

Plaint of an Ordinary Christian

O, Jesus, my Redeemer,
You died that I might live;
You healed the lame, and lepers,
Taught sinners how to give.

You said "walk in my footsteps
and practice all I teach;
forgive and be forgiven;
be loving, each to each."

You said to love each other,
that truth would set us free,
but truth is sometimes painful,
and loving seldom free.

In times of joy it's easy
to find that inner wealth,
that lets me love another
without betraying self.

But times of joy seem fleeting,
when times of grief return;
when patience seems beyond me,
frustrations seethe and burn.

There are no lepers in my life,
just women in a snit,
and men born pessimistic,
or with a fight to pick.

I know no tax collectors,
or murderers or whores,
just the arrogant, the silly,
the smug, the snide, the bores.

You lived a life heroic,
lived decades without sin;
how do I take your footsteps,
given the shape I'm in?

I'm quick to anger, slow to joy,
seem selfish and a hog.
Most people drive me crazy -
I'm happier with my dog.

Would that I could follow you,
in spirit and in mind;
would that I were heroic,
so loving and so kind.

But I'm no hero, Jesus,
not sinless or a saint;
I'm only ordinary -
can't live life free of taint.

I try to love my neighbour,
but then she scares my cat,
Her kids destroy my roses,
Her husband says I'm fat.

Yes, I try to love my neighbour,
and to myself be true;
it's hard to manage either;
the same for loving you.

You said to love each other,
and to that Word I bow,
but Jesus, my redeemer,
I pray you - *show me how!*

Sister Sue Elwyn, SSJD
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