



SIEBENQUELL

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# A Sister from Persia

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CHURCH WINDOW BYN EVELYN KÖRBER IN ST. ANNA HOSPITAL IN WANNE EICKEL

Several weeks ago, on the way home in my car, I saw a girl at the side of the road hitch-hiking and instinctively stopped – something I normally never do. She was so grateful, having just come from school and missed her connecting bus, and was glad that she only had to wait in the cold for a few minutes. Above all, she felt under pressure, because – and this surprised me considerably – her two year old daughter was waiting for her in the Kindergarten. I had pegged her as much younger and quickly addressed her more formally. »Where are you from?«, I asked. »We are from Persia«, she answered. »You intentionally say Persia?« In response, she told of everything that her homeland Persia once signified, and of the lack of freedom that existed within Iran for decades. Now she is here with her small family for two years, learns our language and would like to take up her studies again. It is her great yearning to be able to live in freedom in her homeland again at some point. Her lively manner of telling her tale touched me and I told her a little about myself and my grandchildren and thus we drove to the kindergarten on the other side of our town.

»We are Christians«, she professed. Before she got out of the car, she wanted to know what I do for a living. I told her that I had worked as a religion teacher for a long time. »Catholic? – I am one as well.« She smiled radiantly

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and it was difficult to part again so soon. I gave her my address and telephone number and we said our good-byes with a promise to see each other again.

These 15 minutes are among the happiest experiences of my Lent. Over a few kilometers warmth and closeness developed between two women, who were total strangers, and who were in many ways so different. It began with openness and attentive presence on both sides, but it developed a depth and an abiding quality when we recognised each other as sisters in the faith. We were no longer just two people on a journey, but HE was with us. And since then I have felt that what was born in during this brief story of a journey remains alive in me and lures me to new encounters and experiences.

Is it not the way of the paths of faith that they continue to unfold until we come to the place we never anticipated?

On Palm Sunday I saw the young woman during the procession of the Palms, together with her husband and small daughter and kept an eye out for her after the service. »I will call you, ok?«, she said and I held her hand in mine. »I am looking forward to it!«

**Rosemarie Monnerjahn**

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