



SIEBENQUELL

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# Chattering speechless- ness

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Oh, how many words we hear and speak every day! Kind words, friendly words, and repetitive words - the main thing is that it not grow silent! We meet each other and words spring back and forth: sensitivities are exchanged, what we are doing, where we went, where we ate (finally it's possible again), what we saw, where we shopped, what's next. It is appropriate that this is referred to as »small talk« in English – that is all that it is, and sometimes it need not be more.

But what happens when this kind of exchange becomes the norm? If we get so used to it that we consider all these topics to be »life itself«. Then we run the risk of being at a loss for words when confronted with the really big issues of life. Perhaps we feel shock at the distress of a friend, perhaps our heart aches in the face of a great loss. But we cannot put this into words, we have no language for it. Yet, instead of waiting in silence or mourning together or even marveling - whatever moves our heart - we cannot abide the silence and quickly slip back into our everyday chatter - speechless for what really matters.

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But who can live from this chatter? Who is nourished by it? Many, many years ago a young mother asked herself this question and dared to follow her heart and to look for a language for the genuine topics of the heart. She struggled with much external adversity! She was always struggling to look deeper, to discover connections and to reach her language of the heart by listening, reading and being silent. I recall how many people distanced themselves from her because she was too demanding or difficult. But she did not go back to the world of babbling.

Yet, for a long time now, every conversation with her has been a great occasion. Her words are clear, they come from the heart, and they are filled with real life. She fills her inner »pond«, as the Celts described it, with literature, poetry, music, and good conversation, and so she has grown ever richer in words for the great concerns of the heart.

Years ago, the theme of a Hearth fire- Week was »Bringing Great Concerns of the heart into words«. We are unable to do this if we are always on the small talk level. On the contrary, without being aware of it, we make ourselves small and increasingly live beneath our dignity. Instead of alertly and patiently sensing and recognizing what dwells within us and is waiting to be expressed, we live on the outside and become speechless and, in the worst case, insensitive to the great concerns of the heart.

During the Hearth fire- Week we learned from the example of some of the prophets as to what it takes to authentically and audibly express the genuinely essential heartfelt concerns of God and his people. One of them was Jeremiah, and I would like to share a word from him with all of us:

»Thy words were found, and I ate them, and thy words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord, God of hosts.« (Jer 15, 16)

*Rosemarie Monnerjahn*

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