

Short biography of Gabor Sztehlo

Gabor Sztehlo (1909-1974) was a Lutheran pastor. During his whole life, he followed the true faith and helped everybody. In 1938-40, besides his holy service, he founded the Hungarian People's College Movement. In Spring 1944 he was charged to co-operate with the Calvinist "Good Shephard Association" to assist in saving Jewish children. By the Autumn 1944, it had been clear to Gabor Sztehlo that these children could not be saved else than hiding them into hospices. A couple of weeks was enough to him to organize 32 children's hospices in homes of his relatives and friends in Buda and with the help of the Lutheran Church (deaconesses and the Evangelist High-School) in Pest. The homes were supported and boarded by the International and the Swiss Red Cross. Until the end of 1944, 1540 children and nurse found refuge. All of them were saved unharmed! After the war, many children were waiting for theirs in vain. Gabor Sztehlo established a common home for the hundreds of orphans, the PAX hospice for children and babies which was a real Youth Empire. Reverend Sztehlo tried to recover the irrecoverable, the warm parental home, with his flow of love. He established the first democratic children's republic in Hungary called Gaudiopolis within the frame of the PAX home. He was allowed to conduct this service until the nationalization of the PAX in 1951. Returning to the Church Service, he started a deaconic work: he organized hospices for handicapped children and helpless aged people, secretly visited and supplied the political deportees with board and good words or possibly saving them by the security and comfort of a hospice. In 1961 he visited his family who had earlier emigrated to Switzerland. The emotions of this reunion induced a cardiac infarction and when finally cured of this serious complaint, the doctors advised him to remain with his family and avoid such stress in the future. Then he continued his service as a pastor in the districts of Hohfluh-Hasliberg and Interlaken der Oberhasli up until his deaths in 1974. In 1972 he was the first Hungarian who was awarded as righteous with the Yad Vashem honour by the State of Israel (founded for non-jewish people who saved the Jews from the Holocaust).