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'Reach out your hand and put it into my side' (John 20:27)

Wounds – places of encounter!

„Freunde des Wortes“

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Dear friends of the word,

Pain and wounds – nobody wants to experience them. We try to avoid them. That they can be a 'gift of love' -as it says in a song – is hard to understand!

Father Rainer, a Franciscan monk, helped me to discover this. When I met him a few weeks ago he was lying in an old armchair. I noticed his eyes. They were like gems and radiated a deep happiness. Quickly we got talking. He'd been in a serious car crash 17 years ago. He was driving a van when a front tyre exploded. When Father Rainer heard the explosion he remembered a passage from the gospel. Jesus told the soldiers that had come to arrest him: "If you're looking for me, let these men go!" These words inspired Father Rainer to tell Jesus: If you are looking for me, let the other passengers go unhurt." Then the van started spinning. Nobody in the van was hurt except Rainer, who suffered a serious spine injury and wasn't able to move. He spend 17 months in hospital and regained a little bit of movement. But because of the accident he was in constant pain. "You know", he said to me, "I never asked: Why me? I understood immediately: With this pain I can show my love to Jesus, each and every moment. I give him my pain as a gift. Deeply moved, I looked into his beaming eyes. I 'saw' a love for Jesus that I had seldom experienced before.

Dear friends of the word, Father Rainer taught me that all pain and each wound can become a meeting place. Just like Thomas was invited by Jesus to touch his wounds, we can be close to Jesus through my wounds. HE knocks on my door – in my pain. Let's turn every bit of pain into a gift for Jesus. Then **wounds** can become - **places of encounter**.

For the OnWordTeam

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