulp of tea. Usually she has to have breakfast served, used dishes collected and washed and the kitchen tidied up all in 20 minutes. At eight we leave for 11 1/2 hours on the street.

Well, now you know the run of things in our trailers!

One thing is sure not one of us can ever say he is bored.

God's Day

Six days a week we pound the city pavements from morning until night and bombard the people with the words of the Divine Principle. On Saturday after the shops have closed we head for the next destination. We hope for a nice spot to spend the week-end and a friendly city that will bring forth blessings for our Father.



Early-morning exercises

One particularly memorable weekend was just the weekend of God's Day. At first glance we felt that Ulm would provide fertile ground for our efforts. It was a lovely town nestled in a valley. Everything was so quiet and peaceful. The narrow arm of the Donau River as it wound its way softly through the city, reminded us of a bygone era. We saw an elderly couple stroll by and a young boy enthralled in a game with his own shadow; other than that there was little activity in the streets.

Naturally on work days the wide city streets looked quite different, but somehow this quiet welcome was so soothing after days spent amid the bustle of big city traffic.

Our team leader wanted to find an especially nice spot for the camp, because Monday the first of January was God's Day. We drove crisscross all through Ulm to no avail. Once we even got stuck up on a Burg. It was a prickly situation getting the trailers back down, because there was hardly place to turn; it was such a steep slope. Those of us in the buses prayed fervently for the guidance of the spiritual world. We all felt with a certainty that our Father had a special place reserved for us. Our prayers were soon answered, when we reached a quaint little inn called "Jacob's Rest". There was a small wood bordering the inn and right at the edge of the clearing stood three tall towering trees. We manipulated our wagons so that we filled out the space between them and here we settled safe and secure for the night.

The next morning we awoke to the cheerful news that we would be going swimming. My what excitement! There were shouts of joy! We could hardly believe that the evenly distributed dirt of the last weeks was really going to come off and with warm water too!

It could only have been a matter of 3 minutes and we had rolled up our sleeping bags and scampered into our training suits.

We then jumped into our boots, threw on our coats and with our towels and fresh underwear we piled into the buses. The first place we found was closed! The sign said 'Closed between Christmas and New Year!' Our spirits began to sink.

No-one said anything; we all felt it necessary to take on an attitude of prayer. The next one was closed too! Well, we thought that's that. Then our team leader said 'One more time, if our Father meant us to go swimming he'll soon let us know.' In the meantime we had begun to think more seriously on the matter and come to the conclusion that we had been a little too anxious to please ourselves.

Suddenly someone gave a shout and pointed out a Youth Hostel. We followed the signs. The bus was silent; all heads were bowed in prayer. Our leader got out to speak to the proprietor. The minutes passed till we were startled by the opening of the bus door. It was our leader with a big grin on his face, giving an all-ahead signal! "Whoopee" we cried!

Then, of course, we had to pull ourselves together; after all it was expected of young missionaries to be more self-contained! It was lovely to return well-scrubbed and shiny to our little haven in the woods.

We felt very close to the Father all day long and were very conscious of the gifts he had endowed us with. The day was spent studying the Divine Principle. After supper we prepared for an 11:00 o'clock ceremony to welcome in the first day of the New Year. God's Day!



German Family, Mansei!

It was still early so we began to read one of the Master's sermons. Our hearts were overwhelmed! 6,000 years and no one to comfort the heart of our Father; 6,000 years filled with birthdays and wedding days and father's days and mother's days, but never a God's day!

The deep significance of this day filled the air and we thought of the thousands of brothers and sisters all over the world who would be celebrating this same moment. Suddenly the walls and camp around us vanished. We were no longer a handful of boys and girls in a trailer camp somewhere in Germany. We were one with the Father, one with the universe, with God's living army; his children on earth!

It was a piece of heaven as we stood outside under the tall dark pine trees. All around us the snow-covered earth glistened in the moon-shine. White stars pierced the black sky.

It seemed as if God's angels were peering down at us from heaven. Here we stood to give our Heavenly Father his due praise and honor and to pledge him our loyalty and unwavering faith for the coming year. Our voices rang through the woods and the intensity of our emotions brought tears to our eyes.

When it was all over we climbed back into the wagons. A little later as the noise of fir-works and New Year shouts sounded from afar, we felt so clearly the gap between the old and the new world and our hearts reached out to the many people who did not know of our Family.