

Serving Berlin's English-speaking Catholic Community since 1957



ALL SAINTS



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 10:00-12:00

September 30th, 2018 – Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (Missal 929: Num 11:25-29 • Ps 19:8, 10, 12-13, 14 • Jas 5:1-6 • Mk 9:38-43, 45, 47-48)

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

- Lector: Matthias Waliszewski • Eucharistic Ministers: Thomas Schmidt, Heide Doblhofer, Jennifer Evans •
- Greeter: Christopher Lusaka • Altar Servers: Konrad Giersdorf, Oshin Michael •
- Hospitality: Beate McGreal • Designated collection: All Saints •

Homily on the Twenty Fifth Sunday – All Saints

Some time ago I heard a horrible sermon, not in a church, but in a fascinating exhibition under the title "The Urban Cultures of Global Prayers". The multimedia show tried to display certain patterns of religious activities in urban centres all over the world. In one video recording an African preacher spoke with great energy and enthusiasm to his congregation. His message was as persuasive as simple. "You are sick? Pray to the Lord and he will give you health. You are poor? Pray to the Lord and he will give you plenty of money. You have no job? Pray to the Lord and tomorrow you will find work. Your son failed his exam in school? Pray to the Lord and your son will pass with good marks. Your daughter ran away? Pray to the Lord and she will return to you at once. Your husband is a drunkard? Pray to the Lord and he will stay with you and remain sober. Your wife bears you no child? Pray to the Lord and he fills your house with the laughter of children." And on and on like this for half an hour, and more.

In a nutshell, he claimed: Be God's friend and you have no more problems in your life. For every trouble, every hardship, every difficulty, every problem shows that God is against you because you are against him. Therefore, repent and pray and all is sweet and wonderful, and you live in paradise.

Does this preacher not tell us an enormous lie? Is it not intolerable arrogance to claim to know what God will do when you pray? Religion is turned into magic when prayer is presented as an effective tool to make life pleasant and easy. No, we must never try to instrumentalize Almighty God.

Today's first reading from the Book of Wisdom shows us another picture. The background of the text is the situation of the pious Jews in the pagan city of Alexandria. The faithful Jew tries in all fidelity to follow God's law and be his chosen people. Nevertheless, the wicked say: "*With revilement and torture let us put the just one to the test. - Let us condemn him to a shameful death.*" Their aim is to prove that the just one is not just; their logic is clearly spelt out: "*For if the just one be the son of God, God will defend him from the hand of his foes.*" How mistaken all this is, we recognise when we see Jesus dying on the cross, a good man in the worst situation. As we hear in the gospel, Jesus tells his disciples of his approaching passion, death and resurrection, and the evangelist notes: "*They did not understand the saying.*"

We too find it very hard to accept that God - who wishes us to have life and life to the full - may nevertheless sometimes lead us against our spontaneous likings and preferences. We aim for the top, not the bottom, for pleasure not for pain, for health not for disease, for riches not for poverty, for being first not last, and we prefer to be served rather than to serve. Yet Jesus sets us on a very different course: "*If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all.*" - This is quite another stand than the doctrine of the preacher I mentioned, who promises that when you pray all will be sweet and well. No, our hunger for comfort is one thing, and God's order of priorities is another.

I find Jesus is a wonderful teacher. Instead of lengthy explanations and persuasive words, he shows us in a simple gesture what he wants to get across. We heard in the gospel: "*Taking a child, Jesus places it in their midst, and putting his arms around it, he said to them, whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me.*" In

order really to catch the point, close your eyes and see this scene as lively as possible. Jesus puts his arms around one who is small, weak and rather helpless, without any merits and achievements, far from the pole position which grown-ups always desire. This gesture reveals more than the most beautiful sermon can teach about taking care, protecting and supporting. The picture is miles away from the harshness and dominance, fighting and bitterness, for which Saint James rebuked us in the second reading. In this simple gesture, arms around a child, Jesus demonstrates the exact opposite of the passions that lead to war and conflicts. Looking at him at this moment teaches us more than words can do. Amen.

Fr. Dietmar Lenfers, MAfr

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 23rd: **95**

Collection: All Saints: **€281.89**

Registration continues for First Holy Communion (Spring 2019) and Confirmation (2020)!

First Holy Communion (for 2nd & 3rd graders) and Confirmation classes has begun. **But there is still time to join these classes.**

Please share this news with friends and invite our young people to grow in their faith through the sacraments.

Registration forms are outside the church office; please submit completed forms to the office or via the mail box.

For questions about the sacraments, please contact: (FHC): Zachary Chitwood (zacharias7@gmail.com) or (Confirmation) Karen Castellon (karencastellon908@gmail.com).



Teens would you like to join our Youth Group?

Then talk to either Tom Fitzpatrick or Justine Pédussel or leave your name in the office and we will pass your information along. Justine and Tom are leading this effort but **your participation and ideas** will help shape this youth initiative!

Clip out and put on your fridge or family board!

Mark your calendars:

- October 7th – **Confirmation Class** meets at 11:15 a.m. in Classroom 1.
- October 7th – **First Holy Communion Class (FHC)** meets at 11:15 – 12:00 a.m. in the Nursery.
- October 14th – **All Saints Council** meets in the conference room after Mass
- October 14th – **Confirmation Class** meets at 11:15 a.m. in Classroom 1.
- October 14th – **First Holy Communion Class (FHC)** meets at 11:15 – 12:00 a.m. in the Nursery.

LONG RANGE (get these in your planner):

- November 24th – **Thanksgiving Dinner** in the Fellowship Hall from 6 p.m. onward.
- November 30th – **Christmas Tree arrives.** Tree set up / decorated and church decorated with ivy beginning at 5:00 p.m.
- December 2nd – **Annual Christmas Caroling** at Elder Folks Home starting at 3:00 p.m.
- December 8th – **Combined Advent Service** with PFF and Crossways – details TBA
- December 8th – Preparations for the **Annual Children's Pageant** – details TBA

October 7th, 2017, 10 am Mass: Celebrant: Fr. Dietmar Lenfers, MAfr.

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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: GENODE33PAX