

Archbishop Stephen wrote in today's [Daily Telegraph](#). His article follows in full...

The news of the Queen's death has reverberated round the world; the deep sadness felt in the United Kingdom is shared across the globe, not least in the Commonwealth of Nations which meant so much to her. Her grace and dependability - what seemed a rocklike permanence - impressed everyone. We are all reeling with shock and sadness at the news of her death. We pray in great thanksgiving for her life and service, for the life of a nation, for all who mourn and especially her family and for our new king Charles. In times of danger, uncertainty and personal grief, the Queen consistently exemplified a courage and a confidence that flowed from her faith in Jesus Christ. We all need that now. I am reminded of Christ's words to his disciples on Easter Day: "Do not be afraid; peace be with you; I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Queen Elizabeth made no secret of the fact that the Christian faith and a disciplined life of duty and devotion were the source of her guidance and a constant solace. "For me," she said, "the life of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, is an inspiration and an anchor in my life. A role model of reconciliation and forgiveness, he stretched out his hands in love, acceptance and healing."

It was Christ's servant leadership which shaped her sovereignty. Jesus confounded the prevailing perceptions of authority. For instance, at the Last Supper he noted that none of his disciples was willing to perform the customary task of a servant by washing the dirt off the feet of the others. So he did it. He gave them a new commandment, that they should love one another and that by this love people would know that they were his disciples. He also gave them this astonishing definition of leadership:

"The kings of the gentiles lord it over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather, the greatest among you must become like the youngest and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves."

On her 21st birthday in 1947, Princess Elizabeth was touring South Africa with her parents. She made this personal, Christian commitment then and she lived by it throughout her reign: "I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service."

Right until the end, when she invited the new British Prime Minister to form a Government, she was doing her duty. She broke into her Summer holiday at Balmoral to give an audience, first with Boris Johnson as the outgoing Prime Minister, and then with Liz Truss, the 15th Prime Minister of her reign. We will treasure the photograph published then, which showed her at the age of 96 looking frail, but beaming warmth and kindness. And in the midst of national and international mourning, we may also allow ourselves to recall the glorious episode with Paddington Bear during Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations when, solemnly and self-deprecatingly, she produced a marmalade sandwich from her handbag. It gave us a glimpse into the character of a Queen who carried the weight of her office solemnly, but did not take herself too seriously. As I have written elsewhere, she wore her Faith in her heart, not on her sleeve. It is the best place for faith. From there it can shape everything.

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