

MONDAY
3 AUGUST
 Jeremiah 28
 Psalm 119:89-96
 Matthew 14:13-21
 or 14:22-end

TUESDAY
4 AUGUST
 Jeremiah 30:1-2.
 12-15. 18-22
 Psalm 102:16-21
 Matthew 14:22-end
 or 15:1-2. 10-14

WEDNESDAY
5 AUGUST
 Jeremiah 31:1-7
 Psalm 121
 Matthew 15:21-28

THURSDAY
6 AUGUST
 Transfiguration
 of Our Lord
 Daniel 7:9-10. 13-14
 Psalm 97
 2 Peter 1:16-19
 Luke 9:28-36

FRIDAY
7 AUGUST
 Nahum 2:1.
 3: 3:1-3. 6-7
 Psalm 137:1-6 or
 Deuteronomy
 32:35-36. 39. 41
 Matthew 16:24-28

SATURDAY
8 AUGUST
 Habakkuk 1:12 – 2:4
 Psalm 9:7-11
 Matthew 17:14-20

REFLECTION

This week's Gospel readings are about success. Jesus feeds five thousand men, women and children – a great multitude; he walks on water; he heals those who are sick, including the daughter of a Canaanite woman and a boy with epilepsy; he is transfigured, all in white, and meets two great men of faith, Moses and Elijah.

The disciples must have looked for a time of shared glory or at least hoped to be famous by association, yet they are told: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). The week began with Jesus learning of the murder of John the Baptist, so he knows all too well that anyone who dares to proclaim in action that the kingdom of God is in our midst is at risk. This is because feeding those who are hungry, rescuing those who are drowning, including the Canaanite foreigner, healing those who are sick, is not of interest to powerful people who want to keep the status quo.

As disciples we must know the risk, yet still we are called to act out the kingdom of God.

Jesus and the Canaanite woman, from Saint Germain-Auxerrois Church in Paris, France. Zvonimir Atleje / Shutterstock.com



God of those who are powerless,
 strengthen us in our willingness to bear the cost of
 following your Son.
 Enable us to give up our fear
 and to rejoice in the small signs of your kingdom
 in our midst,
 where love and justice are found and shared.

PRAYER

HYMN WRITERS

PART I – CHARLOTTE ELLIOTT (1789-1871)

Charlotte Elliott, came from an influential evangelical family in London. Her maternal grandfather, Henry Venn, was a founder of what became known as the Clapham Sect – a network of Christians who shared moral and spiritual values and campaigned for an end to slavery.

As a young woman, Charlotte was a talented musician, artist and writer, known for her sparkling wit. Following a debilitating illness in 1821, however, she became chronically ill, largely confined indoors. At around this time a Swiss Protestant minister and hymn writer named César Malan visited her father's Clapham residence. When he asked Charlotte whether she was at peace with God, she initially resented the question. A few days later, however, she called on Dr Malan and apologised, telling him that she wanted to become a Christian. It's said that Malan answered, "Come just as you are," and that Charlotte committed her life to Christ that day.

Charlotte became a prolific writer, penning numerous poems and hymns. It's said that she wrote her best-known hymn – "Just As I Am without One Plea" – when the family had gone out and Charlotte, left behind at home, became overwhelmed by a sense of loneliness and uselessness. It poignantly expresses her sense of being "poor, wretched, blind," and her faith that Jesus will "welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve".

In all, Charlotte wrote about a hundred and fifty hymns and many poems, some of which were printed anonymously. Billy Graham and his team used her hymns in almost all their crusades, since it presented "the strongest possible Biblical basis for the call of Christ". The Christian writer Lorella Rouster called it "an amazing legacy for an invalid woman who suffered from depression and felt useless to God's service".

Here is a woman whose legacy lives on, whose inspiration lies not only in her hymns and poetry, but also in her inspirational life, because she answered God's call and fulfilled her potential, despite the odds being stacked against her.

Edited by
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 and
 Heather Smith



Charlotte Elliott

Week
 Eighth week
 after Trinity
 Monday 3 August to
 Saturday 8 August
 2020

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