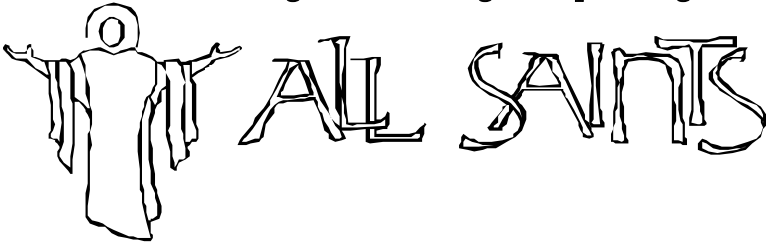


Serving Berlin's English-speaking Catholic Community since 1957



Catholic Community

Member of the English-Speaking Mission

Youth Mass: 1st Friday 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

September 15th, 2019, Twenty- Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Readings (Missal no. 924) Exo 32:7-11, 13-14 • Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 17, 19 • 1Tim 1:12-17 • Luke 15:1-32

Welcome to our 10:00 am Mass at All Saints. Our Celebrant today is Fr. Wolfgang Felber, SJ

- Lector: Justine Pédussel • Eucharistic Ministers: Beate Hausmann, Thomas Schmidt, Heide Doblhofer • Greeter: NN • Altar Servers: Konrad Giersdorf, Oshin Michael • Hospitality: NN • Designated collection: All Saints

Christian decision making has to do with discerning what Jesus would recommend us to do

One of the shortest books in the Christian Scriptures is the one with the biggest influence. Paul's **letter to Philemon** isn't long enough to have chapters, yet its message has challenged Christians for almost 2,000 years. The Apostle was faced with a unique problem when he dictated these few lines and mailed them to his old friend Philemon, a problem with which none of us today hopefully will ever have to deal: a runaway slave.

Onesimus, Philemon's slave, had not only escaped from his master's house after destroying some of his property, but eventually he ran to Paul, expecting the Apostle to protect him. Does Paul keep him or return him? The problem becomes even more complicated when Onesimus converts to Christianity and Paul baptizes him.

Obviously, at that time, our Christian faith had not yet evolved to the point where slavery, as such, would be unconditionally prohibited. And we have to admit it: that wouldn't happen for about another 18 hundred years! That's why it's important to note the principles Paul employs to come to a conclusion. Paul couldn't just check the latest papal documents or look up some decrees of a council. He didn't even have a catechism to flip through to find the answer.

It's clear that he basically agrees with the **Wisdom** author that our first moral principle is always to do "*what Yahweh intends.*" But as we hear in today's reading from the book of wisdom, at times that's hard to do: "*Rarely do we guess the things on earth ...*," the author reflects, "*but when things are in heaven, who can search them out?*" So, we do not even understand what happens on earth, how should we know what happens in heaven? For our author, certainty in decisions can come only from Yahweh's holy spirit. Without that force in our daily lives, we have no orientation. And the author of the book of wisdom says: "*You send your holy spirit from on high – and thus the paths of those on earth are mad straight.*" (Wisdom 9,17f).

Perhaps the first principle **Paul** operates from is the belief of Jesus – and of modern moral theologians that *whatever we do, we do freely*. Things done from force or fear don't count toward our eternal salvation. As difficult as it might be to achieve such freedom, the Apostle Paul expects both Philemon and Onesimus to have no force, no violence, or fear in whatever they do. That means the apostle first respectfully asks Philemon to free Onesimus and permit him to help Paul. But on the other hand, Paul also expects Onesimus to freely return to his former owner Philemon and permit himself to again be in the power of Philemon before he asks for his release.

In each case, Philemon could freely say, "*No!*" just as Onesimus could freely say, "*I'm not going back!*" Since this letter is in our biblical canon, we presume both said yes. But there's no way to definitively prove that. It's an essential part of carrying our cross that we create situations in which people are free to do the unpredictable. With such a commitment to freedom it was only a matter of time, a matter of a *long* time before slavery would be condemned by the church.

So according to his theology, Onesimus is just as much a free person as Philemon, and Philemon is just as much a slave as Onesimus. We are all one. Perhaps one of the reasons we are more comfortable in just following rules and regulations instead of making decisions based on Christian principles is that there's much less personal getting your fingers dirty in *following rules and regulations*. You always have an excuse. Because someone else already made the decision for us – so we can wash our hands in innocence.

Christian decision making always has to do with the wish to follow the spirit of God – by discerning what God would like us to do, by discerning what Jesus would recommend us to do.

Cf. Roger Vermalen Karban <http://fosilonline.com>

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 8th: 83

Collection: All Saints: €99.92 Media Sunday: €30.25



Fall BBQ Potluck

Please join us for our annual All Saints Community Fall BBQ Potluck on Sunday, September 22nd after Mass.

Hamburgers, grilled meat and drinks will be provided. Please bring a hearty side dish, salad or dessert to share.



Teens would you like to join our Youth Group who meet for the 1st Friday Mass of each month?

Then talk to Justine Pédussel or leave your name in the office and we will pass your information along.

About Mass at All Saints!

"The *All Saints Catholic Community* takes great pride that our congregation comes from all over the world. This brings to us a multitude of views and also introduces us to liturgical practices from different traditions with distinct customs.

One such custom may raise the question: "Should I stand, kneel or even sit during the Eucharistic prayer (the consecration of bread and wine) during the service at All Saints?"

The answer is: "Do whatever you are **most comfortable** with, determined by what you have done in the tradition or parish in which you grew up."

We hope this helps you to participate in our celebration the way you are used to.



Dirk Verheijen whom we all know from his "internship" with the English-speaking mission will be ordained DEACON on Saturday Sept 28th at 10:00 a.m.

The service will take place in St Joseph, Müllerstraße 161, 13353 Berlin-Wedding (U-Bahn 9 / Leopold-Platz).

After the service, there will be a reception in the hall and in the court behind the church.



Did you know that All Saints is run entirely by volunteers?

We pride ourselves that we are a self-supporting parish, but, new-helping hands are always appreciated! Please consider joining one of the volunteer groups that make the community work.

Would you like to help with the offering and acting as an usher during Mass? Are you 16 years or older and think being a Lector is your cup of tea? Altar Servers are always welcomed! The choir is always looking for more members too! Finally, hosting the hospitality hour is a great way for your family to contribute together!

If you are interested, you can fill in a form located outside the office. We will be in touch to give you additional details and help you join in our volunteer efforts.

September 22nd, 10 am Mass at All Saints. Our Celebrant today is Fr. Wolfgang Felber, SJ

• Lector: Eddie McGreal • Eucharistic Ministers: Thomas Schmidt, Heide Doblhofer, Jennifer Evans • Greeter: NN • Altar Servers: Konrad Giersdorf, Oshin Michael •

Hospitality: NN • Designated collection: Caritas •

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: GENODED1PAX