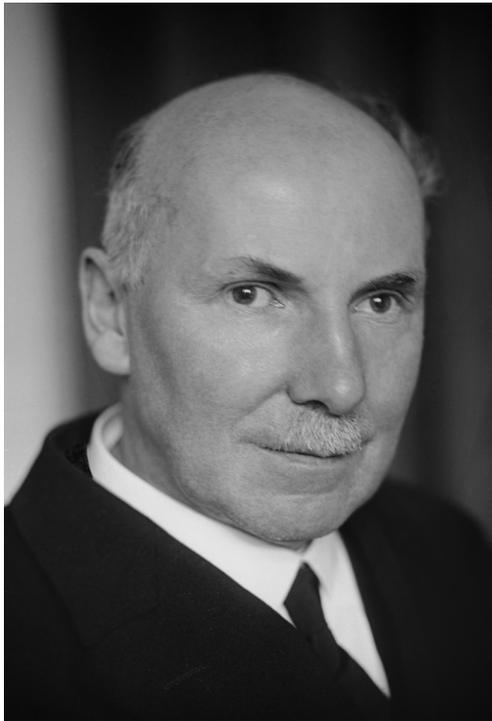


Friedrich von Bodelschwingh (c. 1930)

Abstract

Friedrich von Bodelschwingh (1877-1946) was a Protestant theologian and the son of the founder of the “v. Bodelschwingsche Anstalten Bethel” [v. Bodelschwingh Foundation Bethel], a charitable institution for the mentally ill in Bielefeld. In addition to medical and social care, the institution, which exists to this day, also offers education and professional training to people with disabilities. He assumed the directorship after the death of his father in 1910 and expanded the institute to care for orphaned children. Although he professed concern for the rising numbers of physically and mentally handicapped among the German population, he rejected the “life unworthy of life” [*lebensunwertes Leben*] arguments of the eugenicists who advocated forced sterilization and euthanasia. Later, in the early 1940s, Bodelschwingh made some efforts to protect the residents of his institute from Nazi sterilization and euthanasia policies, but he never engaged in outright resistance to the regime.

Source



Source: Friedrich von Bodelschwingh (Der Jüngere), 1930s, photographer: Willy Römer.
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