

## To my readers

[What Reinhard von Kirchbach says here in ,Tents in the roaring Waters' about his writing, is true for all his ,poetic' texts, also for those which he wrote before the time of the interreligious dialogue:]

### On the origin of the texts

*You can take a bird's freedom and lock him up. But he will only be able to sing his song when he feels at home, and no longer lonely with you.*

It is the same with these texts. Taken at face value, they remain mute. Only when your heart looks at them, and your life adopts them, do they come to life, and say what they intend to say.

Each of the texts originated individually. They are written down in the language and words in which they came to me.

### On the character of the texts

They are not information or realizations. Nor are they just any old words. To some, these paragraphs will say little or nothing. For others, they always repeat the same thing. That has nothing to do with a person's intellectual proficiency, life philosophy or direction of faith.

Just as there are many ways of expressing life, so there are countless expressions of language and understanding

These differences can hardly be judged and definitely not measured. They are part of the richness, the beauty and the limitations of our lives.

It feels important to me *that everyone finds the path*, on which he can understand and develop himself as a whole, and can grasp whatever comes towards him.

### On the Context and Background

For me, meetings with my partners from the interreligious dialogue are reflected here, meetings with men and women, brothers and sisters from Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity.

Since 1980, we have lived together, *with our differences*, fourteen times for four weeks in many different countries in Europe and Asia. Normally we looked after ourselves in a simple manner in terms of cooking and housework.

Praying and meditating, we were wrapped in and carried by godly presence. It was through the autonomy of each person's faith that we found  
*together, each in our own place,*  
*a belonging together,*  
*a depth, a breadth,*  
*and a clarity*  
that we did not know before.

This context gives everything a new emphasis.

Of course *all of us are beginners* in this sphere of experience.  
But looking more closely, we discover that everyone experiences situations every day in the family, at work, in their leisure time or elsewhere, in which these paragraphs can have meaning.

## Who would I want to read these texts?

I would like people to read these texts, who don't take these words in as reading material to be rushed through, but pick out individual pieces as you would from a book of daily spirituality.

I wish that reading these texts will lead to  
more peace in the heart,  
more clarity in the midst of complexity,  
and 'humane' behaviour  
in the daily struggle of work and existence.

It is not how much you've read,  
that helps you to the next step,  
but attentive listening of the heart.

## On the Order and Writing Style

The texts appear in the order in which they were written. Systematic ordering has not been considered.

As in previous versions, the titles of the individual paragraphs only came to be retrospectively, and are not actually part of the texts. They are intended to give a sense of the theme of each piece, so they can be found again more easily.

## On the writing style: 'You' and 'you'

I have kept both the capital 'You' and the small 'you', even at the beginning of lines, to make it clear whether I am referring to *God* or one of *us*.

Altenhof, December 1997,  
Reinhard v. Kirchbach, Propst i. R.

(translated by Josephine Pearse)