



SIEBENQUELL

»Only a breath separates us from the timeless« *



In our parish, it is customary to celebrate a memorial service for the deceased of the past twelve months on All Souls' Day. Many relatives attend, and the grief and pain are often palpable and visible. A candle is lit for each deceased person and each name is mentioned: »We call to mind . . . We remember. . . «. Everyone is connected in this community - the grieving families, but also the living with the dead. Because they belong to us, they are not somewhere far away or gone forever.

We often create magnificent memorial stones in our cemeteries. But what about our ability to sense and occasionally feel the closeness of our loved ones in our everyday lives? Do we cultivate a sense for the thin places in our lives where we sense something of the eternal as if through a veil? John O'Donohue describes it impressively in the last chapters of his book »Anam Cara«, that the soul lives freely in the eternal, without space and time. He tells of a woman in Ireland, for example, who said to her weeping siblings at her son's grave: »Don't lament, because there is nothing of him down there, just the shell he had around him in this life.« The soul, in which the body dwells, lives forever. John O'Donohue continues to write:

»When asked where the soul goes when a person dies, Meister Eckart replied: To no place. Where else could the soul go? Where else would the eternal world be? It can be nowhere but here. Our conceptual thinking wrongly turns the eternal world into something spatial and then moves it into the immeasurable distance, like some unknown galaxy. However, the eternal world does not seem to be a place at all, but rather another level of being. The soul of the deceased does not go anywhere because there is no other place it could go. This indicates that the dead are here with us, in the air through which we move continuously. . . We cannot see them with our human eyes, but we can feel the presence of those dead whom we loved when they were alive. With the refined senses of our soul we can perceive them, and then we also know that they are really with us.« (John O'Donohue, Anam Cara)

In our dominant culture, we tend to build mausoleums or ignore the dead altogether. But how rich our everyday lives could be if we became sensitive (again) to the touch of the veil that allows us to sense the closeness of the eternal and helps us to live in the interconnectedness of all.

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