

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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August 6th, 2017 – The Transfiguration of the Lord Celebrant: Fr. Vincent Karatunga

Readings (Missal p 187 et seq.): Dan 7:9-10, 13-14 • Ps 97: 1-2, 5-6, 9 • 2 Pet 1:16-19 • Mt 17:1-9

Ask God for something which we can put at the service of others

The first reading (1st book of Kings 3:5.7-12): King Solomon, who was probably an historic figure, is presented as a wise ruler. Still today, his wisdom is proverbial. Solomon was the son of David and he became king although he was not the *elder* son of David. His mother and the prophet Nathan conspired to have Solomon made king. According to the Bible, he reigned for forty years – which does not necessarily mean “40 years” in our sense, but it means “for a very long time, for a generation”.

Solomon's reign was peaceful; he had the first temple in Jerusalem built. He modernized the kingdom.

After his death, the kingdom split in two. In the center of the reading we find the sentence: “Give your servant an understanding heart to judge, to govern your people and to distinguish right from wrong - Please make me wise and teach me the difference between right and wrong. Then I will know how to rule your people.” (1 Kings 3,9) This is typical for a wise person – he or she knows that everything is the fruit of this wisdom; there is no need to ask for power or material goods. In Solomon's case, his focus is his people. “If you don't, there is no way I could rule this great nation of yours” he continues. God had said: “Ask something of me and I will give it to you”.

This might recall the question where someone is asked: “Which three things would you take with you on a lonely island?” or “If you had three wishes what would you wish?” Maybe we would have our own answers to these questions. What I like in Solomon's answer is his unselfishness. He does not ask anything for himself. He asks for something which he can put at the service of others.

Would we also give a similar answer if we were asked? Or in relation to today's Gospel (Mt 13,44-46) if asked what we would take with us on an island, would we take the “*treasure from the field*” or “*the pearl*” we heard of in the Gospel? Solomon was a king, a ruler. Let's have a look at the rulers of today – in the US, in Europe, and elsewhere. Do we see personalities like Solomon? Do we see politicians and people in the economy put the common good before particular interests? Do we find politicians who are interested in “*the big project of a just society*”? If I speak of politics, I cannot ignore our Church and its leaders. Searching for power, promoting personal interests and the lobbying of different groups – they all play an important role. Can we still see the “*pearl*” the Gospel presents to us, the “*treasure from the field*”? Or is the pearl hidden behind ecclesial lobbies and particular interests within the Church?

It is holiday time – so I would like to be brief and end with some questions: am I unselfish and uninterested enough to desire gifts or talents for me that can be put at the service of others? In today's passage from the letter to the Romans Paul says: “God has always known who his chosen ones would be. God had decided to let them become like his own Son, so that his Son would be the first of many children.” (Rom 8 29) What is my relation to God? Do I try to become a brother, a sister to others? And finally: where do I invest my energies? Do I look for the “*treasure in the field*” or do I resign myself to be “*thrown away with the bad fish*” as the Gospel says (Mt 13 48)?

Fr. Wolfgang Felber

Welcome to All Saints! Our collection today is for All Saints. Many of us are gone for the summer and return in August but would like to welcome you to our community.

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