

TRUE ROYALTY

by P. F. Jensen

The other day when I was in the local newsagent I discovered something very interesting. A chap came in and asked for a copy of a very prominent national women's magazine. 'Sold out, mate,' said the newsagent, 'Always happens when the Queen is on the front. In fact, any member of the Royal family sells the magazine quicker than anything else.'

Now I thought that was astounding ... which may just go to show how much I'm out of touch. After all, the Royal Family and its doings is so old hat. What new thing can be said about them? Why would we want to see yet more photos of the most photographed faces in the world? Its like having an insatiable longing for bread.

As I thought about this, several possible reasons came to mind. In the first place, of course, the Queen is rightly very much admired. She is the very soul of integrity and loyalty to duty. Her family life is impeccable, and so she can lead us.

Secondly, the Queen and her family have become part of our whole way of life. For almost 30 years she has been there. She represents security and even serenity in an ever-changing world. Through the media and her frequent visits the Queen has come so close to us all that we feel in a peculiar way that we know her. Is it too romantic to say that we treat her almost as though we were in the same family?

But this leads to a third point. The very closeness of the Queen results in a tantalising curiosity. Although we feel as though we know all about her, in fact we don't. There are whole tracts of her life which we would know about if we were

truly related to her, but we don't. Hence the constant newspaper interest in royal gossip. If only we could discover what we wanted to know! If only we could join the family for the day!

Now those reasons are all very well, but what do they explain? Why this intense interest in someone whose life is so very different from ours? Why the fascination with a person who has no real influence in our lives? Admirable as the Queen is, it would be hard to argue that she is sufficiently interesting in herself to warrant the Royal mania so evident amongst us. Indeed as you would soon find if you dared criticise the Queen, many people worship her.

Now wait ... what have I said? May that not be the true reason after all? The attitude to the Queen is more akin to worship than anything else. Contrary to what many people say, Australia is not irreligious. Many of us have a worship that centres on the Queen. She fills the aching void in our hearts that really belong to Jesus. She provides that sense of awe mixed with familiarity which is his alone. She provides a false sense of continuity and certainty when really it is only Jesus who is the same yesterday, today and forever.

The interesting thing, of course, is that the Queen is the last person to want our worship. She may herself be seen every Sunday on her knees, bowing before King Jesus, and worshipping Him. Not least among her many grand characteristics is that she knows enough to ask Jesus to help her. If you truly admire her, why don't you follow her example?

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