

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



May 21st, 2017 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

Readings (Missal p 158 et seq.): Acts 8:5-8,14-17 • Ps 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20 • 1 Pet 3:15-18 • Jn 14:12-21

Welcome to First Holy Communion Mass at All Saints. Our Celebrant today is Fr. Wolfgang Felber, SJ

Lectors: Tom Fitzpatrick • Eucharistic Ministers: Jennifer Evans, John & Glenda Massey

Greeter: Buck Chisolm • Altar Servers: Sara Sheehan, Luc & Naomi Dethlefsen

Hospitality: First Communion Families

Do not expect a solution to be decreed from above

The message the three scripture passages convey is a very modern one, "*participation*" in the Church is more important than the hierarchical structure. If our only contact with organized Christianity has been limited to a hierarchical structured Church, then we will find this message surprising and maybe difficult to appreciate. Our authors are **not** interested in encouraging us to look to a higher rung on the authority ladder in order to discover God's will in our lives. They are concerned with making certain each of us understands the dignity God has implanted in us, and this dignity is independent of any authority structure.

The author of the **1st letter of St Peter** (who is certainly not St Peter) addresses newly baptized Christians – and he can't be clearer: "*You are God's chosen and special people. You are a group of royal priests and a holy nation. God has brought you out of darkness into his marvelous light*". The text continues: "*Once you were nobody. Now you are God's people*" (1 Peter 2,9.10). We are to see each of us as members of the People of God, individuals whose call to minister to others is not mediated through a hierarchical structure. Such actions are rooted in God's spirit embedded in each of us.

Let us have a look at the end of today's passage from the gospel according to **John**. Here we see Jesus during his Last Supper discourse. And Jesus promises his followers something we often forget: "*Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father*" (John 14,12). Our life of faith is not just a matter of remembering the terrific things Jesus accomplished during his earthly ministry 2000 years ago. Jesus presumes that anyone who dares imitate him would continue his ministry after his death and resurrection. Jesus trusts all of us not only to accomplish what he achieved, but to even go beyond what he himself was able to do. The only problem is that many of us have been led through the centuries to believe that such accomplishments are for "others", are for saints or martyrs or popes or cardinals – but not for us.

Maybe some of you still know an old saying concerning the catholic church, it says: "*Our role in the church is simply to pray, pay, and obey.*"

That is where today's passage from the **Acts of the Apostles** comes in. Luke describes a problem in the early community in Jerusalem. *Hellenist* widows think they are being short-changed "in the daily distribution" of food, they think they were given less than the correct amount on food that was due to them. "*Hellenist widows*", the text says. "*Hellenist*" in this context, refers to Jews living now in Jerusalem who are not natives of Israel. They have spent most of their lives outside the Holy Land but have settled down now in Jerusalem. Some of them probably do not even speak Aramaic - the language the "Hebrews" speak. By nature, such a situation in a community leads to misunderstandings.

But the solution the Twelve, the twelve apostles offer is not as natural as the problem. One might have expected them to decide in this case – top-down. But no, they say: "*Choose seven men who are respected and wise and filled with God's Spirit. We will put them in charge of these things.*" (Acts 6,3) Notice the names of the seven: "*Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas of Antioch, a convert to Judaism.*" There is not a single "Hebrew" name among these seven. Every name is Greek. They are *Hellenists*.

This way, in the Acts of the Apostles, Luke is telling his community: "*If there are problems among you, those who have the problems should solve the problems. Do not expect a solution to be decreed from above.*"

If each of us really is as important as Jesus - and our early Christian authors believe we are! - then our problems should always be solved from below, by those who have a Spirit which will help them in this process. As the Church, as a Church community like All Saints, we certainly still have a long way to go in the future - a long way before we get back to how it was "*in the beginning*" of our Christian communities.

Cf: <http://www.dignityusa.org/breath/april-20-2008-fifth-sunday-easter>

Fr. Wolfgang Felber, SJ



ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Attendance on May 14th: 151

Collection: All Saints €278.71



Spring BBQ Potluck May 28th after Mass

Please join us for our annual All Saints Community Spring BBQ Potluck on Sunday, May 28th starting after Mass.

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

We will need volunteers to help set-up, serve and clean-up. Please sign-up to help with in the Fellowship Hall after Mass today.



Altar Server Volunteers

Interested in becoming an Altar Server? We are looking for new Cross Bearers. Training is on May 27th from 15:00 – 17:00 h.

Fill out a Green volunteer form (found in the info rack outside the office) and drop it in our mailbox or give it to someone in the office. Participants will be contacted by e-mail to confirm attendance. We should be done early.



Do you feel lucky?

During our annual spring BBQ we will be having a raffle!

First Prize is a **Lenovo YOGA Tab 3 - 10.1 in. tablet**. Proceeds will be used for the purchase of new altar linen. Buy your ticket(s) after Mass. The drawing is on May 28th at about 11:30 during the Spring BBQ.



Make a Note . . . Friday Mass

We celebrate weekday Mass in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at All Saints every Friday beginning at 18:00 h.

We encourage all to attend and invite your friends.

Mark your calendars:

- May 21st - **Boys Confirmation Class** meets at 17:00 h at the Wilson residence.
- May 21st - **Girls Confirmation Class** meets at 13:00 h at the Okwechime-Reich residence.
- May 27th - **Altar Server Training** – in the main church from 15:00 to 17:00 h. Watch for the Doodle to sign-up for new or refresher training.
- May 28th - **Spring BBQ** after Mass.
- June 2nd - **Girls Confirmation Class** meets at 18:00 h at the Sulzberger residence.
- June 9th - **Girls Confirmation Class** meets at 18:00 h at the Zaby residence.
- June 10th – **Youth Film Night** begins at 18:30. Plan to come and see **the latest Star Wars release** and enjoy some soda and popcorn to celebrate the end of the school year. No charge for attending or for refreshments but we do ask that you help us straighten up the Fellowship Hall when we finish.
- June 11th - **Boys Confirmation Class** meets at 17:00 h at the Castellon residence.
- June 18th - **Boys Confirmation Class** meets at 17:00 h at the Ching residence.
- June 23rd - **Girls Confirmation Class** meets at 18:00 h at the Brinda residence.
- June 25th - **Girls Confirmation Class** meets at 18:00 h at the Pedussel residence
- June 30th - **Boys Confirmation Class** meets at 18:00 h at the Schulze-Makuch residence.
- October 19th – 30th – **Pilgrimage to the Holy Land** - Konrad Giersdorf has details. Contact him at: giersdorf@hotmail.de

7th Sunday of Easter, May 21st, 2017, Celebrant: Fr Wolfgang Schonecke, MAfr

Lectors: Jennifer Evans • Eucharistic Ministers: John & Glenda Massey, Johannes Ploog
Greeter: Buck Chisolm • Altar Servers: NN • Hospitality: NN
Designated collection: All Saints

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