

Serving 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

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Office Hours: Mondays and Thursdays 10-12

November 13th, 2016 – Thirtieth-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (Missal p 234 et seq.): Mal 3:19-20 • Ps 98:5-9 • 2 Thess 3:7-12 • Lk 21:5-19

Welcome to our 10 am Mass at All Saints. Our Celebrant today is Fr. Sylvester Ajunwa

Lector: Johannes Ploog • Eucharistic Ministers: Heide Doblhofer, Jennifer Evans, Beate Hausmann •

Greeter: Conrad & Buck Chisolm • Altar Servers: Ava & Aidan Brinda • Hospitality: Family Brinda •

Designated collection: All Saints

Eternal life – totally different and nevertheless a continuation

Do you see the link between the first reading from the Old Testament and the gospel? It is evidently the fact that the two readings speak of "seven brothers". But there is a second aspect: the authors of both readings believe in an afterlife. As Christians, we believe in a life beyond this one - and we often presume that all the biblical authors did also. Yes, our Christian authors do – of course they do as they have experienced the risen Jesus. But only a few of the writers of the Hebrew Scriptures, of the Old Testament do believe in an afterlife. Such a concept doesn't enter Jewish thought until a little over 100 years before Jesus' birth. For instance, nowhere in the Torah – in the Bible's first five books – does anyone refer to an afterlife as we know it.

This led Christian theologians to a somewhat bizarre idea: They said that "the gates of heaven were closed" after Adam and Eve ate from the forbidden tree. These early Christian theologians did not realize that concepts of "heaven" only evolved centuries after the two Genesis creation myths were composed. And these theologians presumed that the sacred Torah writers didn't mention "heaven" because people couldn't get into heaven.

Then, in the century before Jesus' birth, Pharisees began to develop a new idea: They said that those who formed a relationship with Yahweh in this life would carry and deepen that relationship into the next life. But in spite of this, a large number of Jews still maintained that this life on earth was the only life we would ever experience. And so, Jesus had little to offer to anyone who was determined to live in the past - like the Sadducees. The question of the Sadducees is logical: "In the resurrection whose wife will she be?" – the widow of seven brothers... Jesus **first** responds to the question of the Sadducees by assuring them that eternal life won't be an eternal extension of this life. Those who attain that existence, that eternal life, that "afterlife" "neither marry nor are given in marriage." We are dealing with something we have yet to experience in the way we will experience it. For this new experience, I found a good illustration when I prepared this homily: Just as our existence *outside* of the mother's womb is dramatically different from our existence as a fetus *inside* the womb, so *heaven* will be dramatically different from this *earthly* existence.

So, this was the **first** answer: eternal life won't be an eternal extension of this life. The **second** part of the answer: Jesus knew that the Bible of the Sadducees comprises only the Torah – the first five books of the Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). This is the reason Jesus argues from one of these five books. And Jesus refers to *Exodus 3* - Moses encounters Yahweh in a burning bush. And he focuses on how God identifies himself as God. God says: "**I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.**" Jesus uses a tricky, rhetorical argumentation: if those three patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are not still alive when Yahweh talks to Moses, then Yahweh would say, "**I was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob**" – but God says: "**I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.**" And the scene with Moses happened 500 years after the death of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

So, this is the argumentation of Jesus: there must be a heaven if, at the time of Moses, these three pillars of Judaism continue to relate to God. Very philosophical? Maybe! But Jesus' key argument comes at the end: "God is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive." God's true followers continually grow in their understanding and experience of what it means to be alive in God. Jesus presumes this evolution is an essential part of faith.

Jesus adds another dimension to our life in God: our dying and rising makes us one with him not only in heaven, but also now here on this earth. Jesus is "directing our hearts" in both of these experiences – in the afterlife and in the life, here on earth. We sometimes say we are expected to learn new ways to **die** with Jesus, to commit ourselves to others, to take up hardships. But we are also expected to constantly invent and find new ways to **live** with Jesus, to live the fullness of life, to live a life in abundance, to enjoy our life here on earth.

Fr. Wolfgang Felber SJ

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 November 6th: 143

Collection: All Saints: €337.17, Caritas €45.20

Friends of All Saints Verein Annual membership meeting

December 4th at 11:15

All members of the Friends of All Saints Verein are invited to attend the annual membership meeting which will be held following Mass on December 4th in the Fellowship Hall.

If you have not paid your yearly dues, please do so before the meeting. You can verify that your fees are current by checking with Heide Doblhofer in the church office.

Any other questions should be directed to Howard Eyth or Mike Hoth.

Annual Thanksgiving Dinner

Join us to celebrate Thanksgiving at our annual dinner held on Saturday, November 26th at 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

Sign your family up to attend so we know how much to prepare and plan to bring a dish (salad, side or desert) to share with the community.

To help defray the expense we will have a donation jar in the Fellowship Hall on the Sunday's leading up to this dinner.

Sign-up sheets will be in the Fellowship hall after Mass for volunteers to make themselves known.

Gather In My Name (GIMN) ADVENT event at St. Bernard's

On Saturday, December 3rd from 6:30 – 8 p.m. we will have the second in a series of intergenerational events within the English-speaking Mission. Families with children and youth of all ages are welcome! The evening will include:

- learning about the meaning of Advent
- Advent bingo with prizes
- Advent crafts
- food, singing, prayers

It is very important that you confirm your attendance with the number of people in your party, as this will allow us to better plan catering (Glühwein!!) and crafting supplies and prizes.

The events are FREE, but please register by sending an email to Jenny at jgebhar@yahoo.de to allow for adequate planning.

Clip out and put on your fridge or family board!

Mark your calendars:

- November 18th – **Friday Mass - in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel** at 18:00 h. Tell your friends about our Friday Mass.
- November 20th – **Children's Liturgy of the Word** during Mass.
- November 20th – **High School Youth Group** – meets after Mass at 11:15 h in the classroom
- November 25th – **Christmas Tree arrives.** Tree set up / decorated and church decorated with ivy beginning at 17:00 h. Volunteers to help with the tree and church decorations should contact Konrad Giersdorf.
- November 26th – **Thanksgiving Dinner** – in the Fellowship Hall from 18:00 h onward. Please volunteer to help make this a big success. See the announcement to the left for more details.
- December 4th –
 - **Children's Liturgy of the Word** during Mass.
 - **High School Youth Group** – meets after Mass at 11:15 h in the classroom
 - **Friends of All Saints Verein membership meeting** at 11:15 h.
- December 24th – **Annual Children's Christmas pageant and Mass** beginning at 15:00 h. We are looking for Mary and Joseph; shepherds, wise men and many others! You do not have to attend All Saints to participate. Watch for additional details including dates for fitting of costumes and practice dates and times. **Adults volunteers needed to make this annual tradition a raging success.** Inquire in the church office.

Hospitality Volunteers Sought

We still have a few Sundays which need a volunteer for our after-Mass hospitality hour. If you are interested, please see Vanessa Hansen or drop her a message at vhansen980@hotmail.com.

November 20th, 2016, 10 am Mass: Celebrant: Fr Wolfgang Schonecke

Lector: Helga Beck • Eucharistic Ministers: Jennifer Evans, Beate Hausmann, Johannes Ploog • Greeter: Buck Chisolm • Altar Servers: Carl & Luc Dethlefsen • Hospitality: Alicia Ching • Designated collection: Diaspora Sunday

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