

Where are you?

Why do we search for one another? What do we want from each other? Maybe I can find more in you than I was looking for.

**This man named Jesus, where is he? He said: I don't know.
John 9,12**

The Jesuit father Ludger Born said, "I don't know," when the Gestapo were looking for Jews in hiding. But he knew a lot. For years already he had led the "Archbishop's Aide Station for Non-Arian Catholics" from Cardinal Innitzer; every two weeks he had celebrated a mass with baptised Jews in the sacristy of the Viennese University Church. One of the "submarines" – Josef – lived in his community at Dr. Ignaz-Seipel-Platz. The Gestapo wanted to know where the Jews were in order to place them in a transport – to Birkenau where the "final solution" was waiting.

"I don't know," is perhaps the only "true" answer to such a question: "I don't know what you are looking for; I don't know what you want from life. But I know that one may not ask about another human being in this way."

In memory of the November pogroms from 1938 Cardinal Christoph Schoenborn unveiled a memorial plaque in the inner courtyard of the Archbishop's palace memorializing Innitzer's aid station in which a group of women along with father Ludger Born SJ had helped countless Jews. One of them, Gertrud Steinitz-Metzler, recorded her memories; they are published under the title *That you did not forget us... (Dass ihr uns nicht vergessen habt...)* in *Domverlag*.

"I don't know," says the blind man who has been healed to those who want to know where Jesus is. The nature of the question is apparently not agreeable to him. Perhaps he's thinking, "What do you want with him? Why don't you simply rejoice with me that I can see again? Do you want to attack him?" The simple dialogue, "Where is he?" – "I don't know," reflects two basic concern of the gospel writer John: to search for Jesus is decisive to understanding who he is. Those who are against Jesus from the beginning can not find him and can not recognise who he is. Jesus himself asks the group which wants to arrest him on the Mount of Oil: "Who are you looking for?" (John 18,4) As they answer, "Jesus from Nazareth," and he responds, "I am he," they fall to the ground. Jesus most literally has a knock out personality. How one asks for him depends on the inner attitude. Johannes shows this at the very beginning of his gospel when Jesus notices that people are following him. He asks: "What are you looking for?" and they answer: "Rabbi," which means "teacher"; they want to learn from Jesus. They search with the correct attitude and for that reason they are invited: "Come and see."

People are searching for people everywhere. "IT-Professionals needed...Looking for a young woman...fighting terrorism: can you identify this person?" how we approach each other, why we search for each other and what we want from each other informs our lives. Who is looking for you, and why? Who are you looking for, for what reason? Perhaps someone I am looking for today has a surprise to offer; perhaps I can learn something unexpected, perhaps discover a secret that she herself doesn't know.