

Serving Berlin's English-speaking Catholic Community since 1957



## *Catholic Community*

### Member of the English-Speaking Mission

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**Our Mission Statement:** The All Saints Catholic Community is a fully integrated, multicultural community with English as its unifying language. It is an open, warm, welcoming, inclusive community that prays together and celebrates its unity in diversity.

## July 26, 2015 Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (*Missalette* p 35 et seqq.): 2 Kings 4:42-44 • Ps 145:10-11, 15-18 •  
Eph 4:1-6 • Jn 6:1-15

**Celebrant: Fr Wolfgang Schonecke MAfr**

**Only by sharing with others do we unite others.**

The authors of last Sunday's three readings have one thing in common: they are critical concerning the way "faith" was lived or abused by their contemporaries. Yes, the bible is a critical book – unfortunately, we often use the Bible to criticize others, to cut down other faiths and denominations. This is not unlike many extremists in the Muslim world who use the Koran to cut down other faiths. The bible is a critical book – but it is mainly self-critical: the biblical authors almost always took *stylus to papyrus* in order to criticize the way in which their own faith was being lived, the way in which their own faith was abused by the communities for whom they wrote. This is true of today's three readings.

Our **Jeremiah** passage (Jer 23,1-6) is just one of many in which the prophet attacks the "shepherds" of Judaism: "shepherds" is a biblical term normally reserved for the country's leaders. The leaders are both priests and kings – there was no concept of the separation of church and state in 6th century before Christ. So, Jeremiah includes both priests and kings in this condemnation. Yahweh's complaint against these individuals is short and to the point: "*They mislead and scatter the flock of my pasture.*" This is a really important reproach: "*They scatter the flock of my pasture.*" The biblical authors – Hebrew and Christian, Old and New Testament - presume that authentic leaders should faithfully direct and go before the people down the path God has chosen the people to travel; a path that always has unity as its goal. No matter their diversity, God's people are meant to be one people.

Unfortunately, toward the end of his ministry, Jeremiah had to give up all hope of ever changing the organized religion of his day and age. He only prayed that the future Babylonian destruction of organized religion would eventually lead to a rebirth of faith and the rise of a new, righteous king; a king who would reign and govern wisely, and do what is just and right in the land.

Though he certainly wasn't a king, the first followers of Jesus believed he was the leader for whom the Chosen People had been waiting for centuries. The author

who wrote the letter to the community in Ephesos (**Eph 2,13-18**) insists on the unifying characteristics of Jesus: *“For Christ himself has made peace between us Jews and you Gentiles by making us all one people. He has broken down the wall of hostility that used to separate us. His purpose was to make peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new person from the two groups”* (vv. 14 and 15). If Jesus is not uniting us, Jesus cannot be *“the Lord, our justice.”* But already in the early Church, in the first and second century, some church leaders refused to imitate the style of leadership Jesus had shown.

Our evangelists rarely condemn anyone for rejecting authority. Their condemnations almost always are directed at those abusing their authority, as we hear in today’s gospel passage in Mark (**Mark 6,30-34**). *“Jesus’ heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd.”* The story is set in a “deserted place”. Here, Mark shows how Jesus provides an example of *true Christian leadership*. Jesus forces his reluctant followers to give the hungry crowd something to eat. In the bread miracle which follows - but is omitted from our lectionary - Jesus doesn’t feed the people, his disciples do. Jesus simply encourages the process, he blesses what “little” they have, then he gives it back to them to distribute to the crowds. Mark’s message is clear: *Only by sharing with others do we unite others*. True leaders provide opportunities for sharing.

I am curious to see how solidarity in Europe will work with the Greek people. I am curious to see the results of the different documents the pope has written, curious to see the effects of his travels, the last one to South America. The Church is not only the pope, we are also called by Mark’s message: *Only by sharing with others do we unite others*. I am sure we find enough opportunities to follow the example of Jesus in our daily lives, especially now during holiday time when we are often hosts or guests.

cf. <http://fossilonline.com/index.php?pagekey=roger#0719>

**Wolfgang Felber SJ**

**Welcome to All Saints! Many of us are gone for the summer and return in August but would like to welcome you to our community. A few events to look forward to:**

- **First Communion/Confirmation Parent’s Meeting on Sunday, August 30th after Mass. Contact Jenny: [jgebhar@yahoo.de](mailto:jgebhar@yahoo.de)**
- **Fall Family Bazaar on Saturday, September 5th. Contact Heide: [h.doblhofer@t-online.de](mailto:h.doblhofer@t-online.de)**
- **Welcome BBQ Potluck on Sunday, September 13th after Mass. Please bring a side-dish.**

**[www.bildungsspender.de/all-saints-berlin](http://www.bildungsspender.de/all-saints-berlin)**

**THANK YOU!** Please **CONTINUE** to support **All Saints Community Life** through our fundraising site at **[www.bildungsspender.de/all-saints-berlin](http://www.bildungsspender.de/all-saints-berlin)** at no extra cost. It’s easy! Shop at one of more than 1500 online shops through this website & All Saints receives a **DONATION** for every transaction made! The total this year up to now is 1.038 EUR!

**Friends of All Saints e.V.** IBAN: DE15 3706 0193 6001 6690 18, BIC: GENODED1PAX

**Directions to All Saints:** **Subway:** U 3, Oskar-Helene-Heim (10-min. walk) or S 1, Zehlendorf, then bus. • **Bus:** Bus 285: stop Am Waldfriedhof (last stop, 2-min. walk); bus 110 or 623: stop Oskar-Helene-Heim (10-min. walk) or bus 115: stop Hüttenweg (5-min. walk). • **Car:** A115 Avus highway, Hüttenweg exit or Clayallee (<http://berlinonline.de/citymap>)