

Spending eight dark hours in Casualty, you notice things.
Like the young woman, Jess, in the bay opposite me,
with bright orange hair, in severe pain,
shrieking *Jesus* at the top of her voice throughout the night.
No other swearwords, unlike the posh old dears who told
Sister precisely what they thought of her parentage and
sexual orientation when she tried to turn them.

When she wasn't crying out in pain,
Jess phoned her husband, caring for their infant daughter.
To cut a very long story short, the pain was abdominal
- not appendicitis since she'd had that out years ago -
but in her kidneys, luridly affecting her water-works.
The pain was such that she hadn't been tempted
to sneak out of the ward for a ciggy - so that bad.
Since she was repeatedly calling on Jesus
I said a prayer what I wrote in my first weeks of ministry:

Receive the healing power

which our Lord Jesus Christ poured out for you.

*Draw on his strength, be comforted by his presence, and
finally be restored to life in full with him & those you love.*

It's a prayer which covers all outcomes, and over 40 years

I've said it out loud with people, or under my breath.

Jesus healed at a distance, as in the centurion's servant,

so I'm relaxed about whether you get up close or not.

Whatever, an acute healing situation catches my attention

I'm just like a teenage lad fancying a girl, no more, no less.

I'm not neurotic about following things up,

checking whether healing takes place or not,

I'm happy to leave it in God's hands – over to you, Lord.

God's got a lot on his plate - Afghanistan, Covid, Boris...

so I'm sure is appreciative of our occasional prompts.

I also respect people's independence. Apparently
nutters pester wheel-chair users and the blind, stopping
them in their tracks, suddenly laying hands on them.

By breakfast a doctor decided Jess needed a kidney scan.
Someone had just cancelled, so he put her in her chair
and ran with her to the unit, a bit of a miracle in itself.
One kidney turned out to be twice the size of another,
so she was put on an antibiotic drip for 24 hours to sort it.

Is it lawful to heal? Well, healing flowed from Christ,
took priority over everything else
with rules, regulations and priorities kicked into touch.
Whatever dark pit you had fallen into, he'd pull you out.
Sometimes don't you just hear the voice of Jesus say:
'Don't witter on about being in the lowest place,
notice those in the pit with you and plot their liberation.'