marston news

parish church of st. nicholas

No. 195 Price 5p MAY



ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH — OLD MARSTON

Vicar : Rev. Paul N. Rimmer, M.A.
11 Elsfield Road, Old Marston. Tel. : 47034.

Reader : Mr. W. H. Saumarez Smith, O.B.E., M.A., Bishop's Wood End, Cuddesdon.

Parish Worker : Deaconess O. J. Lodge, 5 Elsfield Road, Old Marston. Tel. : Oxford 47956.

Vicar's Warden : Mr. V. C. Cardy, 110 Staunton Road, Headington, Oxford. Tel. : 61116.

People's Warden & Treasurer : Mr. B. G. Oliver, 13 Jack Straws Lane, Headington, Oxford. Tel. No. 47997

Secretary of the P.C.C. : Mrs. M. Harlow, Fir Tree House, Old Marston.

Organist : Mrs. E. M. Garner, "Barn Gates," 31 Oxford Rd., Old Marston. Tel. : Oxford 41888.

SUNDAY SERVICES

Holy Communion : 8 a.m.

Parish Communion : 10 a.m. Parish Communion (followed by Coffee). **Crèche** at the Vicarage.

Evening Prayer and Sermon : 6.30 p.m.

Holy Baptism : Second and Fourth Sundays of the month at 3 p.m. unless otherwise announced. Notice must be given.

Holy Matrimony : Banns to be given in at the Vicarage.

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Holy Communion : Wednesdays at 7.15 a.m.
3rd Friday at 10.30 a.m. with Laying on of Hands for sick.
And at other times, as announced. (See Notice Board).

The Daily Services of Morning and Evening Prayer are usually said each day at 7.15 a.m. and 5.15 p.m. (except on Saturdays). Wednesday : Morning Prayer is at 9.15 a.m. but it is **advisable to consult the notice board in the Church Porch.**

CHURCH ORGANISATIONS AND MEETINGS :

Children's Instruction : 10 a.m. in Church Hall during Parish Communion for ages 3½ to 10 years.
Also at 11.15 a.m. Kindergarten and Nursery in Church Hall.
Juniors in Church with a Family Service on 1st Sunday of each month.

Mother's Union : As announced, 7.45 p.m. at the Vicarage.

Young Wives Group : Alternate Wednesdays, 7.45 p.m. in Church Hall.

Bellringers : Practice Night — Friday nights, 7.45 p.m.

Brownies : Monday, 6 p.m. in Scout Headquarters.

Girl Guides : Monday, 7.30 p.m. in Scout Headquarters.

Cubs : Tuesday, 6.15 p.m. in Scout Headquarters.

43rd St. Nicholas' Scout Troop : Friday, 7.15 p.m. in Scout Headquarters.

As the covers are printed in advance you are advised to consult the Notice Board in the Church Porch, in case of alteration of times.

PARISH CALENDAR : MAY 1974

May 1. Wednesday. Festival of SS. Philip & James, Apostles & Martyrs.
7.15 p.m. Holy Communion.
7.45 p.m. Marston Wives.

„ 5. EASTER III
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
10.0 a.m. **The Parish Communion.**
11.15 a.m. Family Service.
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon.

„ 7. Tuesday. 9.15 a.m. Holy Communion.

„ 11. Saturday. Bellringers Outing.

„ 12. EASTER IV
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
10.0 a.m. **The Parish Communion.**
11.15 a.m. Children's Instruction.
3.00 p.m. Holy Baptism (after previous arrangement).
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon.

„ 15. Wednesday. 3 p.m. Archdeanconry Mothers' Union Festival at Cirencester.

„ 17. Friday. 10.30 a.m. Holy Communion.

„ 18. Saturday. BUMPER JUMBLE SALE, 2.30 in the Mortimer Hall. Proceeds towards CHRISTIAN AID.

„ 19. ROGATION SUNDAY
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
10.0 a.m. **The Parish Communion.**
11.15 a.m. Children's Instruction.
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon.
The Over 60's Club will be attending.

„ 22. Wednesday. Marston Wives meet at Sescut Farm.

„ 23. THURSDAY. ASCENSION DAY
7.15 p.m. Holy Communion.

„ 26. SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY
8.00 a.m. Holy Communion.
10.0 a.m. **The Parish Communion.**
11.15 a.m. Children's Instruction.
3.00 p.m. Holy Baptism (after previous arrangement).
6.30 p.m. Evensong and Sermon.

„ 27. SPRING BANK HOLIDAY
10 a.m. to 12 noon
Marston Players Coffee Morning in Mortimer Hall.

June 2. WHIT-SUNDAY
We welcome the Vicar back from his sabbatical leave.

ALTAR FLOWER ROTA

May 5. Mrs. Boswell.
„ 12. Mrs. Monger.
„ 19. Mrs. Porter.
„ 26. Mrs. Allen.

My Dear Friends,

" The merry merry month of May " has arrived! This conjurs up scenes of rejoicing, dancing around the May Pole, Morris Dancers on the village green, the crowning of the May Queen and so on. All peaceful scenes from rural England, and far removed, one might think, from industrial England today—the Third world—the devastated areas of so many parts of the world as we know it to-day. Yet we may still rejoice because in the merry month of May we celebrate one of the greatest Festivals of the Christian Church—The Festival of the Ascension of Our Lord. It so happens that on this day one of the psalms said or sung in our Churches and Cathedrals all over the world are the words " God has gone up with a merry noise and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet."

Because Ascension Day always falls on a weekday, so often it is passed by with little thought, but it is a Festival as important as Christmas and Easter and marks the climax of the Great 40 days of Easter which we are now celebrating.

It is a coronation day. The day when we think of Jesus Christ as " King of Kings and Lord of Lords " as the Hallelujah chorus reminds us in that magnificent paeon of praise we all know and love so well, from Handel's Messiah.

