



SIEBENQUELL

**»That Shalom does not remain an
empty word«
Peace be with you**



Happy Easter! Do we still say that a good week after Easter? But isn't it wonderful that Easter can gradually unfold? We have time to allow the joy of Easter to grow within us.

Don't we also need the stories of what happens afterwards?

I often ask myself how quickly resurrection stories can unfold in me, how quickly can I realise what happened. If we look at the biblical stories, we learn how traumatised, frightened and anxious Jesus' friends were after his cruel death. Even the experiences with the empty tomb and the first encounters with the risen Christ did not immediately lead to overwhelming joy or recognition.

Sometimes I worry about whether we want to dismiss these phases too quickly. We are too quick to brush aside these painful, slowly illuminating steps towards understanding the resurrection.

Don't we know this from our own crises in life? How long does it sometimes take when something has literally pulled the rug out from under our feet before we find our footing and orientation again?

How does resurrection happen in the midst of life? In our lives? What does resurrection mean for us? How can we gradually warm our hearts in order to grow into the joy of the resurrection?

What touches me anew every year are Jesus' first words in the Gospel of John, which he repeats three times in chapter 20: Peace be with you!

We know this greeting of peace well from the liturgy in our church services. We like to wish each other peace. It has become a cherished ritual for me.

But Easter makes me more aware of the depth of these words and they harbour more than just a cherished ritual.

I am nourished by the confidence that this peace is not just an empty word.

That the originality of the word shalom can become more than just a greeting.

Shalom can hardly be summarised in a single concept of modern language. Rather, it is a path to be travelled. It is more than a desire for reconciliation, happiness, contentment, trust and well-being, but all of this is also part of it.

Perhaps shalom is a spiritual force or a great invitation that wants to nourish inner peace so that the interweaving of human brokenness and divine love can be felt, experienced and brought to life. Especially in times of crisis and hopelessness.

Let us consider the life situation into which Jesus speaks his shalom. These are the first words that Jesus speaks to his friends after his resurrection.

How do we hear this shalom today? How needy are we and this world for shalom?

May we take and allow ourselves the time to track down this Easter greeting from Jesus.

»That Shalom does not remain an empty word«

Peace be with you

Into the abysmal fear and inner turmoil

into the closedness of my heart

YOU come

you penetrate walls and closed doors

death comes to us now too

why live now

what to trust in

too much self-inflicted

brought into disorder

all a mistake?

What else can we expect

when the one who filled our expectations with life
has been eradicated?
Into that
YOU come
without reproach, without moralising, without contempt
show your wounds and marks
and fulfil your word
and wish us
that we live it in our wholeness,
that your resurrection does not let us perish
but from within: gently, carefully, slowly raise us up again
so that Shalom does not remain an empty word:
Peace be with you

Sylvia Ditt

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