



SIEBENQUELL

Reflection

»The blessing of the father strengthens the roots« (Eccl 3, 9)



SOURCE: WWW.UNSPLASH.COM

Recently I had an encounter that, at first, surprised me, then deeply touched and moved me.

I met a man whom I have known for years as a rather restless, yes, even as an erratic human being; occasionally you could even have called him flighty. Yet, now he stood before me, pausing from his gardening and radiated peace and contentment; he spoke of what was essential, of that, which has grown important to him. In the conversation he commented, that we was not only young when he lost his parents, but that he had also grown up without grandparents. »You know, I then simply slid into life.«

Promptly it dawned on me, how anchorless and rootless he had entered into his life. I remembered how he, as a young man, had sought roots in his wife's family and for several years believed he had found them there. Then he was driven in seesaw fashion, ended up finding his own way of being close to his children and, today, in his mid-sixties, he feels he has

come into his own. The last he radiantly told me, was of the great happiness that his little grandson meant for him, who spent several hours a week with him.

There the circle of our conversation closed: Now he can give and live what he himself so sorely missed in his life – and he gives and receives with great gratitude.

At the beginning of February we encountered two old people in the liturgy of the Church: the aged Simeon, »just and pious«, as well as the wise and very old Hanna. Of them the Gospel of Luke writes, that they were at home in the Temple, in that which is of God, in the ancient words and promises. Simultaneously, they were wide awake for that which they encountered here and now and brought them both together. Thus, they could recognize in the little child Jesus the fulfilment of their own yearning as well as that of their people.

We need such elderly people; people so reconciled that they can open their hearts and hands to the young; people who are deeply rooted and who can, therefore, carry a new generation.

It is worth our while to go to them:

To the Elderly

**To go
to the elderly**

**to the aged
mothers
the fathers
whose innards
root deeply**

**when they rock
their children
on broad knees,
their knowing hearts
sigh,
their prayers open
the thirsty
earth**

**the closed
heavens**

(from: Wilhelm Bruners, »Verabschiede die Nacht« {Bid the Night Farewell})

And, thus, it is worthwhile to grow old.

Rosemarie Monnerjahn

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