

THE QUATREFOIL AND THE VIRTUES

The year 2025 is drawing to a close, a year marked by numerous »*Changing Situations*« (Gappmayr), a year that began full of hope, with numerous attempts to bring about good (peace in war zones, economic recovery, and much more), but which often remained in a kind of limbo, or perhaps was perceived as a ship's swing: sometimes going up, then down again, without taking a fixed position ... »*Everything could also not be*« is the title of one of Gappmayr's works.

In these turbulent times, it may be helpful to focus on fundamental values, on virtues.

The *Quatrefoil* is primarily a Gothic architectural form that can be found in Venetian churches and palaces as well as in buildings in the Middle East and the Near East. It is constructed from circles, which are always a symbol of infinity, yet the quatrefoil also has a far-reaching ethical significance.

While the three divine virtues of »Faith«, »Love« and »Hope« form the basis, because it is »Love« that gives us hope, »Hope« is a positive expectation of the future and »Faith« is the confidence that everything will be fine, the four cardinal virtues of »Wisdom«, »Justice«, »Fortitude« and »Temperance« – symbolised by the *Quatrefoil* – provide guidance for a happy, responsible and successful life. »Wisdom« stands for the ability to recognise what is good and make the right decisions, »Justice« for mutual respect among people, which culminates in charity, »Fortitude« for standing up for what is good and true regardless of possible disadvantages, and »Temperance« for self-control in every respect. Greek philosophers such as Plato already identified these virtues in ancient times, and they can also be found in the »Book of Wisdom«.

With this in mind, I hope that the powerful figures of this world will once again focus more on virtues than on power struggles, so that we can look forward to a more peaceful future with confidence.

Dorothea van der Koelen

Merry and blessed Christmas
with the love and mercy of God!

Health and well-being and
faith, love and hope
for a more humane future

we wish you,

dear friends

from the bottom of our hearts!

May the power of art in its beauty
overcome hate and ugliness,
so that we can enter with confidence the new year

2025

in which we will hopefully see each other again soon !

Lore Bert

+ Dorothea van der Koelen