

**Thought for the day – Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

**By Revd John Marshall**

**Denomination      Mary Sheepshanks**

'Religion, dear?' she asked

Consent form held

Below her, sterile smile.

'Christian' I answered.

(One can always hope)

'It means WHAT DENOMINATION dear.'

She said.

'Christian.' I tried again.

Lying in silly bath cap, baby's gown

Awaiting my Pre-Med.

She thought me simple in the head.

'No, no. That isn't what it means.

What Church do you attend?

I need it for my file.'

'CHRISTIAN' I bellowed.

Cross, unchristianlike.'

'I'll worship God in any church:

It's all the same to Him

If not to me.'

She said I mustn't make a fuss.

They had to know which minister

To call in case I died.

Such words of comfort!

'Let them all come and save my soul.

I'll need their prayers

If I am dead.

'Religion isn't rationed yet.' I said  
'They'd want to know about the burial.'  
She answered sharper now  
Thinking me frivolous  
'We meet all sorts!'  
Eyes rolled towards her friend.  
A needle brought our conversation  
To an end.  
I had no time to pray.  
'Oh put her down as C of E'  
I heard the sister say.

New Christian Poetry Collins Flame

How would you identify yourself in terms of religion?

I did find endless kindness when I was in hospital, even when I was not behaving well. God was in that place and shown in the staff.