

JULY

FREE

Marston times

PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT NICHOLAS

CHURCH POLITICS

I heard it only this morning about someone from a parish miles away:

"She used to be a keen member but something happened and she left the church - Church Politics, you know!" It was said as though this departure was something we ought to take for granted; as though it was inevitable. And so now, some soul is sitting at home on Sundays, glowering at the Sunday Express, remembering the days when she used to sing the 'Gloria', and laugh with the rest of them.

But ought we to take this kind of thing for granted? If umbrage was a health tonic, the amount taken by some churchpeople would make them the healthiest people on the face of the earth! But it isn't. It's an insidious form of self-pity, cultivated in small minds, and bred out of frustration and a feeling of insignificance.

We Christians need to snap out of it!

We need to try and grow big enough to speak up and out, rather than whisper in the back-ground, or create a barrage of silent supporters.

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us". It's a costly prayer, but the strange

thing is that its a prayer which benefits us, as much as the people we forgive.

"No man shall drag me so low as to hate him", said Booker T. Washington, the famous American negro. "A heart too happy to take offence" - That was one of the aims of the Sisters of the Church of South India.

What we all loved about the rock musical "Godspell", (No, not on T.V.) - That bears no comparison to the real thing!;), was the gaiety, and laughter, and fun of the Gospel. "You know, its given me a completely new picture of Christ" said a nun after the performance. You just feel that parish politics, umbrage, hurt feelings, melted in that atmosphere of colour, laughter, light and music.

So ban parish politics!

And if you're going on holiday this month, have a wonderful time.

John N. Kennedy

Vicar and Rural Dean.

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MAN IN THE MINISTRY

CONVERSATION PIECE WITH THE VICAR

Reporter: Last month you said that, after coming back to Oxford from the forces, you had to re-think and re-lay the foundations of your faith. Who helped you most in doing this?

Vicar: Well, there was a University Mission conducted by Bishop Stephen Neill which packed the Sheldonian Theatre night after night. There were those famous S.C.M. services on Sunday nights at St. Mary's at which people like George McLeod of the Iona Community and Bishop Wilson of Singapore preached. I heard Dean Inge preach at Pusey House, Kagawa at the Wesley Memorial Church, and St. Aldate's always had a good bill of fare.

Reporter: Then eventually you offered for ordination training at Wycliffe Hall. What happened then?

Vicar: After receiving my M.A. and doing two years theological training at Wycliffe Hall, I was made deacon at St. Thomas's Church, Douglas, in the Isle of Man.

Reporter: Didn't you find life a bit restricted there?

Vicar: Many people don't realise that in those days there were over forty parishes on the Island. My Vicar and I were chaplain to Noble's Hospital, the Old People's Home, and to the theatres. I remember meeting Michael Bentine, Wee Georgie Wood, and quite a number of the T.T. riders, either in or out of hospital. The Bishop also appointed me Youth Secretary so I helped to form youth groups over the island and published a monthly youth newsletter. One group actually met in the Bishop's library at Bishops court!

Reporter: Then I believe you returned to your home Diocese of Carlisle?

Vicar: Yes, I spent my second curacy at Windermere with Howard Rose, a former curate of Marston, who first introduced the Candle Service to England from America. After this we offered for service in the United Church of South India.

Reporter: This was one of the first successful reunion schemes wasn't it?

Vicar: Yes, it came about in 1947 after years of pressures of a missionary situation.

Reporter: What insights did C.S.I. give you into possible schemes of reunion here?

Vicar: It made me realise that unity does not come about merely by signing the documents. It is a fluid concept, Christians have to strive for unity day by day, and week by week. It doesn't just happen.

Reporter: And now you're in your fourteenth year at Marston, how would you estimate your success here?

Vicar: I wouldn't. I take consolation from some words I once heard Austin Farrer, the late Warden of Keble say at an ordination: "No man can be a success as a priest". I have made many mistakes. I have often been wrong in my prediction of people's reactions, but I have experienced the real joy of the priesthood, which is to be invited to share in the joys and sorrows of one's parishioners - whether church-goers or not - and to be supported in my ministry by a wonderful group of people, who are not just members of one's flock, but true friends.

