



## ***Catholic Community***

**Member of the English-Speaking Mission**

**Youth Mass: 1<sup>st</sup> Friday at TBD in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel**

**Sundays at 10 a.m. in the main Sanctuary**

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Facebook: All Saints Catholic Community Berlin

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

### **February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

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

- Music: Johannes Wrembek, Anna Dziechciarz, Johannes Ploog, Ryan Quiming
- Lector: Eddie McGreal • Greeter: Heide Doblhofer • Altar Servers: Michael Oshin •
- Designated collection: All Saints •

#### **First Reading (Jb 7:1-4, 6-7)**

Job spoke, saying: Is not man's life on earth a drudgery? Are not his days those of hirelings? He is a slave who longs for the shade, a hireling who waits for his wages. So, I have been assigned months of misery, and troubled nights have been allotted to me. If in bed I say, "When shall I arise?" then the night drags on; I am filled with restlessness until the dawn. My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle; they come to an end without hope. Remember that my life is like the wind; I shall not see happiness again.

#### **Second Reading (1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23)**

Brothers and sisters: If I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it! If I do so willingly, I have a recompense, but if unwillingly, then I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What then is my recompense? That, when I preach, I offer the gospel free of charge so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.

Although I am free in regard to all, I have made myself a slave to all so as to win over as many as possible. To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some. All this I do for the sake of the gospel, so that I too may have a share in it.

#### **Gospel (Mk 1:29-39)**

On leaving the synagogue Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her and she waited on them.

When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him.

Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed. Simon and those who were with him pursued him and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you." He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come." So, he went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

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## Homily on 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

Sunday, January 31, 2021

In the second reading St. Paul says a few things that make us feel uncomfortable today, not because of mistaken thoughts of ours, nor because Paul's remarks lack sense and truthfulness. Our discomfort flows from the failure to see the questions that Paul is treating here. As always in life, unfamiliar with the question one cannot understand the answer correctly.

Paul speaks about the unmarried and those in marriage, in his time, not today in our society and with our cultural memory. In his days and in his society, the single person counted as an oddity. There were no models of this sort of life to which one might look up as inspiring examples to imitate. No respectable person lived in this way voluntarily. Now imagine the surprise, when in the Christian community some members choose to refrain from marriage, because Jesus had spoken of those who would abstain from sex *for the sake of the kingdom*, and he had added, "*Whoever is able to grasp it, let him grasp it.*" Those who remained single for the sake of the kingdom made many contemporaries raise their eyebrows; they cause astonishment and appear in the congregation as peculiar persons. People wonder what to make of this kind of life. "Living single for the sake of the Lord Jesus" needs explanation.

Now we begin to see the question Paul is discussing. He seeks to justify the option of some members of the community to remain unmarried. The answer is: They do it **for the Lord**. "*The unmarried person is anxious about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord.*" Is that not also true of the married person? Of course, it is, generally speaking. Yet in their situation they must inevitably attend also to other concerns, for the partner, for the family, for getting on in society. Therefore, Paul speaks of being *divided*. The unmarried can allow themselves to neglect a great deal of these demands of ordinary life. They can afford to be much more radical in their endeavor *for the Lord*. The Corinthian community is baffled by this option; Paul insists, it is an excellent choice to be so completely *for the Lord*. Paul is aware, not everybody will feel the same way, and therefore he adds at once, "*I am telling you this for your own benefit, not to impose a restraint upon you.*"

Today we live in very different social circumstances. The worries of the Corinthian community are no longer ours. We are familiar with monks and nuns – we owe them marvelous achievements in our history and recognize their services in our present setting. We are also familiar with persons who live single, man or woman, and we know a broad range of good reasons and motivations that guide them. Hence, we are not troubled by the particular questions which Paul treats in this letter.

Nevertheless, the reminder *to be for the Lord*, and his word about *adherence to the Lord* does us good, and is surely not superfluous. All of us, married as well as single, are permanently tempted to become *anxious about the things of this world*, in a measure that at the end we live unfocussed and cease *living for the Lord*. Taking that choice would of course be a serious mistake. Amen

Fr. Dietmar Lenfers