So do not let us think of Jesus going up and away out of our sight, but that " He fills the whole universe with His ever abiding Presence " because He has overcome sin and death and is alive for evermore. That is why we **can** be merry in spite of all that makes us so sad to-day. He has said " Be of good cheer for I have overcome the world." We shall celebrate this great Festival of the Ascension with a Service of Holy Communion at **7.15 p.m.** which we hope will be a time when as many people as possible can gather in praise and thanksgiving that the Lord is King **and is in control,** whatever may happen.

Yours sincerely,

OLIVE J. LODGE, Dss.

P.S. I could not let this opportunity pass without a special " thank you " to the kind donors of a lovely new bicycle which I am now using. This has meant so much to me and I hope that these good friends who wish to remain annonymous will know how very much I appreciate their gesture at the time when my original bicycle was stolen.

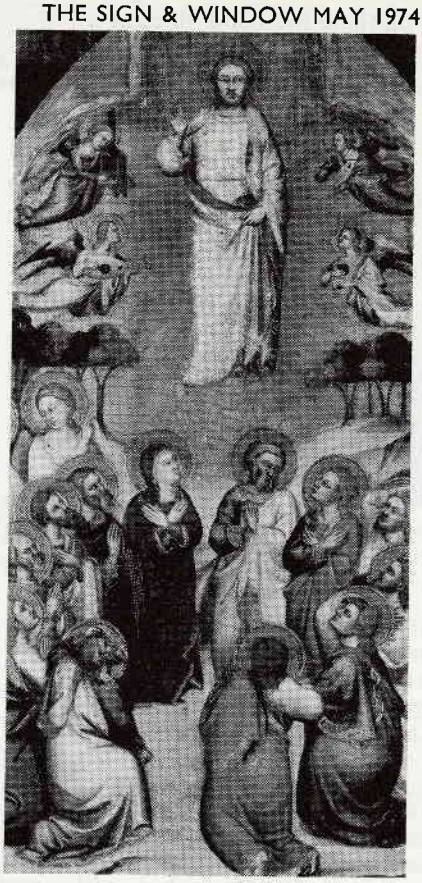
ABOUT PEOPLE

Welcome into God's Family those who have recently been baptised—Lorna Ann Burton and Tina Jane Emberton. We pray for their parents and their godparents.

Ascension into Heaven

WHEN artists in former times wished to portray the Ascension of Jesus, they invariably showed him moving upwards, as if into some heaven above. It was a natural enough thing to do when it was thought that this earth was the centre of the universe, having a 'below' and an 'above'. The advance of knowledge since those days has made such a view untenable. And the exploration of space by all the man-made hardware of recent years has brought home to us all that there is in God's mysterious universe, no up, nor down, in the old literal sense.

This is all to the good if it enables us to have a clearer idea of what is meant by the Ascension. It is true that, in the first book of The Acts there are the two men in white, who say to the disciples, 'Men of Galilee, why stand there looking up into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken away from you, up to heaven, will come in the same way as you have seen him go.' On the other hand, of course, the Gospel of Luke makes no mention of any 'going up'. It just says that Jesus 'parted from them'. Mark mentions the Lord Jesus being 'taken up into heaven', it is true. Matthew,



The Ascension—Style of Orcagna, 1343
Reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees, The National Gallery, London

IN THIS ISSUE

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on the other hand, does not.

Where Heaven is

The fact of the matter is that we are likely to get confused if we think too much of heaven as a place, although such an idea dies hard. Heaven is a state, the place where God is, rather than any geographical spot in his universe. Great spiritual ideas become open to attack only when they are wrongly thought of in material terms, and the failure to find any tangible evidence of a material heaven in any of the immensity which surrounds our earth becomes important only so long as a material heaven has been what we have been expecting.

Great joy

The point about the Ascension for the disciples was that it finally confirmed for them the divinity of the Jesus whom they had loved and followed. That is why, far from sorrowing at what appeared to be his departure from them, they 'returned to Jerusalem with great joy and spent all their time in the Temple praising God'.

So the Ascension has never meant that Jesus has gone away from us into some heaven beyond the stars. It does mean that Jesus is with us in that heaven which exists wherever he is. SIGNET

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

The trouble is that too often charity not only begins but ends at home.
ANON.

THE SIGN

Not ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified

MAY 1974 No. 833

1	W	**St Philip and St James, Apostles**
5	S	**3 after Easter**
12	S	**4 after Easter**
19	S	**5 after Easter** Rogation Sunday
23	Th	**Ascension Day**
26	S	**Sunday after Ascension**

Barnabas

The *Barnabas Bible* cartoons, which will be a feature of *The Sign* for some time to come, deserve a word of welcome and explanation. They are the creation of the Rev. Graham Jeffery, vicar of an Eastbourne parish. He is the originator of the *Barnabas Bible* which has already given pleasure to thousands. It is a highly-individual interpretation of the Bible's stories and teachings as seen through the very human eyes of the cartoon character 'Barnabas'.



There is always a deep Christian message in these drawings; but it is put across without solemnity or self-righteousness. Barnabas teaches above all that life should be observed with a twinkle in the eye. We welcome him very warmly to the pages of *The Sign*. *The Barnabas Bible*, from which our extracts are taken, is published by Wolfe Publishing Ltd.

AIDAN WHITTINGTON TALKS TO. . .

Peter Moore, Dean of St. Albans

DEAN of St Alban's Cathedral since last November, the Very Rev. Peter Moore has never been far from the English countryside, whether as a country parson in Worcestershire or as Canon Residentiary of Ely. 'I was born and brought up in the Surrey countryside. I love the country and feel at home there. It is the place I naturally find my relaxations and personal pleasures. Along with fishing, gardening is my major hobby: even though I say it myself, I've always taken over uncultivated gardens and made them beautiful! My special interest is rare herbaceous plants.'

