JULY/AUGUST FREE

marston times

PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT NICHOLAS

ENJOYING GOD . . .

"What is the chief end of man?"
"To glorify God and to enjoy him for ever".

I like this section from the shorter Catechism.

I wonder if you 'enjoy God'?

Somebody once said that most people have just enough religion to make them miserable.

I remember as a student attending a famous Oxford church on a spring morning. The sun streamed in through the windows. The birds were singing outside. The trees were bursting into new leaf. And in Church we sang: "And make thy chosen people joyful". But looking round at the congregation we looked anything but that. We looked miserable.

Yet joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit in our lives. The early Christians after the Ascension 'returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and spent all their time in the temple praising God'. Somehow we've got to recapture that sense of the enjoyment of God, if we are going to enthuse others about our faith.

There was a time when a visit to a religious bookshop was a source of joy to me. Now as the years pass by, and religious books increase, I find myself increasingly bored by the plethora of religious literature on the market. So much of it is either trivial or superficial. So much of it seems concerned with liturgical niceties or spiritual peccadiloes.

I once asked a Bishop who is a scholar: "What theological works should I be reading now?" He replied: "Read the poets. They're writing the best theology today". It was of course an overstatement, but his point was that the enjoyment of God can often be found in the extra-ecclesiastical world . . . in the world of art, and music, and literature.

Gerald Manley Hopkins once wrote: "The world is charged with the grandeur of God" and this is true. Of course we are led into a deeper perception of God through pondering and praying over the Scriptures, joining in the regular worship of the Church, sharing with fellow-Christians . . . but the Christian must avoid a ghetto mentality which permits him only to discover God in a so-called religious context. If we are to enjoy God let us discover him in the totality of the world of our experience . . . in the sheer beauty of music, in the laughter of little children, in the freshness of a flower, in the compassionate eyes of a friend, in the complexity of a great machine, in the whole world of sight and sound and sense and touch . . .

Some of the great Saints from St. Francis to Teilhard de Chardin were people who learnt the secret of the enjoyment of God . . . and they made the great discovery that God was not just to be found in the sanctuary, but in the sum of human experience. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handywork".

So do enjoy yourselves . . . for God's sake!

Paul N. Rimmer

Vicar of Marston.

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH

Sunday Services

8.00 a.m. Holy Communion
10.00 a.m. Parish Communion
6.30 p.m. Evensong

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What is best for the children?

Recently the Parochial Church Council discussed a report from the Worship Committee. The Committee had certain suggestions to make about Children's Instruction and Worship.

As a result of this we invite parents and all interested to attend a PARISH MEETING at 8 p.m. in St. Nicholas Church Hall on Tuesday, 25th September.

At this meeting we shall be asking: 'Is 10 a.m. a better time than 11.15 a.m. for Children's Instruction?"

This would mean that parents who so desired could attend Church whilst their youngsters were in Sunday School.

We shall be asking for suggestions about the times older children can be instructed, and whether we should hold more Family Services of an informal kind like those held at Harvest Time and on Mothering Sunday.

If you have children of your own, or even if you haven't, and are interested, do come along to this meeting.

We want it to be as representative as possible, so that the Church may serve the children and families of the parish.

Remember the date: TUESDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER at 8 P.M. in St. Nicholas Church Hall.

DATES

Wednesday, 15th August

2.30 p.m. to 4 p.m. Marston Wives Tea Afternoon in the Mortimer Hall.

Bank Holiday Monday, 26th August

10 a.m. Women's Institute Annual Coffee Morning in St. Nicholas Church Hall. All welcome.

Sunday, 30th September

Harvest Thanksgiving at St. Nicholas Church.

BAPTISM & MARRIAGE

The Vicar regrets that he is not permitted to christen the children of non-parishioners, unless the parents' names are entered on the current Church Electoral Roll. This is in accordance with the ruling of the Oxford Diocesan Synod.

He is also not permitted to take the marriage service unless either the bride or bridegoom lives in the parish, or has his or her name entered upon the current Church Electoral Roll. This is in accordance with Ecclesiastical Law.

Cumberlege House

'Never a dull moment' is how I would describe Cumberlege. We are all one big happy family. We opened on 1st March, 1971 and already we fell as if we have known each other all out lives. The tenants appreciate so much their modern, comfortable flats, with up-to-date amenities.

We have a weekly Whist Drive, when our friends from Bradlands join us and twice a year we hold a sale of work. Tenants knit, sew, crochet and make toys, home-made wine, jam and cakes, etc. At our last sale we made £55. We were able to go out for our Christmas dinner and have entertainments at Cumberlege afterwards in our Communual Room. We also have an annual outing. This year we hope to go to the Vale of Evesham.

C. Barwell (Warden)

Parish Council Notes

At a recent Parish Council meeting the question of damage to Parish Council property was discussed.

It was pointed out that the age of criminal responsibility was ten years in cases where the child knew that his action was causing damage. It was not the policy of the Parish Council to call in the police when young children were involved but it was hoped that the parents would take responsibility. It should be born in mind that the cost of repairs was a direct charge on parish rates.

The Parish Council, therefore, hoped that adults would be vigilant and report cases of damage and that parents will endeavour to influence their children to take care of property.

oxford polytechnic

ACCOMMODATION WANTED

Oxford Polytechnic urgently requires more accommodation for students for the Autumn Term starting 28th September.

Bedsitting rooms with or without breakfast are equally acceptable. An evening meal is not usually required. If you can spare a room and would be willing to take a student your help will be much appreciated.

Please write, or telephone between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

The Lodgings Officer,
Oxford Polytechnic,
Gipsy Lane,
Headington, Oxford.

Telephone: Oxford 64777

TWO EPITAPHS

Here lies the mother of children five
Three are dead and two are alive;
Those who are dead preferring rather
To die with their mother than live with
father.

- - - - - - - - - - -

Here lie I and my three daughters,
So much for drinking the Cheltenham
waters.
If we had stuck to the Epsom salts,
We never would have lain in there
'ere vaults.

Did you know . . . ?

Did you know Marston means Marsh Town? The old name ever survives in Marsh Lane. If you have paddled to the playground on the football field after one of the recent storms, you may find it difficult to believe that ancient Marston was even wetter. But it was! The first settlement was little more than an island amongst the watercourses of the Cherwell. As late as the fourteenth century land just over the village boundary in Elsfield was under water almost all the year round. Every so often floods or plagues of frogs remind us of a damper past. So when your children come home with wet feet, take comfort; it was once a lot worse.

HELP NEEDED !

ST. LUKE'S HOME urgently needs people (voluntary or paid) to help the nurses do all kinds of jobs in the Home.

It would help if anyone willing to help could start at 8 a.m. to take round breakfast trays, though this is not essential.

Pay: 44p per hour. Uniform provided. Full-time or part-time help.

Anyone at all interested please apply to St. Luke's Home, 20 Linton Road, North Oxford. Telephone No. 59581

The W.R.V.S. are short of drivers and helpers to deliver 'Meals-on-Wheels'. Takes about 2½ hours in the middle of the day.

People who will make it a regular commitment weekly or fortnightly or monthly are urgently needed.

Please get in touch with the W.R.V.S. County Office, Alexandra Court, 270 Woodstock Road, Oxford, Telephone No. 53835.

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