

The Dynamism of Jesus

In the Gospel this week we meet Jesus reaching out to three individuals who were each regarded as 'untouchable' by the religious culture of their time. Jesus asks the tax collector Matthew to join his core team of disciples. Yet we know that tax collectors in the time of Jesus were regarded as collaborators who served the occupying Roman administration.

A desperate woman who had been bleeding for twelve years risks a public flogging by touching the clothes of the Jewish teacher Jesus. She believed that he could heal her in a way that no one else had been able to, and Jesus affirmed her faith and courage. He did not reject or shame her there was simply healing and a new beginning for this woman.

Many of us would be reluctant to touch the body of a dead person, and in the time of Jesus it was thought that contact with a body would leave you unclean and in need of ritual cleansing. Jesus took the hand of the girl that had died, and asked her to get up. How astonished and delighted would her parents have been?

For those of us who follow Jesus today what insights are there for us in these encounters? I offer some ideas but would love for you to share with me the ones that occur to you that I've not thought of!

Who are the people 'out there' that we'd be surprised to invite into our faith community core leadership team? Who are the people that feel ashamed because of their ethnicity, or disease, or marital status, or gender orientation, or age, or weight... who long for affirmation and acceptance? What are the areas of need and justice in our area, and in our world, that long for life to be breathed into them?

The Lord be with you.