



Prayer for Berlin

July/August 2011

an unemployment rate of 13.3% 12.8% of Berlin's residents are drawing unemployment benefits, and the number of criminal offences, 14,000 per 100,000 residents, is nearly twice the national average. (Source: Wirtschaftswoche)

Good News: One Spirit Camp

For the fifth year in a row on Ascension Day, "One Spirit Camp" was held, followed by a two-day Youth Camp. People from nearby, as well as from Essen, Hamburg, the Ruhr Basin, and Stuttgart, came together to celebrate. For the first time, 120 Berliners originally from Africa, Iran, India, and other nations as well as some native Germans took a bus trip together to Spangenberg. Heaven's Rock (Himmelsberg), is a mountain in northern Hesse for people from all nations where boundaries are overcome, and unity in diversity is lived and celebrated. It is not about one church, denomination, culture, language or skin colour, but rather faith in Jesus Christ and the joy of sharing the journey together. Praise and time for sharing with one another were the main emphasis during the day. All participants agreed-- This must definitely be repeated again next year--with even more participants from Berlin!

Prayer:

- **Thank God for this step towards more intercultural unity among Christians**
- **Pray for mutual appreciation and enrichment between Christians of German and non-German descent**
- **Pray for positive impact for the integration debate**

Good News: Berlin is gaining

According to a study done by the Initiative for Market Economy, Brandenburg and Berlin are developing faster than the rest of Germany. The number of gainfully employed persons in Berlin grew from 2007 to 2010 by 5.1% (national growth was only 1.9%). During the same time period, the gross domestic product of Germany declined by 0.3%, but grew in Berlin by 6%. In Berlin, the export grew quota by 13.4%, but nationally by only 1.2%. These are positive tendencies that lead to hope. Behind these dry numbers lie the stories of hundreds of people who have found work during this time period. Nevertheless, Berlin still has

Prayer:

- **Thank God for the positive development which has resulted in a higher quality of life for many**
- **Pray that new jobs will be created and that unemployment will soon be under 10%**
- **Pray for a reduction in crime and that criminal cases will quickly be solved**

Berlin: City of Ideas

Berlin is the capital city of creative people. People here have many humorous, fresh ideas, for instance wooden cubes, so-called scubes, which, when set up in public swimming pools, can be used as places to stay overnight, which would allow the double use of already existing sanitary facilities. For the city, such ideas during economically rough times mean an additional source of income. The first 40 overnight cubes for Berliners and guests had been produced and were to be set up in June in the Prinzenbad, but just days before the swimming pool was opened, the Department of Parks and Gardens denied approval, because the usage of the cubes for overnight stays collides with the ordinances of the Department of Parks and Gardens. This was a harsh blow for the young entrepreneurs. This is just one example among many which shows the conflicts between innovative companies and a bureaucracy which is not very flexible. www.scube-parks.de

Prayer:

- **Pray for a good solution for the businessmen who developed the scubes**
- **Pray for effective, non-bureaucratic processes which would allow quick implementation of ideas**

The Pope is visiting Berlin

The first stop during the Pope's planned visit to Germany is Berlin on September 22. Pope Benedict XVI has accepted an invitation of the President of Germany. On September 22, he will speak to Parliament and celebrate Mass in the Olympic Stadium. The original plan to have the Mass in front of the Charlottenburg Palace had to be changed, because over 50,000 people had already registered to attend.

Following Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI is the second Pope to be a guest at the Olympic Stadium. In 1952, 1958, 1980, and 1990 large Catholic Conventions were held in the stadium.

320,000 Catholics live in Berlin. Every fifth one of these people is from non-German backgrounds. Although Berlin's officials are calling the Pope's visit to Berlin an important event, considerable opposition is growing among the leadership of the lesbian and gay association. Members of the opposition committee include the union Ver.di, atheist associations, pro familia, and various Queer-groups. To date, 30 groups have joined the opposition committee. They are planning a large demonstration against the "anti-personhood gender and sexual politics" of the Pope. In a resolution, the Pope is considered one of the «most responsible in the world for the oppression of lesbians, gays and transgender people». For this reason, "Kiss-Ins" and other activities geared toward asserting homosexuality are being planned by gay and lesbian couples.

Prayer:

- **Pray that protesting groups will not be able to drown out the message that the Pope intends to bring**
- **Pray for blessing and spiritual strength for Catholics in our city**
- **Pray that the Pope's visit will set a positive signal for the gospel going out into the city**

School Holidays and Tourists

School holidays began in Berlin the end of June. Many others will be taking a vacation, but because of the high percentage of low-wage workers in Berlin, vacation outside the city is for many an illusion. This is especially true for large families. Although there are many free activities being offered for children and youth, many are still left to themselves and as a result are susceptible to negative influences

In the summer, there are also an increased number of tourists in Berlin. The city is more attractive than ever. This is good news, especially from an economic standpoint. However the city is not always friendly to guests. In June, the media discussed a phenomenon which has developed in the Wrangel district of Kreuzberg. Some long-time residents were tired of the many tourists. Some with alternative life-styles no longer wished to be a tourist attraction for visitors from all over the world, so stickers appeared on many loca-

tions which said, «Berlin does not like you». What on first sight appeared to be a funny campaign has a serious background—some streets were not quiet until nearly dawn. Residents feel there is not enough quiet during the night hours and no longer feel comfortable at home.

Prayer:

- **Pray for protection for children and youth during school holidays**
- **Pray for constructive compromises which protect the rights and interests of both tourists and residents**
- **Pray that the many visitors will find Berlin fascinating and friendly**

Keeping On: Arson Attacks and Assaults

During the past weeks there have once again been an increasing number of arson attacks on cars during the night. In addition, right-wing extremists have assaulted left-wing extremists and vice-versa. Let us continue to pray for the prevention, solving and hindrance of arson attacks and that extremists will comprehend that peaceful means can be helpful.

Dates:

- **Jews for Jesus until July 16:** Street activities designed to proclaim Jesus as the Messiah to both Jews and non-Jews.
- Weekly Prayer for the elections in Berlin every Wednesday at 6pm, **alternating between the Rote Rathaus (RR), meeting point on the corner of Spandauer Straße/Rathausstraße on the Rathaus side, and the Abgeordnetenhaus (AH), meeting point on the corner of Niederkirchnerstraße/Stresemannstraße Direction of Potsdamer Platz. Every Wednesday 6-7pm:** July 6.(AH); July 13 (RR); July 20 (AH); July 27 (RR); August 3 (AH); August 10 (RR); August 17 (AH); August 24 (RR); August 31 (AH)
- **Pop-Oratorium The 10 Commandments, August 28, 2011, 6pm Kindl-Bühne in der Wuhlheide:** Following the premiere in Dortmund with 2,500 participants and the performance at the Protestant Church Convention in Dresden, the Pop-Oratorium from Michael Kunze and Dieter Falk is coming in August to Berlin. Hundreds of singers from Berlin will accompany the prominent soloists. Further details and information can be found at: www.die10gebote2011.de