



114th edition - May 2013

Good News: Nazi Bar closed

Near the Brückenstraße in Berlin's district Niederschöneweide there are various right-wing establishments. Many Neo-Nazi's also live there. Recently, without previous notice, the owner cancelled the rental contract of the well-known right-wing meeting place "Zum Henker". According to the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, the bar was a gathering point for right-wing extremists in Berlin.

In the past, the district council had repeatedly asked the owner to close it down-- a bar where guests who just happen to come by are greeted with a Hitler greeting cannot be tolerated.

In addition, there had been regular criminal proceedings against the owner and guests. The closing is a step in the right direction. However, Schöneweide still continues to be a gathering point for right-wing extremists. (Source: Berliner Zeitung)

Prayer:

- **On May 1st at noon, there is a Neo-Nazi demonstration taking place right there. Christians are taking part in anti-demonstrations and will be praying.**

Good News: Berliner is President of National Chamber of Commerce

Eric Schweitzer, 47 years old, Director of the Berlin Waste Management Company Alba, was elected President of the National Chamber of Commerce (DIHK). The Chamber of Commerce (IHK) is one of the most important lobbies of German industry. 3.6 million member companies from small kiosk owners to large automobile manufacturers are represented by the IHK.

The successful Berliner entrepreneur Eric Schweitzer, who will receive no salary, will now represent German industry to the federal government, the states, the political parties, and the public.

There is no higher such position in Germany. The fact that a Berliner is taking over such a high position in this significant trade association indicates that Berlin is increasing in importance as an industrial location.

Prayer:

- **that Eric Schweitzer will think about the common welfare of all in his representation of interests**

- **for good cooperation between politics and business which will result in a growing number of jobs**

Catholic Church Structure Reform

Archbishop Rainer Maria Woelki is confronted with a huge challenge. Because of demographic change, a radical structural change in the churches in Berlin, Brandenburg, and Vorpommern must take place. This should happen by decree from above, but rather through the active participation of church members. The Archdiocese Berlin is the second-largest diocese in Germany in terms of land-area. 317,000 of the 396,000 Catholics in the entire diocese live in Berlin (54,000 in the eastern part of the city, 263,000 in the western part). Currently there are 105 parishes. By 2020 there will be only 30. How can the church survive in the secular society in Berlin, where by far the most Catholics live? How can reform stimulate growth without destroying the church? These and other questions must be answered by 2020. (Source: Berliner Zeitung)

Prayer:

- **Pray that the churches can develop models which can positively influence and change the city**
- **Pray that the pressure to save money can be viewed as a chance for inner spiritual renewal**
- **Pray for wisdom and strength for Markus Weber, who has been commissioned to begin and accomplish the structure reform**

Rent Limits

In September, 2012, the Senate, together with the six municipal housing societies, agreed upon an alliance for affordable rent in Berlin. Since then, lively discussions have taken place, resulting in various suggestions--How can the high rise in rent (compared to a relatively previous low rate) be limited in newly developed rental properties so that they remain affordable even for low-income tenants?

Michael Müller (SPD), the Senator for City Development, suggests a "revolving fund" to stimulate the building of new rental properties. According to first calculations, approximately 60 million Euros could be funded annually through the budget, so that nearly 1000 flats could be built yearly. This money would be provided free of interest to property developers, who

must pay it back within about 20 years. The returned appropriation would then be used to subsidize further building of new flats.

The coalition partner CDU does not want to focus on governmental responsibility and municipal housing support alone. According to an introductory proposal made by the CDU in April, they also want to encourage investments by private construction companies. For instance, public housing societies could create 30,000 flats. The construction of an additional 30,000 flats by private companies could be financed through trust funds.

Rent control for lower-income tenants in 10,000 flats would be secured through the purchase of the rights of occupation. According to the concept of the CDU, an additional 6,500 flats could be financed through family loans. (Source: Der Tagesspiegel)

With a yearly population growth of approximately 7%, these are existential questions for the social peace of the city.

Prayer:

- **Pray for a quick agreement about effective measures to limit the rents of new flats**
- **Pray for a socially compatible relationship between investment incentives in the construction of flats and affordable rents for low-income tenants**
- **Pray that construction of new flats can be begin soon**

Sorting out Wowereit's Successor

The poll ratings of the SPD are going down since the airport debacle and are now below the election results of 2011, which at 28.3% was not particularly strong. The CDU is now clearly ahead of the SPD in public polls.

Klaus Wowereit has landed on the last place on the popularity scale of politicians. Actually it has become clear that he can no longer be the front-runner candidate for the SPD in the next election, which is planned for 2016.

His loss of image is now so great that it is rumored that successors in the SPD are getting ready behind the scene. It is expected that the debate in the Berlin SPD about Wowereit's successor will become public after national elections. It's high time to pray!

Prayer:

- **Pray that the person who is suitable to succeed from God's perspective will emerge and be identified**
- **Pray that more and more men and women who follow God's standards will get the chance to advance in politics and will embrace that chance**

- **Pray for a fair transition of power within the SPD and that Mr. Wowereit can leave office at the right time**

"Culture strengthens"--in Berlin too

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has begun an initiative for educationally disadvantaged children and youth. Extracurricular activities in the area of cultural education will support the development of these children and youth by letting them try out new forms of expression through an encounter with art and culture.

In the fall of 2012 the first selections were made. Of the 163 applications, 35 federal associations and initiatives from the cultural landscape of Germany were selected. Over the next five years they will receive development funds for cooperation projects within the framework of the "Alliances for Education--Culture strengthens".

During the next step, locals (associations, libraries, kindergartens, choirs, theatre groups, etc.) will suggest specific projects which will be implemented and financed under the umbrella of the 35 federal associations. Currently applications are being made for the local partners.

In Berlin there is a huge potential for opportunities because of its educational imbalance and deprivation (www.buendnisse-fuer-bildung.de)

Prayer:

- **Pray that those Berlin initiatives will apply and be selected which will produce fruit**
- **Pray for good cooperation, sincere motivation, and commitment to Berlin's children**

Keeping On: Danger of Terrorism

The international danger of terrorism has come back into focus since presumed radical Muslims committed the bombings in Boston.

Let us continue to pray that God will protect Berlin, especially the transportation sector, government buildings, Jewish institutions, and wherever crowds gather.

Dates

April 30, 8pm to May 1, midnight: Non-stop praise by BURN in the **Gebetskeller on Kottbusser Tor** (Adalbertstr. 97 in the arcade behind Rossmann); Entrance on the hour. **Blocks of intercessory prayer for peace** on May 1st, 10-12am, 2-4 pm, 6-8pm.