

Women of Faith: The Water of Life

'Those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty'. John 4.14 (Lent 3 Yr A)

Jesus is way out of territory – in Samaritan land.
He is way out of order – speaking to a Samaritan
He is also out of order, speaking to a woman.

Yet it seems that he is so much more at home here at the well side, engaging with a 'stranger' (Year A gospel) than he is in the Temple in Jerusalem amidst the hustle and bustle of trading and arguing. (Year B gospel)



And that's the whole point – his purpose is to engage with the world, not just those of his Jewish descent. His purpose is to transcend the boundaries of age, race, gender, culture... to let it be known that God's love embraces all humanity. But not by shouting it loudly from the pulpit, but in quiet and personal conversations.

'Come and see a man who has told me everything... and many Samaritans believed in Jesus because of the woman's testimony.' John 4. 29, 39

We don't know the Samaritan woman's name, but we do know her unexpected encounter with Jesus changed her life and the lives of many of those she told.

Stephen Cottrell, Bishop of York, in his book, 'Dear England', writes that most of us come to Jesus, not through a Damascus experience, or a mega evangelist's preaching, but by the unexpected words of a stranger and the gradual awakening of God's persistent presence in all aspects of our lives.

'The water that I give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.'

So - if you want to give a thirsty person a drink, don't deluge them with a fire-hose, simply give them a cup of water. That's the way of Jesus – simple, quiet, personal, allowing the Water of Life to gently quench the parts that other water cannot reach! This Water of Life, once drunk, will become an unquenchable spring within us to sustain us for ever. We pray for those who are touched by God's love through the life-giving projects of MU worldwide.

**I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Behold I freely give the living water, thirsty one;
stoop down and drink and live!'**