Peter Moore is a strong, but not uncritical, advocate of traditional church life in the country parish. 'The percentage of church attendance in the country is very much higher than in the town; indeed, towns have always been "mission areas" for the Church of England. I don't think we should withdraw clergy from strong points in the country in the hope they would be successful in the towns, but the present balance of clergy certainly needs looking at.'

Interest in the arts

The arts are a particular interest of the Dean: 'In the course of my ministry, I've had the good fortune to encounter a number of the leading artists of our time, such as Henry Moore and John Piper.' He thinks it quite untrue to describe the English as a 'philistine' or unartistic people—England's unsurpassed medieval cathedrals and parish churches prove the opposite. In much contemporary art,



Dean Moore sees 'violence and the breakdown of an organic society'.

—and worship

Art overlaps into worship—'it should draw people beyond their own horizons'. Peter Moore stresses that worship has been impoverished by the divisions between Christians. 'This, for me, is the urgency about ecumenism: until we've restored the unity of the Christian Church, we shan't experience real worship as fully as we should. Worship should include the sense of mystery: the contemporary fascination with the occult arises in some measure because the Church has not satisfied that basic need in man.'

In Taizé, the famous French Protestant monastic community, Peter Moore sees the keys to contemporary spirituality and worship. (In his *Tomorrow is too Late*, he has written the Taizé story.) He sums it up thus: 'We can learn from its simplicity, its sense of mystery and awe, its integrity, its lack of encumbering tradition, and its life in freedom, which imposes disciplines as well as giving liberation.'

As a Matter of Fact...

Language of Welcome

Multi-lingual members of the congregation of St Andrew's, Plymouth, have been asked to make themselves available to greet foreign visitors after services. The church attracts many tourists during the summer months, and the vicar hopes that the scheme will make visitors feel more welcome.

Members Only

Only children from worshipping families will be baptised in future at Anglican and Methodist churches on a housing estate for 30,000 at Clifton in Nottingham.

Bible City

The ancient Biblical city of Jawa, dating back to 3000 B.C., has been discovered 100 miles north-west of Amman on the Jordan-Iraqi border. The city was surrounded by huge walls, and had several gates, say archaeologists.

Stewards' Prayer

A prayer study group in Sheffield were invited to compose prayers relevant to contemporary life. One of them turned his attention to shop stewards, with this result. 'O God, who through the earthly life of your Son, Jesus Christ, has shown us the dignity of labour, grant to those to whom is entrusted the responsibility of being shop stewards in the

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Prayer of an Older Person

Lord, thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will some day be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody, helpful but not bossy.

Seal my lips

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing, and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of other people's pain; but help me to endure with patience.

Teach me a lesson

I dare not ask for improved memory but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken. Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a saint—some of them are so hard to live with—but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people, and give me, Lord, the wish to tell them so.

From *Response, Forward Movement Publications, U.S.A.*



photo: Graham Tatlock

Psalms of Life

'The foolish body has said in his heart; there is no God'

Ps. 53.1



The Editor of THE SIGN will be glad to hear from readers. All letters, if accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, will be answered personally and should be addressed to: Canon Purcell, 'Your Letters', THE SIGN, The Alden Press, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0EG. A 50p Book Token will be sent to the writer of any letter published.

Sterilisation Operations

I would like to know the teachings or views of the Church concerning sterilisation operations which are becoming increasingly popular as a means of limiting the size of one's family.

R. Tudhope, Fort William.

There is as yet no collective view of the Church at present on the ethics of these comparatively new procedures, such as, for instance, vasectomy. As a means of contraception, however, they may be held to be covered by the recommendation of the 1958 Lambeth Conference, which came down firmly in favour of family planning. The committee on the Family In Contemporary Society said that 'Family planning ought to be the result of thoughtful and prayerful Christian decision. Where it is, Christian husbands and wives need feel no hesitation in offering their decision humbly to God, and following it with a clear conscience'. Ed.

God and Accidents

I have friends whose son was recently killed in a road accident. This seems to have completely destroyed their faith. They say that if God allows things like this to happen, they don't want anything more to do with him. What should I say to them?

J. Slater, Plymouth.

Perhaps the best thing is not in the first instance to say anything at all; but to offer constructive love and sympathy to your friends in their grief. After that might come the opportunity of pointing out that it is neither right nor fair to blame God for tragic happenings of this kind. A victim of a motor accident, or of any other disaster, suffers as a result of some human action, not of a divine action. In giving man free will, God gave him the power to inflict suffering on himself and others knowingly or unknowingly. But the lesson of the Cross is that God in Christ shares our sufferings and will help us to rise above them. Ed.

The Magazine and Churchgoers

At the beginning of this year I agreed to become a parish magazine distributor. I have been very surprised to discover that a lot of people who take the magazine never come to church. So what is the point of me taking them the magazine?

H. Harris, Stevenage.

Every point. The parish magazine is a very great help in introducing the Church and in getting its message across to homes where it would maybe not otherwise enter. So don't be discouraged. Carry on the good work—because it is a good work. Ed.

Swearing in Court

Some time ago one of your correspondents wrote concerning a difficulty they had had in taking the oath in court. I had a similar experience, and was adamant about not swearing on the Bible. The clerk of the court said there was an alternative oath, and that one was not bound to use the Bible.

M. Evans, Middlesbrough.

A useful point. Those who have written to us, having experienced similar difficulty, will be glad to know of this. Ed.

