

Providing a foundation for something meaningful

Beloved person,

Someone recently told me about *The Crying Stone*. It is a monument in Ireland that represents the grief people felt when family members left for America to seek a better life. It focuses on double grief: that of the people who left *and* that of the people who stayed behind. Often, they knew they would probably never see each other again. The artwork depicts loss, uprooting, love, and farewell.

In *The Meeting (De Ontmoeting)* of May 2026¹, we see how Ameike's family discusses the question of how to pause and reflect on what matters. For example, how do you pay attention to saying goodbye to your job and the shock that can cause? To passing your preliminary exams? To the decision to stop playing football at a high level? How do you make room for mourning, joy, farewells, and a new beginning? Rituals can help with this.

Living your faith also involves something you can do and experience. Faith does not live only in your head, in words or thoughts. Faith, longing, love, doubt, gratitude, and reconciliation seek a form. They may also become visible and tangible in your body through a gesture, an action, a place, or a moment. Something that allows you to pause for a moment and feel: this is important.

Symbols play an important role in this. When you give someone a kiss, that kiss can mean many things: a greeting, congratulations, comfort, passion, confirmation and even betrayal. No two kisses are alike. A symbol therefore does not have only one meaning. Everyone can see or feel something different in it. That is precisely where its power lies. Something from everyday life, such as a ring, a bowl, bread, water, or a small stone², can take on a different meaning and connect us to a deeper layer. It then refers to something you cannot see directly, but can feel or recognise.

In a busy, confusing, and sometimes difficult to understand life, we need moments to pause and consciously feel what is happening. This applies to profound experiences, but also when dreams come true. We need traffic islands: places or moments where we are allowed to step off for a moment. To catch our breath before moving on. To feel what lives within us. Not to push emotions away, but to give them meaning. A ritual can help you open yourself up to this. It gives shape to what you are experiencing, even if you do not yet know how to move forward with it. And even if, for example, reconciliation still feels far away.

A ritual does not always have to be your own to still touch you. Even if the ritual belongs to someone else, it can be about you. Just as *The Crying Stone* is not only about Irish emigration, but also about a farewell you have experienced yourself. A weeping stone: symbolism could hardly be harder or softer.

Besides the crossroads of birth and death, of love and promise, there are countless other moments that invite us to pause. A transition, a loss, a choice, a new phase. A desire that changes or a story that may be concluded. Marking that requires time, attention, and sometimes also imagination. A ritual can provide a foundation for this. It makes room for what still chafes, for what inspires gratitude, for what may be let go, and for a new beginning.

What is currently going on in your life for which you would like to have a ritual? What would such a ritual look like? And is there anything in the community at the moment that calls for attention, symbolism and a moment of reflection right now? I hope these questions will spark beautiful and insightful conversations.

With a warm-hearted greeting, gladly your sister

Nanda Ziere



We remember and thank those who have preceded us.

¹ apostolischgenootschap.nl/ontmoetingmei26

² apostolischgenootschap.nl/brochures