



SIEBENQUELL

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# Words born of Silence

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SOURCE: ROSEMARIE MONNERJAHN 2015

For years there is a phenomenon that exhausts me more and more, which I call the »inflation of words«.

Countless words are »disgorged« – daily, hourly, by the minute! Everything is mentioned, commented on and propagated highly topical. We are informed of shattering events and catastrophes and then there is a »News Special« with many and opinions about them. After that, an emptiness starts to spread, because, in fact, nothing has really been said.

With increasing frequency, it happens that I feel as if someone had »vomited« on me; for example, when I am shaken by the young British Member of Parliament who was massacred. I see her children, her husband, before my eyes and words fail me. Yet, in every newspaper and every news station there follows speculations and considerations as to what this could mean for politics, etc., etc.

Every talk show is an example of how in temperate speech fills our world, without having, in the least, anything meaningful and profound to say.

If we look at our immediate surroundings, often people are doing all the talking in our circles who love to selves, who expound on shallow topics without sensing, that there might be people in the group whom these topics are distressing and even painful. After all, such shallowness can feel like scorn and derision on for people deeply topics, perhaps of great pain or of greatest value.

In a culture of superficiality, we have forgotten that there are no words for the deepest things in life:

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There are no words for the deepest things.  
Words become feeble  
when mystery visits  
and prayer moves  
into silence.  
In post-modern culture  
the ceaseless din of chatter  
has killed our acquaintance with silence.  
Consequently, we are stressed and anxious.  
Silence is a fascinating presence.  
Silence is shy;  
it is patient  
and never draws attention to itself.  
Without the presence of silence,  
no word could ever be said or heard.  
Our thoughts constantly call up new words.  
We become so taken with words that we barely notice the silence,  
but the silence is always there.  
The best words are born in the fecund silence  
that minds the mystery.

– John O'Donohue, *Eternal Echoes*

**Rosemarie Monnerjahn**

*Vallendar, June 22, 2016*