

ThomaServing Berlin's English-speaking Catholic Community since 1957



## *Catholic Community*

Member of the English-Speaking Mission

Mass: Fridays at 6 p.m. in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel

Sundays at 10 a.m. in the main Sanctuary

Interfaith Community Center • Hüttenweg 46 • 14195 Berlin-Dahlem

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Office Hours: Mondays and Thursdays 10-12

### **September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Readings (Missal p 213 et seqq.): Ex 32:7-11, 13-14 • Ps 51:3-4, 12-13,17, 19 • 1 Tim 1:12-17 • Lk 15:1-32

#### **Welcome to our 10 am Mass at All Saints. Our Celebrant today is Fr. Wolfgang Felber**

Lector: Howard Eyth • Eucharistic Ministers: Thomas Schmidt, Beate Hausmann, Johannes Ploog •  
Greeters: Buck Chisolm • Altar Servers: Timothy Pudessel, Conrad Chisolm • Hospitality: Vanessa Hansen •  
Designated Collection: Media Sunday

(One of the shortest books in the Christian Scriptures packs one of the biggest wallops. Paul's letter to Philemon isn't long enough to have chapters, yet its message has challenged Christians for almost 2,000 years.)

The Apostle Paul was faced with a unique problem when he dictated the few lines of his letter to Philemon and mailed them to his old friend, a problem with which none of us today (hopefully) will ever have to deal: a runaway slave. Onesimus, Philemon's slave, had not only escaped from his master's house after destroying some of his property, but eventually he ran to Paul, expecting the Apostle to protect him. Does he keep him or return him? The problem becomes even more complicated when Onesimus converts to Christianity and Paul baptizes him.

Obviously our faith had not yet evolved to the point where slavery, as such, would be unconditionally prohibited. (That wouldn't happen for about another 1,800 years!) That's why it's important to note the principles Paul employs to come to a conclusion. (He couldn't just check the latest papal documents or look up some conciliar decrees. He didn't even have a catechism to flip through to find the answer.) It's clear that he basically agrees with the Wisdom author that our first moral principle is always to do "what Yahweh intends." But as we hear in today's reading, at times that's hard to do. "Scarce do we guess the things on earth," the author reflects, "but when things are in heaven, who can search them out?" Such certainty can come only from Yahweh's Holy Spirit. Without that force in our daily lives, the paths of those on earth could never be made straight.

(Luke's) Jesus presumes we must be completely committed to that spirit. Nothing – or no one – can be more important than that commitment, not even life itself. And it's certainly not something that comes easy. It can take as much planning as building a tower or waging a war. We simply can't be other Christs without it. There's no other way to daily carry our cross.

Perhaps the first principle Paul operates from is Jesus' – and modern moral theologians' - belief that whatever we do, we do freely. Things done from force or fear don't count toward our eternal salvation. As difficult as it might be to achieve such freedom, the Apostle expects both Philemon and Onesimus to have no force or fear in whatever they do. That means he first respectfully asks Philemon to free Onesimus and permit him to help Paul. But on the other hand, he also expects Onesimus to freely return to his former owner and permit himself to again be in his power before he asks for his release. In each case, Philemon could freely say, "No!" just as Onesimus could freely say, "I'm not going back!"

Since this letter is in our biblical canon, we presume both said yes. But there's no way to definitively prove that. It's an essential part of carrying our cross that we create situations in which people are free to do the unpredictable. With such a commitment to freedom it was only a matter of (a long) time before slavery would be condemned by the church.

But Paul is also guided by his belief that, once baptized, we each become a new creation. So according to his theology, Onesimus is just as much a free person as Philemon, and Philemon is just as much a slave as Onesimus. We're all one. Perhaps one of the reasons we're more comfortable in just following rules and regulations instead of making decisions based on Christian principles is that there's much less personal dying in the rules and regulation. Someone else already made the decision for us.

