

“Women you have great Faith”

The woman in the Gospel does not give up.

The woman in the Gospel is a mother fighting for her child.

The woman in the Gospel is weak but uses whatever she has.

Those of faith, like this woman,

are not relieved of the struggle

by belief

but absorbed into it.

At the back of St Joseph’s church is one of the few depictions of William Wilberforce.

Born 1759 there were no cameras to catch his image

And he generally had more important things to do than pose for a portrait.

Not the only leader of the anti-slave movement

He was never the less it’s most public face

When first he and others proposed the end to this evil exploitation he was considered either mad or deluded.

But he did not give up

On more than one occasion the movement came close to passing laws to close down trade in human beings

But chance and vested interests delayed or destroyed the necessary legislation

For over forty years this man campaigned tirelessly for what he knew to be true

Three days before his death parliament freed the slaves

But paid the masters compensation and not the victims of the trade

He did not give up

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Because what she seeks is true

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The Great Martin Luther King became the symbol of the civil rights
movement in the United States of America
Born into a society where people were judged by the colour of their skin
And not the content of their character
Seen as successful in his time and progressing in the cause
Having survived more than one assassination attempt
He then made very public pronouncements condemning the Vietnam War
People who hated him saw this as a weakness
People who supported him warned him to be silent
He knew he would be killed
He stood upon the mountain and proclaimed he could see the Promised Land
Though he would not get there with us
He knew he would be killed

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Our own Arch Bishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador
Was perfectly happy with his conservative appreciation of faith
Was perfectly happy with the status quo position of his ministry as priest
But once elevated to be bishop he recognised the position of the poor
He recognised the repression of all movements for human dignity
So as arch Bishop he spoke out
As arch bishop he allowed victims to find shelter in the cathedral

He was warned that his life was in danger
He was threatened by the killing squads of the Reagan supported government
He knew he would die by violent hands
He was assassinated celebrating mass because he refused to be silent

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Why did William Wilberforce devote his energy's to people he did not even know
Why did Martin Luther King endure the physical and mental torture of leadership
Why did Arch Bishop Oscar Romero accept the inevitable martyrdom
Because it was true
They would not give up

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Do not give up
Do not give up
Do not give up
Keep your eyes on the prize hold