

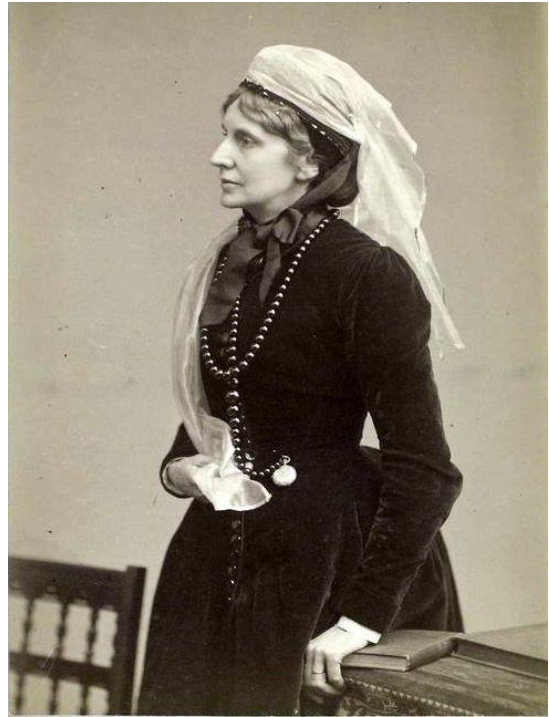
Josphine Butler

Saturday 30 May 2020

Josephine Elizabeth Butler (*née* Grey) was born on 13 April 1828.

She was an English feminist and social reformer in the Victorian era. She campaigned for women's suffrage, the right of women to better education, the end of coverture in British law, the abolition of child prostitution, and an end to human trafficking of young women and children into European prostitution.

She died on 30 December 1906



- All Bible readings come from the *New Revised Standard Version*.
- The liturgy assumes the service is Eucharistic. The prayers of consecration have been included at the end rather than in situ because many following the service will be in isolation and unable to celebrate the sacrament.
- The hymn is a Youtube link. Please hover the mouse over the link, press Ctrl and then return.

HYMN [Father, hear the prayer we offer](#) (please click on this link to hear the hymn)

The welcome

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit

All Amen.

The Lord be with you

All And also with you.

The Preparation

**All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

The first commandment is this:

‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.’

And the second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

There is no other commandment greater than these.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

All Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Christ calls us to share the heavenly banquet of his love with all the saints in earth and heaven. Therefore, knowing our unworthiness and sin, let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God’s commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

All Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
who died for us,
forgive us all that is past
and grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name. Amen.

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Gloria

This version of the Gloria is sung to the tune of 'Cwm Rhondda'. Click [here](#) for the tune.

All Glory be to God in Heaven,
Songs of joy and peace we bring,
Thankful hearts and voices raising,
To creation's Lord we sing.
Lord we thank you, Lord we praise you,
Glory be to God our King:
Glory be to God our King.

Lamb of God, who on our shoulders,
Bore the load of this world's sin;

**Only Son of God the Father,
You have brought us peace within.
Lord, have mercy, Christ have mercy,
Now your glorious reign begin:
Now your glorious reign begin.**

**You O Son of God are Holy,
You we praise with one accord.
None in heav'n or earth is like you,
Only you are Christ the Lord.
With the Father and the Spirit,
Ever worshipped and adored:
Ever worshipped and adored.**

The Collect for Josephine Butler

God of compassion and love,
by whose grace your servant Josephine Butler
followed in the way of your Son
in caring for those in need:
help us like her to work with strength
for the restoration of all to the dignity and freedom of those created in your image;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

First reading

A reading from the Book of the Acts of the Apostles

When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him.

Three days later he called together the local Jewish leaders. When they had assembled, Paul said to them: 'My brothers, although I have done nothing against our people or against the customs of our ancestors, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. They examined me and wanted to release me, because I

was not guilty of any crime deserving death. The Jews objected, so I was compelled to make an appeal to Caesar. I certainly did not intend to bring any charge against my own people. For this reason I have asked to see you and talk with you. It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain.'

For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance! *Acts 28:16-20, 30-end*

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Second reading

A reading from St John's First Letter

Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

1 John 3:18-23

This is the Word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God.

Gospel reading

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

All Glory to you O Lord.

Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, 'Lord, who is going to betray you?') When Peter saw him, he asked, 'Lord, what about him?'

Jesus answered, 'If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.' Because of this, the rumour spread among the believers that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that he would not die; he only said, 'If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?'

This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.

Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written. *John 21:20-end*

This is the Gospel of the Lord

All Praise to you O Christ.

Sermon

Today we celebrate the memory of Josephine Butler, an English feminist and social reformer of the Victorian era. She campaigned for women's rights, the abolition of child prostitution and an end to human trafficking in Europe. It was a brave thing to do.

Josephine was born into an upper-class family in the 19th century, schooled at home and raised to be devoutly religious, but she used her faith and her intellect to challenge the social values of her time. In particular, she wanted women to be treated equally with men and she did not shy away from pointing out the double standards in the social conventions of the time. A man who visited prostitutes was 'a bit naughty', a woman who engaged in prostitution was the lowest of the low, rejected by all respectable people and often punished by the law.

Today's Gospel reading is 1 John 3:18. 'Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth'.

Josephine Butler set us an example of what that means in a world where injustice often reigns. She campaigned vigorously for many years and won a lot of support from individual politicians, radicals and medical people. But she also made enemies of some very powerful men. On occasion, people became so angry at her attempts to end the sexual exploitation of women that they pelted her with cow dung and another time, a group of men smashed the windows of a hotel where she was staying and threatened to set it on fire.