Let God Arise

RICHARD HOLLOWAY

When, recently, Richard Holloway, who is Rector of Old St Paul's in Edinburgh, and lecturer in Christian Ethics at Edinburgh Theological College, published his book Let God Arise *it was an instant success. A deeply thought out message of encouragement to Christians today after a long period of doubt and criticism, it was clearly of help to many. In this first extract, he points out how unnecessary it is for the Church to make the choice between retiring into a ghetto or surrendering to the ways of the world.*

IN the first century the Church was a group of people whose view of the world differed significantly from the one generally taken for granted in their society. Such a minority may react in either of two ways to the pressures of the alien society in which they are set. They may retreat into a ghetto where they meet with their own kind, or they may surrender to the alien culture. The fascinating thing about the Church is that it has never given in entirely to either alternative, because it has always held itself to be a missionary body. It has always claimed to possess information, news of urgent and intense concern to all men everywhere. Christian tradition is full of images of men running to bring beleaguered villagers news of victory, of feet pounding over mountains, impatient with glad tidings.

The message

The command 'Make disciples of all nations' contained several fateful implications. On the one hand, the Christian evangelist was heir to a message, a particular piece of news. Corresponding to the given element was the need to preserve the message by containing it safely within a supporting structure where the believer could be preserved from the temptation to surrender it to the pressure of the larger culture.

The command

On the other hand was the command to spread the message, to make it known among the nations, which made necessary a constant interaction between the Church and society, and which put the Church permanently at risk. There would be a constant temptation to dissolve the Church's message into the dominant world view, what is usually called 'the spirit of the age'.

An early example of the creative use of tension in the Church's life is found in the missionary work of Paul, who faced the fundamental difficulty of every evangelist, the problem of communication. The very fact that he could talk to men about God at all indicates that he recognised no fundamental discontinuity between the experience of men and the reality of God.

The Word

The peculiar anguish of the evangelist at all times and in all places is

to next page

to find the word that will reveal to men the reality whom they have been unconsciously seeking and ignorantly worshipping. There have always been Christians whose zeal has led them to try to resolve the tension on one side or the other, ghetto or surrender. The characteristic activity of some Christian theologians today is not ghetto, but surrender.

An interesting example of the theology of surrender was made in Harvey Cox's book *The Secular City*. This was a breathtakingly novel example of an evangelism translated into the dominant cultural motif of its day. The really new thing in Cox's book was the enthusiastic identification of the modern, secular city with the Kingdom of God.

The roots of his thinking were found, not in the Bible, but in the cultural milieu that he inhabited while writing *The Secular City*—the intoxicating atmosphere of white liberal America during the days of John Kennedy's presidency.

The difference today

Things are very different today. The secular city has become, in fact, the American nightmare. Already cities are disfigured with the hideous symptoms of cultural degeneration. As we would expect, Cox was soon considered passé by the theologically fashionable, who moved on to the theme of 'Revolution', dismissing Cox as a mere 'reformist theologian'. Even so, revolutionary theology is the same old thing. We are not offered the theology of revolution but revolution as theology. It makes the theologian a quick-change artist, endlessly struggling into the fashion of the moment.

Let God Arise *is published by Mowbrays at £1.50.*

One Column Bible Commentary

WILLIAM NEIL

SOME of the splendid Ascension Day hymns catch its spirit of triumph and exultation magnificently. One thinks of Charles Wesley's 'Jesus the Saviour reigns' or Thomas Kelly's 'The Head that once was crowned with thorns is crowned with glory now'. St Paul has caught it too in his great Christ-hymn (Phil. 2. 5–11) where he pictures the time when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. The fullest account of the Ascension is given by St Luke in Acts 1. 1–11 and as befits prose compared with poetry it is less exciting, and for some people the narrative presents difficulties. But it attempts to convey in biblical imagery that our Lord, having given his disciples the vision of a world-wide Church, left them with the assurance that he would be with them everywhere and for ever.

The Ascension

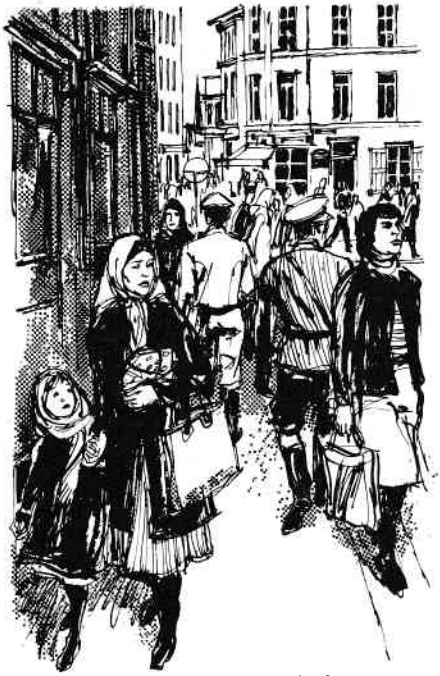
No one has put into simple language the meaning of the Ascension for us today better than William Temple. 'In the days of his earthly ministry, only those could speak to him who came where he was. If he was in Galilee, men could not find him in Jerusalem; if he was in Jerusalem, men could not find him in Galilee. But his Ascension means that he is perfectly united with God; we are with him wherever we are present to God.' William Temple had that rare gift of illuminating the profoundest mysteries of our faith in a way which marks the Christian teacher who is first and foremost a man of God.

JUNIOR PAGE

'THEY get up to all sorts of terrible things, you know. . . . I'm told that they murder babies and eat them!' said one shocked lady to her friend. Who on earth was she talking about? The family at the end house in her own street, a shopkeeper and his wife and son. She'd known them all her life. She'd always bought her fish from his shop.

Whatever had the fishmonger done? Was he involved in some terrible secret society? Certainly that's what his neighbours thought. For this was Rome, about a hundred years after the first Easter; the fishmonger and his family had become Christians. This meant that the whole power of the Roman state was against them, for the Roman law said, 'You can practise another religion in private, but in public you must worship our gods, and you must worship our Emperor as a god.' They thought it was reasonable—but the Christians wouldn't obey. 'Sorry', they said. 'We believe that the one true, living God came to earth in Jesus, and wants us to tell everyone that he is Lord of the whole world. We *can't* do as you say.'

