Thought for the Day 16th April - by Joan Loane

Luke 8:40-48

This passage starts with Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, falling at Jesus' feet in the dust, imploring Jesus to come to his house because his only daughter, a twelve year old, was dying. We have all had really anxious times when we were paralysed with dread…Jairus came to right place!

Then a poor woman came there…she had been bleeding for 12 years so she was weak with anaemia. It was an effort for her to climb a hill. No doubt she found it difficult to keep clean and she was ceremoniously clean, not allowed in the temple or even in that crowd. Anyone who touched her was made ceremoniously unclean. And she was dreadfully poor – Mark 5 says that she had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she had got worse. (You'll notice that Dr. Luke leaves out that bit!) She was shunned, yet she was determined to touch Jesus. She believed he could and would heal her. And that is what happened.

Now Jesus stopped. He knew power had gone out of him and wanted to see who had touched him.

You might wonder at Jesus.

Firstly he has the ruler of the synagogue wanting him desperately to come with him although there is no mention of Jairus interrupting this exchange between Jesus and the woman. (Others, of course not us, might have said that they were a bit busy at the moment and please make an appointment for next week!)

Secondly, why embarrass this poor woman in front of all those men, making her confess about her very female illness?

Jesus had his reasons. He made it clear to the woman that it was her faith that had healed her. Not only that, the ruler of the synagogue was there to witness all this and could later welcome her back into society.

And then there were all the people crowding around Jesus and pressing on him. They were touching him but there was no record of any change in their lives…we can be at the very heart of Christian doings, but unless we have faith in Jesus, we remain unchanged.