Fosilonline.com **Roger Vermalen Karban**

## **First Holy Communion Class meets after Mass - TODAY!**

# ANNOUNCEMENTS



**WELCOME!** *Visiting for the first time? Please introduce yourself and tell us where you are from at the end of Mass, so we can welcome you. Please join us for coffee and cake in the Community Hall!*

**Attendance on September 4<sup>th</sup>: 147**

**Collection: All Saints: €378.78**



## **Introduction into the Catholic Faith in English (RCIA)**

The Archdiocese of Berlin is offering an Introduction into the Catholic Faith in English, beginning November 8<sup>th</sup>, over nine Tuesdays from 19:00 to 21:15 at the Jesuit Forum, Witzlebenstraße 30a, 14057 Berlin. Registration under 030 32000114, [kqi@erzbistumberlin.de](mailto:kqi@erzbistumberlin.de) or 030 60975944, [info@ipz-berlin.de](mailto:info@ipz-berlin.de).

## **Fall BBQ Potluck**

Please join us for our annual All Saints Community Fall BBQ Potluck on Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup> after Mass.

Hamburgers, grilled meat and drinks will be provided. Please bring a hearty side dish, salad or dessert to share.

Sign-up to help with Konrad Giersdorf in the Fellowship Hall after Mass today.

## **Family Bazaar on Saturday, 17 Sep**

Please volunteer to help with setup and cleanup and selling coffee and cake. Youth are welcome to help too. Students this is a great opportunity to build service hours. Sign up with Heide

## **Registration is open for First Holy Communion and Confirmation**

Registration for First Holy Communion classes is now open! Classes today after Mass with 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion celebrated May 21, 2017. Our next Confirmation class will be taking registrations. Exact dates to be announced later. For all classes please fill out the registration form found outside the church office. Parents can submit the registration forms to any catechist or to the office (the tray next to the printer). Watch the bulletin and our website for more details.

**Clip out and put on your fridge or family board!**

### **Mark your calendars:**

- September 15<sup>th</sup> – **Friday Mass - in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel** at 18:00 h.
- September 17<sup>th</sup> – **Fall Family Bazaar** 09:00 – 16:00 h. Contact Heide Doblhofer for details.
- September 18<sup>th</sup> – **Children's Liturgy of the Word** during Mass.
- September 24<sup>th</sup> – **Altar Server training\***. Pizza party afterwards ☺
- September 24<sup>th</sup> – Rehearsal for the **Confirmation Class Mass\***
- September 25<sup>th</sup> – **Autumn BBQ & Potluck** after Mass in the Fellowship Hall detail to follow.
- October 1<sup>st</sup> - **Christ the King Pilgrimage** to Swiebodzin, Poland. See flyers outside church office or on bulletin boards for details.
- October 2<sup>nd</sup> – **Children's Liturgy of the Word** during Mass.
- October 6<sup>th</sup> – Rehearsal for the **Confirmation Class Mass\***
- October 7<sup>th</sup> - **Confirmation Class** setup of church\*
- October 8<sup>th</sup> – **Confirmation Class Mass 11:00 h**

\* Times to be announced later

## **Raffle to support our Youth, Children's and Hospitality Ministries**

Here is your chance to support some of our very important ministries, plus, have a chance to win our first prize of a Lenovo Tab 2 A10 tablet or a cool second prize.

Tickets are 7 EUR each, or four for 20 EUR, and will be on sale in the Fellowship Hall after Mass today. You (or your ticket) must be present at the drawing so plan to attend the BBQ!

**Drawing on 25 September at 1200 during the Fall BBQ.**

## **September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016, 10 am Mass: Celebrant: Fr Wolfgang Schonecke**

Lector: Johannes Ploog • Eucharistic Ministers: Beate Hausmann, Johannes Ploog, Thomas Schmidt •

Greeter: Buck Chisolm • Altar Servers: NN • Hospitality: Beata McGreal •

Designated collection: Caritas

Designated collections are for special purposes in the Archdiocese of Berlin and are transferred in full. **However, in agreement with the Archdiocese, All Saints receives no financial support, so we are completely dependent upon your donations.** Please continue to donate to All Saints by using the **WHITE ENVELOPES** stamped "ALL SAINTS FUND" and/or transferring your donation to the Pax-Bank account written below. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!** •

\*Friends of All Saints e.V.\*, IBAN: DE15 3706 0193 6001 6690 18, BIC: GENODE1PAX