

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 10:00-12:00

July 29th, 2018 – Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Celebrant: Fr. Wolfgang Felber, SJ

Readings (Missal no. 902): 2 Kings 4:42-44 • Ps 145:10-11, 15-18 • Eph 4:1-6 • Jn 6:1-15

“Come to a quiet place and rest a while”

Today's liturgy speaks in the first place about good and bad leadership, or in biblical language, about good and bad shepherds. In the first reading the prophet Isais accuses the leaders of Israel to be corrupt and not to care for their common good. Jesus saw the people of his time as sheep without a shepherd. Their religious and political leaders did not give them vision and orientation nor did they care about the misery of the masses of people who were landless, jobless and overburdened by many taxes. If we would make a list of the leaders of nations today, of those who are narcissistic and self-obsessed, those who ruin their countries to stay in power at all cost, those who oppress and enslave their own people... the list would be much longer than that of leaders who have a true concern for the common good.

Jesus is a leader who gives people a new vision of hope and is concerned about the poor and the sick. He also shows one important quality of a good leader: he is concerned about the well-being of his team and knows when they need a break.

The apostles had just come back for a missionary journey which could have lasted days, maybe weeks. They were not allowed to take any provisions nor any money with them, trusting only in God's providence. Maybe they were at times hungry and thirsty. They came back happy about the success of their work, but also exhausted. Jesus sees it and gives them a day off: "to be all by themselves in a quiet place and rest".

We all need regular rest because we are not robots. We need to strike a balance between work and rest, stress and relaxation. God gives us a good example in the creation story. God works hard for six days, but then rests on the Sabbath. Not because God needs rest, but to show us that we need a rhythm of work and rest.

For some this can be hard to realise, like for parents who try to reconcile the increasing demands at the workplace and the needs of their children or all those who care at home for a sick parent or a partner. We can also be caught in so many hectic activities that we lose the capacity to relax and rest until our bodies go on strike and we get sick or suffer from depression or burnout.

We do need to be sometimes "by ourselves in a quiet place". Couples and friends need to have sometimes time to be by themselves, otherwise they risk to become alienated from each other and their friendship begins to evaporate.

Even when we do not manage to take a complete day off, we all can do one thing: take some time at the end of each day to slow down, feed our soul with a biblical or poetical text, let the day's events pass once more before our eyes and give thanks for all we have received and ask pardon where we failed, or simply be silent and come home to ourselves. Jesus went every night to a lonely place to pray. Let us try and do the same the way we can.

Fr. Wolfgang Schonecke, MAfr

August 5th 10:00 a.m.: Mass: Celebrant Fr. Dominic White, OP

Lector: NN • Eucharistic Ministers: Beate Hausmann, Thomas Schmidt, Heide Doblhofer •
Greeter: Buck Chisolm • Altar Servers: Konrad Giersdorf, Buck Chisolm • Hospitality: NN •
Designated collection: All Saints

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