Many of them were killed. (You've probably seen them in films, facing lions in the arena.) But many more suffered all their lives because people treated them as the fishmonger was treated: told horror stories about them, wouldn't speak to them, took away their jobs, thought up all kinds of ways to make them miserable. And yet the Christians held on . . . until in the end it was Rome that crumbled. Let's remember all those brave ordinary people when we sit comfortable and safe in church next Sunday!



In some parts of the world it's still dangerous to be a Christian. But plenty of people are, just the same, and they need the help of your prayers.

Pamela

Competition

Imagine that you have been ordered to worship the Roman Emperor—or else! Explain why you, as a Christian, can't do that. Send your answer to Pamela at 'The Sign', The Alden Press, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0EG, adding your name, address and age. Prizes for the best.

Advertisement

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Tel: 01-995 1661

Women's World

An article in *The Sign* last summer, touching on the plight of many children from broken homes during school holidays, brought interesting reactions. One reader vividly put the other side of the picture. The questions she raises are important and it is right we should consider them very seriously. She writes: 'I should like to know how real church people would answer my questions. I really want to know the answers.'

Marriages Adrift

She feels that most church people she knows—I hope she does not know very many!—are smug and self-satisfied in their outwardly successful marriages towards those like herself whose marriages have gone adrift against their will and desire. 'What do you do', she writes, 'when, having married the man you love, he turns out to be cruel, and you, and later your children, are in terrible danger, physically, mentally and spiritually? You have faithfully promised to stick by that man until death. What do you do? . . . I speak as someone who *never* got divorced lightly. I agree that marriage vows should be binding.

There are lots like me. It's heartbreaking really to think of. And should I ever find a man who is decent and Christian and loves me, then I put him in a dreadful position if he wants to marry me. No Church wedding: only a register office and then off to ask permission to be re-admitted to Communion. . . .'

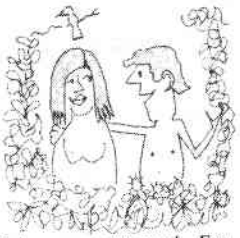
Our aim in Women's World is to consider constructively such important current matters as affect the home. As Christians believing in the permanence of marriage, we must not ever take up a self-righteous position. Those who have ever worked on desperately sordid cases in the matrimonial courts are often the first to say in compassion, 'There, but for the Grace of God, go I.' What answers, then, can we put forward, in face of tragedies such as these? A £1 book token will be sent to the senders of the two most helpful answers, which will be passed on to the questioner.

A lighter note

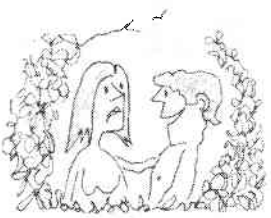
By courtesy of *The Church Times*, in which it originally appeared, I add this charming essay on Grannies,

LIFE WITH BARNABAS *by Graham Jeffery*

In the garden. *Gen. 2.25.*



1. I love you very much, Eve . . . There's no one else quite like you in all the world . . . In fact . . .



2. Would you believe it . . . There is no one else in ALL the world!



3. It's lovely here, Eve. Just the two of us.

written by an eight year old:

'A grandmother is a woman who has not children of her own, so she loves the boys and girls of other people's. Grandmothers have nothing to do, they only have to be there. If they take you for a walk, they go slowly past beautiful leaves and caterpillars. They never say "Come along quickly", or "Hurry up, for goodness sake".

'They are usually fat; but not too fat to do up our shoe-laces. They wear spectacles and sometimes take out their teeth. They can answer questions; for instance, why dogs hate cats, and why God is not married.

'When they read to us they do not leave out anything. They do not mind if it is always the same story. Grandmothers are the only grown-ups who always have time. Everyone should have a grandmother.'

PLANNING FOR HOLIDAYS

Farmhouse holidays, of course, are known to many who find them more suitable, and considerably less expensive, than taking young children to hotels either at home or abroad. If you have not already been on a Farmhouse holiday you will find all the information you need in the Farm Holiday Guide which is obtainable from branches of W. H. Smith & Son Ltd, at 25p.

For those who are on their own, or who have special interests which they like to pursue during their vacation, there are any number of residential courses and study tours available. Some of these are run by adult education centres like Hawkwood College, Stroud, while others are annual affairs organised by clubs or associations. For instance Radius (formerly the Religious Drama Society) hold a summer school each year in a different part of the country. At each of these a number of experts give tuition in various aspects of drama such as dance, production, creative writing, etc. For further particulars write to Radius, George Bell House, Ayres Street, London, S.E.1.

Another organisation, The Holiday Fellowship, which aims to 'provide for the healthy enjoyment of leisure' celebrated its Diamond Jubilee in 1973. It now has guest houses all over the country. The Fellowship offers walking holidays, riding holidays, painting holidays, holidays for flower lovers and many more. For detailed information contact The Holiday Fellowship, Fellowship House, 142 Great North Way, Hendon, London NW4 1EG.

Anne Arnott

From the *Barnabas Bible* by Graham Jeffery; Wolfe Publishing Ltd.



4. Just the HOW MANY of us did you say, Adam?



5. Sorry, Lord. Just the THREE of us, I meant to say . . .



6. I never was very good at mathematics.

Question Competition

Can you answer the following question in not more than 100 words: **Do we need more modern hymns?**
Write your own letter in reply and send it to Question Competition, The Sign, The Alden Press, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0EG. A £3 Book Token will be awarded to the winning entry. Closing date May 31st.

Competition Report

Should young children be made to go to church? *A small minority thought the discipline of compulsory church-going was an important part of a child's upbringing. Some elderly contributors looked back in thankfulness to such discipline in their own childhood, but the vast majority said that children should be encouraged by the example of their parents to attend, and that churches should make the occasion happy and attractive.*

The prize goes to Miss H. M. Griffin, of Merrow, Guildford, who sums up what many people felt:

'Children learn most and best from example. If church-going means something to parents, then children will go along happily too, but not if parents grumble!