Perhaps you're thinking, 'What an amazing woman. But I could never do that'.

Maybe it helps to look at her personal diaries, in which we see that she was not simply a fearless soldier in the cause of right. In fact, she often felt intimidated, frightened and depressed. In September 1869, after a particularly harsh law was

passed against prostitution, but targeting only the women, not the men who used their 'services', she wrote:

'I have not yet put on my armour, nor am I yet ready. Nothing so wears me out, body and soul, as anger, fruitless anger; and this thing fills me with such an anger, and even hatred, that I fear to face it. The thought of this atrocity kills charity and hinders my prayers. But there is surely a way of being angry without sin. I pray Thee, O God, to give me a deep, well-governed, and lifelong hatred of all such injustice, tyranny and cruelty; and at the same time give me that divine compassion which is willing to live and suffer long for love of souls, or to fling itself into the breach and die at once'.

The task she faced was 'so dreadful, so difficult, so disgusting, that I tremble to look at it; and it is hard to see and know whether or not God is indeed calling me concerning it'.

Sometimes she wondered, 'Does not God care? Can God bear these things?' He is silent, the woe deepens, and the question is still sent up from generation to generation, 'Hath God not seen? Will He not help?' Surely these are sentiments we can all identify with. The world is still full of injustice and we often feel helplessly inadequate when faced with so much pain.

Fortunately for the women she campaigned to help and for us now, as we benefit from the greater gender equality gained in the time since, Josephine Butler came to the conclusion that God does care. She also believed that it was God who gave her the strength she needed to carry on.

She continued to follow Jesus, 'the Son of Man who came to seek and to save that which is lost'. Jesus never gives up on us, she reasoned, so we cannot give up on one another.

She wrote: 'In order to follow our lost sheep *until we find them*—never stopping short of that—it seems that we must have, in some degree at least, the faith of the Son of God; His faith in the creative power of the Father and His faith in the possibility of resurrection for every dead soul'.

Reading her writings, it's clear that she was still a woman of her time: she regarded the sex workers as 'lost souls' who needed to be saved from their sin, which not everyone would feel comfortable with now.

But her Christian witness: the way she gave her life for what she knew to be right, continuing the struggle through personal pain, frequent ill-health and sometimes

violent opposition, is an inspiration to us. This is what 'loving with actions and in truth looks like'.

I'll leave you with a thought. Are we loving 'with actions and in truth'? And if we're already doing some of that—as I think most of us are in small ways—how can we do it more?

Prayers of intercession

Father of compassion and love, we pray for your Church and your world.

We thank you for the witness of your servant Josephine Butler. We pray that, like her, we might work for justice and the restoration of dignity to all your people.

Help us, like her, to work for the coming of your kingdom, to proclaim your gospel in our daily living and never to rest content until your kingdom comes, on earth as it is in heaven.

Lord in your mercy,

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for all who are in need today: for those living in war zones, those living in fear and oppression, and those facing an uncertain future because of the coronavirus. Help our leaders to govern with wisdom and compassion, to do what is best for us all and to stand up for truth and justice.

Lord in your mercy,

All Hear our prayer.

We pray for those known especially to us, who need your healing touch and your compassion today. Help us to reach out to them with your love.

Lord in your mercy,

All Hear our prayer.

And we pray for those who have died and those who mourn and miss them. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Merciful Father,

**All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

The peace

May the God of peace sanctify you: may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before him at the coming of our Lord Jesus with his saints.

The peace of the Lord be always with you:

All And also with you.

The liturgy of the Communion Service appears below

The Dismissal

May Christ who makes saints of sinners,
who has transformed those we remember today,
raise and strengthen you that you may transform the world;
and the blessing of God the Almighty:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you now and remain with you always.

All Amen

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

Eucharistic Prayer (prayer E)

The Lord be with you

All and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy
that we should always sing of your glory,
holy Father, almighty and eternal God,
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.
For you are the hope of the nations,
the builder of the city that is to come.
Your love made visible in Jesus Christ
brings home the lost,
restores the sinner
and gives dignity to the despised.
In his face your light shines out,
flooding lives with goodness and truth,
gathering into one in your kingdom
a divided and broken humanity.
Therefore with all who can give voice in your creation
we glorify your name,
for ever praising you and saying,

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord;
and as we obey his command,
send your Holy Spirit,
that broken bread and wine outpoured
may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends
and, taking bread, he praised you.
He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.
Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:
Drink this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.
Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection
until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Lord of all life,
help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes
and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms
and bring us with Julian of Norwich, St Barnabas and all the saints
to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father,
for ever and ever.

All Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**All Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**All Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world,
grant us peace.**

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink

in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts
by faith with thanksgiving.

**All We do not presume
to come to this your table, merciful Lord,
trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies.
We are not worthy
so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table.
But you are the same Lord
whose nature is always to have mercy.
Grant us therefore, gracious Lord,
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ
and to drink his blood,
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body
and our souls washed through his most precious blood,
and that we may evermore dwell in him,
and he in us.
Amen.**

Communion is distributed.

Prayer after Communion

God our redeemer,
who inspired Josphine Butler to witness to your love
and to work for the coming of your Kingdom:
may we, who in this sacrament share the bread of heaven,
be filled by your Spirit to proclaim the Gospel in our daily living
and never to rest content until your kingdom come,
on earth as it is in heaven;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen

**All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out
in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory.
Amen.**