



SIEBENQUELL

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# The Gift of the Detour

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While hiking on one of the beautiful dream trails in the Eifel, I recently caught myself making an impressive experience.

After a steep climb, a view opened up over a kind of plateau with large fields and a wide outlook. Paths crossed each other and a first stopover at the highest point was easy to recognize. We drew closer quickly on a solid, direct path. But then sign directed us to the right. It was then that I noticed in myself, that I was inclined to remain on the short path that led directly to the stopover. Why take a detour, when it was clearly recognizable, how we could get to the destination faster? Mildly reluctant I followed the trusted signs – we turned right, then descended slightly to the left and finally ascended again, until we arrived at the heights from behind. When I spotted from there other hikers who had taken the shorter path and had thus overtaken us, I had to smile. I could take that path as well, but then I would be poorer for it: the detour had opened up unexpected wonderful viewpoints to the north, it repeatedly showed me new perspectives and the longer climb had, in the end, make the gift of the attained heights much more precious.

This detour, which, thanks be to God, I had taken, had given me space and time – more space for a landscape which did my soul a world of good, and more time in the place on a free and sunny day. And what had it demanded of me? A little patience!

Why, I asked myself, did I follow the signs, despite my inclination to take the shortcut? It became apparent to me: In the end I did it because, based on my experiences with these »dream trails«, I had great confidence that the paths were well chosen and meaningfully selected. Indeed, here people, the planners of beautiful paths, had included detours in order to make the experiences of the hike richer and more diverse. Being quickly done is not a mark of a full life.

Fullness of life is our desire; Life in fullness is what is promised us.

I can only truly open myself to this when and because I trust God, who holds inexhaustible life at the ready. Then I gradually discover the following: apparent detours, that I might consider pesky, because they seem to delay my arrival, become paths, the paths of my life.

**Rosemarie Monnerjahn**

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