

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

Interfaith Community Center • Hüttenweg 46 • 14195 Berlin-Dahlem

Phone (030) 8620-3636 • Fax (030) 8620-3638

Email: allsaintsberlin@t-online.de / Website: www.all-saints-berlin.de

Facebook: All Saints Catholic Community Berlin

Office Hours: Mondays and Thursdays 10:00-12:00

December 24th, 2017 – Fourth Sunday of Advent / Children's Mass and Christmas Pageant

Readings (Missal no. 793): 2 Sam 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16 • Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29 • Rom 16:25-27 • Lk 1:26-38

Welcome to our 9:30 am Mass at All Saints. Our Celebrant today is Fr. Wolfgang Felber

Lector: Eddie McGreal • Eucharistic Ministers: Jennifer Evans, Glenda & John Massey •
Greeter: Buck Chisolm • Ushers/Gift Bearers: Rowan & Conlin McConvey, Will Logsdon, Aidan Brinda
• Altar Servers: Brenden FitzPatrick, Conrad Chisolm • Hospitality: NONE •
Designated collection: Children, Youth and Hospitality Ministries

Third Sunday of Advent

In our two readings from the prophet Isaiah and from the gospel according to John, we hear of two men being called by God. We can be sure that these parts of those two books were the last to have been written. It is only in hindsight that it was clear for Isaiah and for John the Baptist that they had been called by God. Prophets do not know the details of their ministry from the beginning. Let us take the text from **Isaiah**. Isaiah eventually discovers who benefited from the words he proclaimed. These were the lowly, the brokenhearted, captives and prisoners. I doubt he began his ministry with that specific audience in mind. But the prophet was convinced that "*the Spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me*" – this is the first line of our reading. In the beginning of his ministry, Isaiah had no idea how this service to his people would evolve, but he knew that he received a mission from his God.

Is there a master plan when God calls a person to be a prophet? No, God's calling someone to be his prophet is not accompanied by a hidden master plan! That is rarely the biblical case!

John the Baptist provides an example. Let us look at the prologue to John's gospel from which today's passage is taken. [The gospel according to *John the Evangelist*. . . – not the *Baptist*, by the way]. We see that John the Baptist was quite certain about the details and direction of his ministry. The evangelist tells us:

God sent a man named John, who came to tell about the light and to lead all people to have faith. John understands his place in salvation history so well that he can confidently proclaim: "*I am not the Messiah! I am not Elijah! I am not the prophet!*"

When pressed, he replies, "*I am only someone shouting in the desert, 'Get the road ready for the Lord!' But here with you is someone you don't know. Even though I came first, I am not good enough to untie his sandals.*"

From the beginning, Christians have regarded John as Jesus' precursor: as the person who spent and gave his life to prepare the way for Jesus. No one today denies he did this – he did prepare the way for Jesus. But today, in 2017, and already for a long time, one thing has been clear– and this is due to research in the Bible and its context: the historical John the Baptist probably didn't recognize his role in God's plan. And he did not understand the meaning of his own death. He did not understand why he was beheaded by Herod. It probably never crossed the mind of John the Baptist that he actually was preparing the ground for the seed Jesus would later plant.

In the light of this, our passage from the **letter of St Paul to the community in Thessaloniki** becomes significant. This section is one of the earliest Christian writings we possess. What Paul does is not so much to point out the meaning of the **past**. But what he does is to try to help his community experience the **present**, understand the present.

I am convinced that Paul wrote this passage for the community in Thessaloniki – and for *this* community only. Do you really think that Paul wrote this passage with the idea in his mind that it would be read and reflected today, two thousand years later? Paul composed these lines to help his followers imitate Jesus even when they weren't 100% certain where the imitation was leading them. Paul commands his people: *Always be joyful and never stop praying. Whatever happens, keep thanking God. Don't turn away God's Spirit or ignore prophecies. Put everything to the test. Accept what is good and don't have anything to do with evil.*

I used these verses for the penitential service and the individual confessions we had for the First Holy Communion children in the English-speaking mission on December 17th. I think this is not a bad way to live - especially when we're not exactly certain where our living is taking us, where our Church goes, where our political and economic system goes.

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 December 17th: 122

Collection: All Saints: €391.97



Thank you to all the children (our musicians, narrators and singers) who volunteered for this year's performance.

Special thanks Pageant and Music Coordinators:
Vanessa Hansen, Johannes Wrembek, Buck Chisolm, Lynn Brinda, Trinh Scott and Vikki Ruiz.



Three Kings Day Celebration

We will have a special Three Kings Day hospitality after Mass on **Sunday, January 7th**. Will you be the lucky one to find the special item in the Rosca de Reyes? If so, you get to be the King or Queen of the day!

Clip out and put on your fridge or family board!

Mark your calendars:

- December 25th – **Christmas Day Mass at St. Bernard's**, Königin-Luise-Straße 33, 14195 Berlin, at 11:00 a.m.
- December 26th – **Holy Mass at St. Bernard's**, Königin-Luise-Straße 33, 14195 Berlin, at 11:00 a.m. December 31st.
- December 31st – **Holy Mass at All Saints** at 10:00 a.m.
- January 1st – **Holy Mass at St. Bernard's**, Königin-Luise-Straße 33, 14195 Berlin, at 11:00 a.m.
- January 7th – **Special Three Kings Day** hospitality after Mass in the Fellowship Hall.

Check for the latest "News" at the **All Saints website** (<http://www.all-saints-berlin.de/home.shtml>) or visit us on Facebook: *All Saints Catholic Community Berlin*

It's 2018 already!

- January 14th – **All Saints Council** meets in the small conference room after Mass (11:15).
- January 21st – **Combined Confirmation Class** meets at St Bernard's from 16:45 – 18:45.

Visit the English-Speaking-Mission (ESM) Website to learn more about what is happening in the ESM:
<http://www.english-mission-berlin.de/>

TONIGHT – COME AND JOIN US!

December 24th, 9:30 pm: Christmas Carols

December 24th, 10:00 pm: Midnight Mass: Celebrant Fr. Wolfgang Schonecke MAfr

Lector: Rachel Rückeis • Eucharistic Ministers: Thomas Schmidt, Heide Doblhofer, Johannes Ploog • Greeter: Buck Chisolm • Altar Servers: Samantha & Madeline Rückeis • Hospitality: NONE • Designated collection: Christmas Collection for Advent

December 31st, 10:00 pm: Mass: Celebrant Fr. Wolfgang Felber, SJ

Lector: Christine Tombarge • 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: GENODE33