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Dear praying friends in Europe,

The story of Christmas and migration go together. In Matthew 2v13 we read, “An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt.””

If we truly believe in the forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ, we have become citizens of the Kingdom of God, which is not something that will happen at some future date but should be a reality in our lives today. How often though do we settle for this time on earth as if it were our true home?

Jesus knew that His home was with the Father and his time on earth was for an eternal purpose to show the way to those he encountered. Let’s follow Jesus’ example and look for ways to help our fellow “aliens and strangers” find their way to our eternal home and Father.



Ian Jeal

MIGRATION

Review 2016

When we look back on this year 2016, the most outstanding events for Europe were: the Brexit vote of Great Britain, the victory of Donald Trump, the break-down of the cornerstone of the EU: the solidarity of her members and therefore the endangering of the EU as a Union. All these events have to do with the question of migration: in the USA migration from Mexico and, in Europe the fear of migration from the Near and Middle East.

These anxieties were of course readily used by all European populist parties as an opportunity to fuel fear, envy and all negative prejudices. They cheered Brexit, they sent congratulations to Trump and they supported every opposition against Europe. For their target is to finish with this Union.

Three proposals how to handle the migration challenge

(1) Come and see!

Never, dear Christian brothers and sisters, speak about “the migrants” before you have come and met them face to face. You know the Word of God says to help the needy. So first of all: Come and listen to their stories. Try to see Jesus in them (Matthew 25, V.35.40). And you will be blessed. And then let’s talk about the necessary questions and any problems afterwards.

(2) Every state is obliged to keep its own borders in order to protect its citizens. This is not true in the case of the Schengen states: there the borders must be kept by the EU.

Please also pray for

- In January the European Parliament elects a new President. There is much quarrelling about it.
- The situation of the world needs an EU with an ability to act. But the EU lacks unity, vision and leadership. Pray!

This was the strategy behind the contract with Turkey to maintain open borders within the EU. This was the task of Brussels.

(3) This, however, has nothing to do with the question of the distribution of migrants. In the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) 1. Part, Title I, Article 3 and 5 the competences of the Union resp. those of the member states are defined. There “migration” is not expressly mentioned. Yet you could summarize it under “Social Policy” in Article 4. But Article 4 includes the activities, where the competence is mixed. Therefore the four Central European Visegrád states can refuse to accept the directions of Brussels.

So it would be wise in my opinion instead of letting the EU split to leave the whole question of quotas fully to the member states. The EU as such is in a state of transition anyway. And this would be a further step in the right direction of more participation.

Prayer

- (1) God’s mercy over all these men and women who have suffered so much.
- (2) Protection of the unity of the Union against all deliberate wrecking.
- (3) Wisdom for politicians for the reorganisation of the EU.
- (4) Courage for Christians to have practical encounter with migrants.

Ortwin Schweitzer