

Serving Berlin's English-speaking Catholic Community since 1957



Catholic Community

Member of the English-Speaking Mission

Hüttenweg 46 • 14195 Berlin-Dahlem

Phone (030) 86203636 • Fax (030) 86203638

Email: allsaintsberlin@t-online.de

Website: www.all-saints-berlin.de



Our Mission Statement: The All Saints Catholic Community is a fully integrated, multicultural community with English as its unifying language. It is an open, warm, welcoming, inclusive community that prays together and celebrates its unity in diversity.

August 17, 2014 Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 56:1, 6-7 • Psalm 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8 • Romans 11:13-15, 29-32 • Matthew 15:21-28

Celebrant: Fr. Wolfgang Schonecke

Crossing to the Other Side

Sometimes geography can help to a better understanding of biblical texts. "Jesus made the disciples head to the other side." He had to force them because they were deathly scared to leave their familiar surroundings and cross the lake of Galilee. Why? Because the people living on the other side were pagans, people with a different culture, a different language, a different religion or none at all; in other words people who were considered dangerous and despicable.

The Gospel of the storm on the lake is in the first place not a description of a nature miracle, it rather tells the story of the mission of the early church. Jesus had left his close collaborators an impossible mission: to go and spread his message "to the ends of the world." They were not at all qualified for such an undertaking. As fishermen they had little education and no financial resources and still less experience of the great world of the Romans. Moreover, Jesus had not left them any precise instructions how to go about it, he had only vaguely promised them the help of "his Spirit." And no sooner had they started their mission that a storm of opposition rose against them. Their leaders were put in prison or killed; the community scattered all over the place; fierce internal disputes about the place of the pagans divided the church. Hardly had the boat of the young church ventured into open waters, it nearly sank. No wonder the apostles were scared.

And where was Jesus? More often than not, he seemed to be absent leaving them struggling on their own. But then the apostles had another experience. In spite of fierce opposition, open persecution by the authorities and internal divisions, the church miraculously grew stronger and stronger. Many people became interested in the message. Small communities of believers sprang up in many places. After all Jesus seemed to be with them and proved stronger than contrary winds.

We are called to continue Jesus' mission today, to go out of our cozy community to the margins of our secular society, as Pope Francis continually challenges us to do. And we, like the disciples, are scared. We fear the scorn and ridicule when we admit our love to our church in spite of its many defects or when we humbly but boldly take positions which are at odds with the norms of the current culture. We are even more scared watching the waves of religious intolerance and violence suddenly springing up in many places. We are people of little faith. The Gospel wants to encourage us to trust that all storms can eventually be overcome if only we keep Jesus in the boat.

Fr. Wolfgang Schonecke MAfr

Friends of All Saints Verein: IBAN: DE15 37060193 6001669018 BIC: GENODED1PAX, Pax-Bank eG

All Saints Council: Konrad Giersdorf (Co-Chair) * Vanessa Hansen (Co-Chair) * Rudolf Hausmann * Nora Bungert * Tamás Meggyes * Marianne Sihotang

Friends of All Saints Verein: Howard Eyth * Mike Hoth * Lupita Wilhelm * Heide Doblhofer * Eddie McGreal

Rector Ecclesiae: Fr. Gillissen, English-Speak. Cath. Mission, Johann-Georg-Str. 8, 10709 Berlin, Tel: 8132026

Boy Scout Troop 46: All Saints is the proud Chartered Organization for Boy Scout Troop 46 "Freedom Outpost." *True to Scouting Values for Over 55 years* (www.troop46berlin.ScoutLander.com)