'Some say children shouldn't go until they are old enough to understand or decide for themselves, but we don't leave other activities until then. Children learn to walk, talk and behave properly long before they understand why; they read, write, and learn new subjects and skills long before they can decide whether to accept or reject them.

So bring young children to join the rest of the Parish Family (with *soft* toys to play with!).'

As a Matter of Fact from page 68

industries of our land, the guidance of your Holy Spirit.

'Take from them all mistrust and misunderstanding, so that in their consultation with one another and their employers, they may seek a fair and just settlement of their problems, for the well-being of their fellow men and the prosperity of our land.'

Blanket Welcome

When the Archbishop of Cape Town visited Welkom, second largest town in the Orange Free State, he preached at a vast open air Eucharist outside a school. Afterwards he was officially received by the people, and clothed in a cope formed by a Basotho blanket.

Tailpiece

Finally, my most regular correspondent poses the question: 'Who is the first man mentioned in the Bible?' Answer, Chap. 1.

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VIEWPOINT: Margaret Duggan looks round the Anglican scene

Communication Gap

'POLITICS are nothing to do with the Church.' True or false? The way you answered that question would tell me which side of the communication gap you are—that communication gap in the Church which has now reached the dimensions of the Grand Canyon.

It troubles me deeply. For nearly eight years my working life has been among Christians who believe fervently that Jesus came to change the world; not just to save individual souls, but to teach his disciples a new order—that we should love one another.

And those friends of mine in the missionary societies, in the Church's Council for Social Aid, the British Council of Churches, on the Board for Social Responsibility, and in the innumerable church-initiated action groups, are all committed to the view that loving one's neighbour also means seeking social justice for him. If he is hungry, he must be fed; if he is homeless, he must be housed; if he is ignorant, he must be educated; if he is oppressed, he must be liberated. All political actions; and many of them now need political pressure groups if they are to be made to happen.



Married to an electronics engineer, Margaret Duggan has three children. She is also a professional journalist, a member of the General Synod, and of the Board of Social Responsibility.

Exploring new ways

Those marvellous verses at the end of *Matthew 25* have become the most important quoted text among Christian activists today. It is that which drives my Christian friends to help the alcoholic, the homeless family, the economically exploited South African labourer, the Brazilian slum-dweller. And at the same time I find them exploring new ways of worship, of understanding the Gospel; new—and sometimes shock-making—ways of communication. They sit lightly to tradition—indeed, they are often exasperated and impatient with it. The Eucharist seems more meaningful celebrated on the floor, those taking part sitting or kneeling in a ring, passing the elements to each other.

These are the sort of Christians I have been working among; but the ones I live among are quite different. They also care about those in need, but they see the answer to those needs in the generosity of individual Christians and churches, and themselves often give generously to Christian Aid and overseas missions and Shelter, and a host of other charities. This, they believe, is the proper Christian eirenic way. They are deeply worried by those who say that the Church should commit itself to political involvement, and

to next page

POETS' CORNER

The winning entry this month is published below and receives a £3 Book Token. Other winning entries for this competition will be printed throughout the year. Send your entries to Poetry Competition, The Sign, The Alden Press, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0EG.

PRISONER

I nurse my ego like a running sore
Myself incurable, a leprosy.
I peel away the skins but still the core,
the centre of the Universe, is Me.
Only in sleep I am adrift at last
But with the waking am again made fast.

I seek a lover who will understand.
In travel, it is I behind the moon.
In pain I sharpen to a shrill demand.
My prayers re-echo in the light cocoon
that faith alone can pierce. Christ Jesus pity
lest in the promise of the Resurrection
I am bound to myself throughout eternity.

MRS J. C. BURGESS

W. E. Shewell-Cooper's

GARDENING NOTES

ONE always thinks of the rock garden as something huge, and, of course, it can be. But it is possible to make very effective small rock gardens providing certain facts are borne in mind. The first thing is that it is better to use stones with a massive appearance, even if there are only comparatively few of them, rather than a large number of smaller ones.

Never try to make a rock garden in the shade of a tree, for the alpines will just wither and die. There is a very serious danger from the drips of moisture from the branches, as well as the plant food robbing which will be done by the roots. Make a mound with varying contours, say, to the south side of the pool, and have perhaps a path skirting its irregularly shaped outline.

Try to choose stones that have been weathered and show the original geological outlines. Do not use rocks that have had to be quarried and so look brand new. If there is one side of the rock that looks more natural than the other, then you can always expose

Viewpoint from page 77

they have been very critical indeed of the World Council of Churches and those oh-so-notorious grants that the WCC has made to the various guerrilla liberation movements.

Tradition

But all this for them is but the outward reach of their local church life, which is where they find *their* manifestation of the Gospel. To them tradition means so much: the old music, the old ways, the Authorised Version and the 1662 Prayer Book.

They don't want change: they are fretted by too much of it already in their daily lives. They see the church as the place where the eternal verities remain eternal and unchanging, a place of prayer and God-seeking. They stand by and for the old values: law and order, decency and chastity, and they regard talk of things like 'the theology of revolution' as trendy bandwagon-chasing, and a dangerous dilution—if not a betrayal—of the traditional teaching of the Gospel.

Working with one lot, living with the other, I feel myself torn in two as the gap widens. If ever there was time for bridge-building within the Church itself, it is now. But most of all is needed a great surge of charity on both sides; patience from the trendies, understanding from the traditionalists, and a lot more openness of mind and willingness to listen on all sides.

this and bury the rest. Remember that the maker of a good rock garden invariably buries three-quarters of the bulk of each rock. The more skilled the builders of the rock-garden, the more natural will the rocks look when they are in position. Try to study the small outcrops seen on the hillsides.

