



Prayer for Berlin

March, 2009

Good News: Record number of babies in Berlin

The statistical annual book for 2007, which has just been published, contains a small sensation. In 2007 in Berlin, for the first time in decades, there were more births than deaths – exactly 194 more births than deaths! Since World War II only once in the mid-sixties, and once in the eighties in former East Berlin, were there more births than deaths.

Good News: Berlin's Economy is growing

Last year the gross domestic product in Berlin grew by 1.6 percent, which puts Berlin in second place compared with the other states in Germany. The national average was 1.3 percent growth. Berlin's industry, which concentrated on areas with promising futures such as health, renewable energy or electro technology, grew considerably.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for the increase in births and the good economical development**
- **Pray that Berlin's economy will be able to sustain its position during these difficult times**

Young teachers are leaving Berlin

Not all teacher vacancies in Berlin schools can be filled with qualified personnel. The situation is intensified by the fact that many young, committed teachers are leaving Berlin, because the pay is higher in other states, and they can also receive tenure quicker.

The beginning of February, more than one hundred young teachers working in Berlin's schools applied for a leave of absence to apply for jobs in other states. Within two weeks, the Senate made a decision to raise the pay of new teachers by 1,200 € This puts Berlin at the top

of the pay scale, but other states still give tenure earlier. Thus teachers there are in a better position. There is a national competition for new teachers, which is reflected in aggressive advertising campaigns. In order to stop this enticement, a standardized nation-wide pay scale must be adopted, but whether the states are willing to do this is questionable.

Prayer:

- **Pray that teachers sense a clear call to stay in Berlin and are committed to Berlin's school system**
- **Pray that the pay raise is sufficient to keep young teachers in Berlin**
- **Pray for the entire situation in Berlin's schools and for the strengthening of the existing personnel**

Hospitals in Berlin

Berlin has approximately 70 hospitals and 17,500 doctors. For many years in Berlin, as is the case elsewhere, there has been a cut-back in the number of hospital beds, and patients are staying in the hospital for shorter periods of time in order to reduce costs. Many hospitals have been privatized. The pressure on doctors and nursing staff is continually increasing. Because of the overload, nursing staff often cannot even take a break and are often on the edge of complete exhaustion.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for all who work in health-related professions**
- **Pray for protection and effective measures to prevent exhaustion and burn-out**
- **Pray for discernment about how hospital operations can be re-organized to lessen the pressure on personnel**

New Senator of Finance

It is now official: Senator of Finance Thilo Sarrazin is switching to the Federal Bank. Thus the Berlin state political scene is losing one of its distinguished politicians. With an aggressive austerity policy, Mr. Sarrazin has rehabilitated Berlin's ailing budget in the last six years and has made the city more functional for the future in terms of finances. His successor is Dr. Ulrich Nussbaum. The 51-year attorney and businessman in Bremer-

haven served four years as the Senator of Finance in Bermerhaven. In view of the remaining debt and the current financial crisis, Dr. Nussbaum is facing huge challenges

Prayer

- **Thank God for the good work of Thilo Sarrazin and for his personal dedication**
- **Pray for God's blessing in his personal and professional life**
- **Pray for wisdom for his successor so that he can continue to follow the good course in view of the financial challenges**

ProReli-Vote in April

The Governing Mayor has decided not to place the vote concerning the popular referendum »ProReli« on the ballot along with the EU elections on June 6th. Instead, the voting will take place on April 26th. As a result, it will cost the tax-payers 1.4 million Euros more. This has led to massive criticism on the part of the opposition, churches and the union of tax-payers. Evidently this decision was made in the hopes that a separate voting would hinder the success of the referendum which desires to see religion re-instated as an elective on equal ground with ethics in the schools.

Prayer:

- **Pray that many will vote in the referendum**
- **Pray that more people desiring to vote for »ProReli« can be found in the coming weeks**
- **Pray that this early voting will prove to be an advantage in the end**

Keeping On: Good political masterminds

In recent months, the Governing Mayor has attracted attention for “going it alone”, which has surprised even his own party. For instance, he granted a ten-year contract for the usage of all hangars of the Tempelhof Airport to the fashion tradeshow »Bread and Butter«, thus greatly hindering all other usages that had been proposed in a public contest for ideas. The Senator for City Development was presented with the fait accompli. A leading poli-

tician does need freedom of design, but nevertheless, he should adhere to the “rules” of political action. Berlin needs – among all political parties – people who are not thinking primarily of themselves, but rather who think through and devise processes for the good of the city.

Prayer:

- **Pray that politicians devise creative, but also democratic processes**
- **Pray for masterminds in all parties who develop good solutions and perspectives for the future of the city**
- **Pray that good political talents will be discovered and cultivated at the local level**

NEW: Brochure: »Gebet für Politik. Impulse, Menschen in Verantwortung zu stärken« (Prayer for Politics), 2 Euros (German only): www.down-to-earth.de

Preparation for May 1st

Once again this year, there will be a worship service at the »Myfest« in Kreuzberg. Preparations are now beginning. Once again, a tent for blessing and healing prayer is planned. Training for this will take place in April (see Information by Dates). Local politicians are looking for solutions for dealing with the huge drug problem in the area surrounding the Kottbusser Tor. Residents in the area are being adversely affected by conditions which they are no longer willing to accept.

Because of complaints, a nearby five-year old help centre for drug users is being closed. For the past year, a Teen Challenge Café has been operating in the area. It is well-frequented by drug addicts. Conversations about God and prayer for people in need are possible there.

Prayer:

- **Pray for the preparations and a peaceful May 1st**
- **Pray for solutions for dealing with the drug scene**

Dates:

- **Training day for May 1st:** April 25, 3-6pm
Topics: praying outside on the streets, blessing and healing prayer, prophetic prayer
- **May 1st, around 11am Open-Air-Worship service Kreuzberg**