

June 2012

### Prayer and evangelism

Easter Monday. A national prayer conference. The main theme: *Prayer and Evangelism*. An unusual combination: but prayer and evangelism go together like a spear head and a spear shaft. The metal spear head alone could be a hand weapon, the shaft is only a big stick. But with the head fixed on the shaft we have a weapon that in God's hands can achieve breakthroughs.

How do we bring the two together in practice? How in our personal lives?

At the end of the conference someone handed me a small note. It said: "The church in Germany faces a huge mountain. God does not want us to climb over it. He wants us to ask him to split the mountain so that we can walk through it. As I was asking God: What is the name of this mountain? , these big letters appeared: '**Fear of Man**'. So – speak to your mountain! -OS-

### Christians in politics

It is such a blessing for a country when Christians actively engage in politics! They do this not only in the already established political parties but also in various small ways, consciously taking a Christian position. Christians are needed in local communities as well as at the state and national level, in the front line and behind the scenes. Anyone who gets involved as a Christian in a political party immediately knows why. In the program of almost every party you can find policies which broadly speaking are in accordance with Biblical principles – but never entirely! Therefore Christians often find themselves under tremendous stress with pressure from the "party whip". We need young people who are being called by God to work in politics. And those people who are already there need our covering in prayer.

Prayer:

- **Thank God for the Christians in politics. Pray for young Christians to hear God's calling. (Nehemiah 1 v.11. Daniel 1 v.17-21.)**
- **Pray for health, wisdom and courage to "take a stand" when needed. (Daniel 3 v.16-18.)**
- **Pray for protection of spirit, body and soul. (1 Thessalonians 5 v.23-24.)** -OS-

### European Stability Mechanism (ESM)

The "Fiscal Stability Treaty" (see May prayer letter) had the historic task of bringing to an end the (unlimited) borrowing within the budgeting policies of EU member states and achieving national budgets with no increase in debt ("austerity"). The ESM, on the other hand, has the task to support financially those EU states, especially those in the Euro zone, which face bankruptcy. These two can only succeed together, one with the other. So far *all* Euro countries have paid into a long-term emergency fund ("protective shield") according to an assessment scale. As the largest national economy, Germany of course paid the

most, but all must pay something – even though their economies are not booming like the German economy. Since the debts of the southern European states and Ireland were higher than expected, already two "protective shields" were needed, but even these were not sufficient, and it was decided in June 2011 to implement a long-term "stability mechanism". As well as having to deal with astronomical amounts of money, the ESM must now be set up in such a way that it can operate independently and can itself take all the necessary decisions for financial stability. As in the EU Commission, each EU state has one representative (commissioner), so each country sends its finance minister to form the ESM governing council. This group must agree unanimously on how much assistance a country can get and under what conditions. The EU is for all practical purposes creating a "Financial Authority" that raises, administers, controls and pays out money from the EU states. This revised ESM mandate has to be approved by vote in both in the German National Parliament and States Council in Berlin on June 16<sup>th</sup>. Critics see several risks in the proposals:

- How will the work of the ESM governing council be monitored?
- When approved credit has to be paid out, won't the state budgets lose all credibility?
- The German constitutional court does not allow any interference in the right of the German parliament to set its budget.
- European treaties up until now have stipulated that no member state should be required to help another out of financial difficulties ("no bail-outs").

Prayer:

- **Thanks for the growing cooperation within Europe during the financial crisis. (Jeremiah 29 v.11.) Pray that current flaws in the ESM will be recognised and corrected.**
- **Pray for the countries which are most at risk, that they can solve the problems in their economies so that they can service their loans and bonds.**
- **Wisdom for politicians in agreeing upon the most effective measures and that their citizens will gain trust and show favour for Europe-wide solutions. (Jeremiah 29 v.7.)** -OS-

### Paths of Reconciliation with China

The Christian initiative "Paths of Reconciliation" has been working since 2005 to come to terms with a dark chapter in western colonial history with regard to China. What is this all about?

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, English businessmen began with great success to smuggle opium into China and to sell it illegally. In view of the huge health and economic damage to its population, China with every right confiscated and destroyed one of the British illegal opium depots. Britain declared war, forced China to capitulate using its warships

and demanded compensation. Among other things they compelled China to legalise the opium trade, to surrender Hong Kong to Britain and to allow the setting up of trading companies in many port cities virtually tax free. France, Japan, Italy, America, Germany and others later joined in the game to exploit China. In the end it came to the war against the "Boxers" under the leadership of a German field-marshal.