See that you show some lines of stratification—say, a primary line and then a secondary line or two if this is really necessary. Start at the lowest part of the rock garden. Bed in these rocks in their right strata or, as we might say, at their right angle, and always slope the rocks slightly backwards because this helps the rain to get down on to the roots of the plants. Then go on with the placing of the other rocks in position.

Weather markings

Examine the graining or the weather markings, or even the colouring, and



Illustration: Patricia Frost

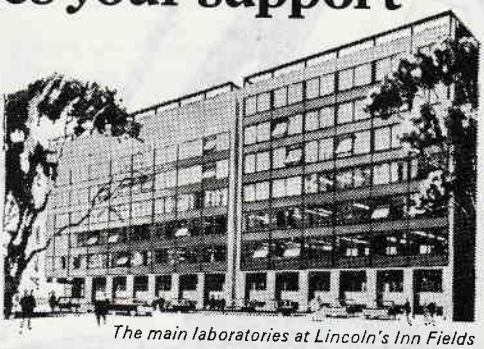
you will learn much. Choose for the top of the garden the more rounded stones, and for the base the more angular, solid, harder rocks. As the stones go into position, see that suitable soil is placed around them and behind them and be sure to ram them tightly into position. Then the planting areas, or pickets as they are called, will appear quite naturally.

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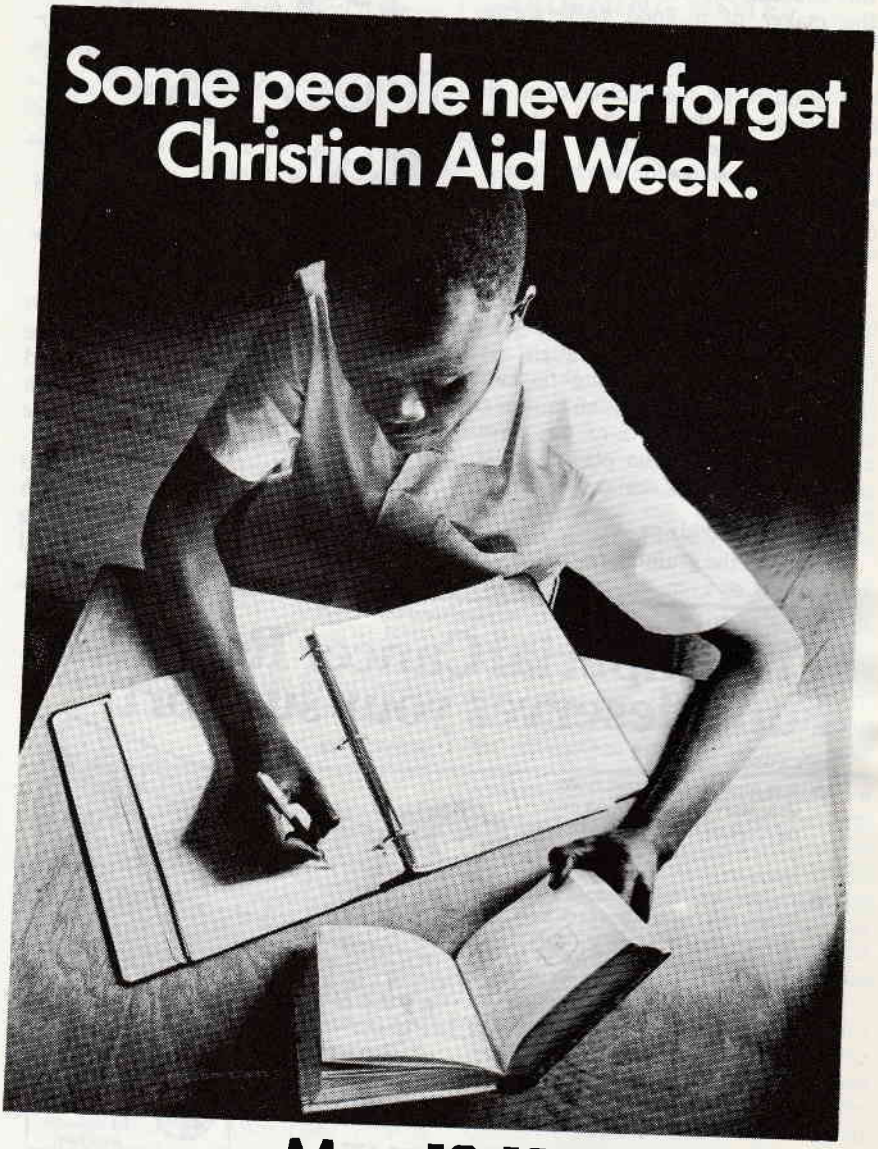
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May 13-18

Christian Aid, P.O. Box 1, London S.W.1.

Advertisements for THE SIGN should be sent to Evetts Publications Company, 3 Cheviot Court, Luxborough St., London W1

Our congratulations to those married recently—Anthony Leonard Mitchel and Lynne Errington. Also to Mr. & Mrs. Hugo Williams who recently celebrated their Ruby Wedding. Our love and blessings to them for health and happiness in the years to come.

We remember too those who are preparing for marriage.

Our good wishes go to Mr. Cyril Dunsby, former Headmaster of the Harlow School, as he takes up his new post at Highworth near Swindon. Also to Mr. Joe Austin for many years florist in Oxford on his retirement. There will be many people in our parish who are grateful to Mr. Austin and his wife and family for the wonderful floral arrangements they have done for sad occasions and joyous ones over the years. They have always shewn such kindness and consideration when flowers have been needed for the Church, and we hope that they will enjoy many happy years of retirement. We wish them all God's blessing. It is good to know that the business is still being carried on by their daughter and her husband and we wish them well. There is always a welcome when one visits the shop.

Our gratitude to all who gave so generously for the Easter flowers and to those who arranged them. I am sure you will agree that the Church looked even more beautiful than ever as we celebrated that Queen of Festivals on such a sunny Easter morning.