Reporter: Vicar, would you like to share your favourite text with us?

Vicar: Certainly. It's from the Book of Nehemiah, Chapter 8, verse 10 . . . "The Joy of the Lord is your Strength".

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Parish Ordination

The Parish will wish to congratulate Miss Olive J. Lodge, our Parish Worker, on being recommended for training and ordination as a deaconess by the Central Board of Deaconess Training.

The ordination will be at St. Nicholas Church, Marston on All Saints Day, 1st November.

Miss Lodge will, of course, continue to serve the parish of St. Nicholas.

School Camp

Tents large and small were sprawled on the Rugby pitch at Stow-on-the-Wold. It was a fine evening and fifty-eight pupils from St. Nicholas Primary School, with their teachers, Mr. Johnson and a student teacher, were preparing for their three-day camp.

Ask any of the children who went and you will find they thoroughly enjoyed all the activities, whether it was the long walk to the 11th century church of St. Nicholas, Oddington, with its fine wall paintings; sports day with mixed teams of boys and girls for football and rugby; obstacle races, etc: trying their hands at sketching, or just learning to exist away from home and under canvas.

The parents who came to fetch them home joined in a final celebration with sausages, cooked on an open fire, and then it was all over until next year.

BAPTISMS

During July services of Baptism will be held on Sunday 9th and 30th and during August on the 27th only, at 3 p.m. (after previous notice).

Who has them ?

The announcement that church fees have been doubled may make some people think that the Vicar is making a tidy sum on the quiet! The truth of the matter is that his stipend remains constant no matter how much the fees are raised, as these are deducted from what is paid by the Diocese. It does, however, mean that the clergy as a whole may benefit ultimately by relieving the diocese to this extent.

Do you wish to develop your body and grow healthy?

Do you wish to spend an hour in an atmosphere of peace and quiet?

Do you wish to get away from it all and achieve power and poise and serenity?

Well, come along to the churchyard any Thursday evening, preferably with a pair of shears or a sickle. You will find yourself in a company of devout extroverts who are tackling the grass and the kerbs with rhythmic and devoted care.

After two hours with them, you'll find that you sleep the sleep of the gods, and if you do it regularly your aching back will completely disappear.

personalia

We welcome back Mrs. Betty Garner, our organist, who has returned after convalescing from her operation.

We are fortunate in having a Churchwarden, Mr. A. W. Sidebottom, who was able to play in her place.

Our wishes go to Mrs. Bing who has had to have nineteen stitches in her leg after a fall in her home. We hope she will soon be in top form again.

Farewell to Mr. and Mrs. Porter of the Salford Road shops. Mr. Porter has had to give up his business on account of failing eyesight. We are grateful to him for all his help in the past.

Welcome to Mr. and Mrs. Timari who have taken over the Porter's fruit and vegetable business.

Farewell to Debbie Havill who returns to Princeton Indiana, and who has gained an entrance into Indiana State University. We shall miss Debbie who has been a loyal member of our choir.

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He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in still another village, where He worked in a carpenter's shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher.

He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family, or owned a house. He didn't go to the college. He never visited a big city. He never travelled two hundred miles from the place where He was born. He did none of the things one usually associates with greatness. He had no credentials but Himself. He was only thirty-three when the tide of public opinion turned against him.

His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying his executioners gambled for his clothing, the only property he had on earth. When He was dead He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen centuries have come and gone and to-day He is the central figure of the human race and the leader of mankind's progress. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that ONE SOLITARY LIFE.

From a Christmas Card

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH

1. Which window of the Church depicts some children who had been 'pickled'?
2. Which aisle of the Church has the most arches?
3. How many bells are there in the Tower?
4. Which part of the churchyard was under water during the last century?
5. What is the Hagioscope?

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