The humiliation suffered in this period of history is still deep in memories of the Chinese and unconsciously feeds a mistrust between our two nations.

The "Paths of Reconciliation" initiative is currently bringing together a delegation of people from political, aristocratic, academic, social, military as well as church backgrounds from the western nations that were involved. They will express their deepest regrets over what happened in the past. The project still has many challenges to face in China and needs our prayers.

**Prayer:**

- **For the winning over of the right Chinese leaders and for an official acceptance by the Chinese government.**
- **For wisdom during the complex and culturally sensitive preparations for the trip to China and for the formation of the delegation.**
- **For provision of the necessary finances.**

-Gaetan Roy/RS-

**Internet prayer campaign by "ProChrist"**

"Your request to God" – is the name of the new, very different, ProChrist evangelistic campaign. From December 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 until March 10<sup>th</sup> 2013, ProChrist messages will be blended into displays on popular Internet Websites (such as gmx.de and web.de) to encourage users to make a personal request to God. The process begins with an invitation to the user to make a prayer request with the question: "What would you like to ask God?" The user will then be shown a list of people from which he or she can select a personal intercessor.

You could be one of these intercessors!

ProChrist is looking for intercessors who are willing to bring these requests before God in prayer. This is primarily about sharing sincerely in the lives of people that you do not know by showing them your genuine concern and that you value their prayer request. The one who prays for the user's request then sends a short email to share a response to the prayer request. The process allows the intercessor and requester to remain anonymous. In the autumn, online training will be offered to all interested intercessors and to answer any questions. We, as the Call of the Watchman prayer network, want to help make this one-time prayer campaign successful and ask you to consider becoming involved as an intercessor.

Further information and registration at:

<http://gebetsaktion.prochrist.org> .

**Prayer:**

- **That many Christians will be called to be intercessors. (1 Peter 3 v.12.)**

- **Thanks for the campaign and blessings on all preparation activities.**
- **That there will be spectacular answers to many prayers. (James 5 v.16.)**

-RS-

**Israel and Germany**

In May Benjamin Netanyahu was forced to form a new coalition government as the old one fell apart over the question of whether ultra-orthodox men could continue to be exempt from obligatory IDF service. The highest court in Israel had ruled that this exemption was no longer possible according to the law. However a law to make IDF service obligatory for all men could not be passed with the religious coalition partners in the existing government. The new coalition will bring political stability. The support of Israel by Germany through the governing CDU-FDP coalition continues to waver. While Angela Merkel does not want to position herself against Israel on important issues despite all the criticism of the Israeli Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister Westerwelle is doing all he can to reach out to the Palestinians. Westerwelle has upgraded the status of the Palestinian representation in Berlin to a "diplomatic mission" without previous consultation with the Chancellor's office. This is one level below an embassy.

From a spiritual point of view, it is remarkable that in this year of 2012 the Biblical feasts of Passover, Shavuot and Succoth fall on the same dates as the Christian church celebrations of Easter, Pentecost and Harvest Festival. While tensions are growing externally, God is bringing us together spiritually. (Ephesians 2 v.11-22.)

**Prayer:**

- **Protection for Israel and its political leadership. (Psalm 122 v.6-9, Psalm 129.)**
- **For unity within the German government, that the will of God will be discerned and implemented in the positive support of Israel.**
- **That the one new man of Jew and Christian will become increasingly a reality such that reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis will also occur. (Ephesians 2 v.11-22.)**

-RS-

**Keep praying**

The prayer walk "Gemeinsam Beten und Bewegen" (pray and move together) continues in June through Hamm, Hanover, Magdeburg, Berlin and on to Wittenberg. Video reports are being posted daily on [www.betenbewegen.de](http://www.betenbewegen.de). Pray for protection, good weather, health and spiritual sensitivity and awareness for all who are taking part.

**Other events for prayer**

- 02.06** Global Outreach Day – Christians world-wide seeking contact with "not yet" believers.
- 09.06** Opens Doors Day in Kassel.
- 16.- 24.06** Evangelistic outreach at "Kiel Week" (Large sailing regatta and festival in north Germany).

*May God bless you - Ortwin Schweitzer,  
Rosemarie Stresemann and Markus Egli*