

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY- POLICE CEREMONY

How did we end up at a Police Ceremony for Holocaust Remembrance Day? Well, let me tell you the story: I hope it will also encourage you that a "bad story" can turn into a "good story!"

A few months ago Sachar called me, quite nervous, and I understood that something had happened at the house. A thief had entered in the night and stolen several things that belonged to Vera. Her computer and some of her jewelry were gone. Vera took it surprisingly well and I did not hear her complain! All of this happened just a few days before her time as a volunteer with us ended and she was to go back to Germany. That's how we met the police officers. It was so moving to see that these Israeli police officers did not just do their duty--they really seemed to have a heart for the Holocaust survivors. One day, just as we were having a small gathering at the house with German guests and some survivors, the district police officer, Yaakov Sorrero came with two policemen and joined our table. I wish you could see with what patience and honor they spoke to every one of the elderly and to us. I thought to myself: "Inge, you really can learn from them!" Looking at the survivors, the senior officer said: "You, you are the VIP's for us! And if you need anything, you can always turn to us!" I shared this with many of my friends--Israelis and others--and everyone was very deeply touched. Even today, I sometimes have tears when I remember the kind and respectful way these officers dealt with the elderly. I know, it meant so much to them! I was quite concerned that Sachar and Raja would be afraid after the break-in, but just meeting these police officers made them very calm. They felt safe!

When Holocaust Remembrance Day came, Ner Yaakov was invited to join the Police Ceremony. This is an especially difficult day for the survivors, where many have to deal even more with pain and depression but they were eager and glad to get up early and go to the Ceremony organized by the Police of the northern Jerusalem district. These survivors are really Zionists and they love their country. Now to be invited by their police, was very special for them. Some of you know Sachar and know how funny he can be. He said, "I have to go and 'check' them out!"- which left us with a big smile. A big police car came to the house and picked up part of the survivors- no, not to jail- but to be honored! In a Power Point presentation the invited survivors were mentioned, and a small part from their personal stories read: "To be remembered and not forgotten!" I had heard so many testimonies of survivors over these many years--how they really had no one to protect them in the past. Now they were sitting in this ceremony, here in their own country with the police officers behind them, knowing that they would do anything to protect them. That is a true comfort for them! They are proud of their Israeli police, and they have every reason to be! And for me as a German, to be among the survivors and the Israel police on Holocaust Remembrance Day was a very special experience. Seeing them there, I had to think that we are so used to addressing them as "survivors," but I realized again that they are truly: „Over-comers!“ Josef shared with them his personal painful testimony. I believe no one will ever forget his story. District Officer Yaakov Sorrero said that we could always turn to them for help. This is of course a very big blessing for us. I hope we will not really "need" them, and that all the thieves will stay far away from us, -but we also hope they will visit many more times. My wish is, that the survivors, who are true examples by not harboring bitterness, could also become a blessing for these young police officers. We are grateful that

they are watching over Ner Yaakov, but we are also glad and trust, that the "Keeper of Israel, who does not slumber nor sleep," is watching very personally over them and their own families, and over "Kol Am Israel!"

„Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep!“ Psalm 121:3

1. Officer Yaakov Sorrero 2. Josef Aaron 3. At the ceremony