Thanks too to Stephen Jeffery who hoisted our new St. George's Flag. It was good to see this flying from the Church Tower on Easter Day !

We pray that those who have been bereaved may know the joy and strength of the Risen Christ. We remember especially our Vicar as we heard of the news of his mother's death. Mrs. Hilda Rimmer will always be remembered with affection and gratitude. Her visits to Marston were such happy ones as he took such a part and interest in all that was going on at St. Nicholas.

To the relations of Olive Bleay we extend our love and thoughts. The Bleay family have suffered a number of losses during the past months and although Olive had been away from the parish for some time she had known and loved the village through her life together with all the other members of her family. Also to the wife and family of Cyril Holt.

We remember too in our prayers the parents of little Alan Ogden. May they know the consolation of Christ at this time of their great need.

THE OVER 60's CLUB

The Secretary and Committee would like to thank all those who worked hard and who bought generously at their Morning Market. This raised the magnificent sum of over £80.

We shall look forward to welcoming all the members of the Club to Evensong on Rogation Sunday the 19th May when our Parish Reader, Mr. W. H. Saumarez Smith, will be preaching. Light refreshments will be served in the Church Hall after the Service.

THE MARSTON PLAYERS

The Marston Players will be holding their Coffee Morning in the **Mortimer Hall** from 10 a.m. to 12 noon on Monday, 27th May which is the Spring Bank Holiday, and hope that as many as possible will come along and support this effort.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

Christian Aid Week is from 13th to 18th May finishing with the GRAND JUMBLE SALE in the MORTIMER HALL on Saturday, 18th May. Mrs. Helen Foster, who is organinzing this, will be grateful for any help whatsoever during that week for house to house collecting and also on the day of the Jumble Sale and collecting jumble beforehand. She wrote about this in the April Magazine and we do hope you will support this week as generously as possible for those people who are suffering untold hardship in other parts of the world. We hope to break our record of £255 raised last year. Please do your best to help us !

CHILDREN'S INSTRUCTION

We look forward to welcoming parents and children at our Family Service on the 1st Sunday in May the 5th at 11.15 a.m.

MARSTON WIVES

Marston Wives will be meeting at Iffley School on Wednesday, 1st May for a " Hoe-Down " and then again on the 22nd (instead of 15th) at Sescut Farm.

CHURCH & LOCAL CLUBS, SOCIETIES, ETC.

CHURCH

Bell Ringers. Sec. : Mr. A. Gammon, 50 Oxford Road.

Brownies : Brownie Guider : Miss I. Read, 6 Cotswold Crescent - Tel. 47370

Cub Scout Leader : Mr. A. J. Roberts, 54 Cherwell Drive. Tel. 40879.

Girl Guides :

Parish Magazine : Deaconess O. Lodge, 5 Elsfield Road. Tel. 47956.

Mothers' Union : Hon. Sec. : Mrs. D. Cardy 110 Staunton Road, Headington. Tel. 61116.

Parochial Church Council. Sec. : Mrs. M. Harlow, Fir Tree House, Oxford Road.

Scouts. Scout Leader : Mr. N. J. Hughes, 53 Arlington Drive.
Group Scout Leader : Mr. W. Furber, 30 Colley Wood. Kennington. Tel. 34061.

Stewardship : Miss E. Warburton, Cross Cottage, Old Marston. Tel. 47339.

St. Nicholas, Marston Wives :
Group Leader : Mrs. R. B. Wells, 14 Raymund Road. Tel. 40357.
Secretary : Mrs. P. Lessiter, 62 Cherwell Drive. Tel. 43120.

Bible Reading Fellowship :
Sec. : Mrs. R. Lucas, 9 Talbot Road, Oxford. Tel. 55739.

Marston Times Editor : Mr. A. Raban, 9 Clays Close. Tel. 65130.

LOCAL

Allotment Association. Sec. : Mr. R. Bowen, 135 Oxford Road.

British Legion. Marston & District Sec. : Mr. F. Thompson, 5 Temple Street, Oxford.

Marston Players : Roy Harvey, 18 Minster Road. Tel. 41228

Marston Residents' Association : Secretary : Mr. G. A. Hine, 21 Raymund Road. Tel. 40482.

Over 60's Club : Secretary : Mrs. W. Tomlinson, 35 Oxford Road.

Parish Council. Chairman : Mr. J. E. Busfield, "Mallards," Mill Lane.
Clerk : Mr. L. Garner, "Barn Gates, 31 Oxford Road, Old Marston.

Parent-Teacher Association
St. Nicholas : Mr. Norman C. Jones, 52 Elms Drive.
Harlow School : Mrs. J. Hodgkins, 31 Elms Drive.

Women's Institute : Miss E. Warburton, Cross Cottage, Old Marston. Tel. 47339.

USEFUL INFORMATION

District Nurses, 6 Broughton's Close, Old Marston. Tel. Oxford 44417.

Health Visitor : Miss Kneisel. Phone KIDLINGTON 3502.

Infant Welfare Clinic : The Village Hall, Thursdays 2—4 p.m.

Library : The Village Hall, Old Marston.
Monday and Wednesday — Closed.
Tuesday — 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. 5.30 to 7.30 p.m.
Thursday — 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.
Friday — 10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Over 60's Club. St. Nicholas Church Hall, Mondays at 2.45 p.m.

Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths : St. Nicholas' Church Hall, Elsfield Road, Old Marston. Thursdays 4 to 4.30 p.m.

Village Hall. All Bookings to Mr. Tasker, 35 Mill Lane, Old Marston.

St. Nicholas' Church Hall and Committee Room. All Bookings to Deaconess O. J. Lodge, 5 Elsfield Road, Old Marston. (47956).

Nursery School. All enquiries to : The Village Hall during School hours.

Play Group. All enquiries to : St. Nicholas Church Hall during school hours.

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