

# Vicar's Notes

## THE ORDER OF THE LAITY

Many of us remember the inspiring sermon which Dr. Eric Yelverton preached in our church on the occasion of the formation of our branch of the Church of England Men's Society. In a recent article, in the 'Church Times' he has elaborated some of the things which he then said. He is particularly anxious that the laity should realise once again that they are a fourth order in the Church, with their own special part in the worship of the Church (e.g. the presentation of the Offertory in the Communion, with all that this stands for) and their own special duty of evangelization. Largely as a result of the enthusiasm of this fourth order, Christianity was spread in a marvellous way in the early centuries.

But in the Middle Ages, the laity slowly lost their right of order, and with it their evangelistic zeal. The eclipse began as early as the sixth century, when there were frequent references in sermons to the failure of the laity to perform their "liturgy"—their own proper part in the worship of the whole Church—and of the danger of their becoming mere spectators. But the decline continued, until in seventeenth-century England, the average parish in England was run by two men only, the parson and the squire. The laity in the parish were never expected to do anything but attend the statutory services, which they faithfully but often uncomprehendingly did, and they did nothing else, because nothing else seemed to be required. The idea that a layman should do anything to spread the Christian Faith and attract others to the Church had so far died out, that in 1883 the late Prebendary Wilson Carlile, then secretary of the Christian Evidence Society, was howled down at the Church Congress when he made an appeal for the use of the laity towards the conversion of England. (It was, apparently this incident that caused him to found the Church Army.)

But things are different to-day, and members of the fourth order are getting to work as never before since the early days. They are forming themselves into "cells", or "parish-

teams", or "news-teams", they are finding something of that inspiration in worship which the early Christians found.

Dr. Yelverton thinks that what made the laity of the first four centuries successful evangelists was the kind of worship in which they took part, in spite of the fact that to hold Christian services was a capital crime. This kind of worship produced and maintained in them a quality of life which was amazingly attractive to those who did not possess it. This worship centred in what we are now beginning to call the 'Parish Communion,' and Dr. Yelverton believes that it is only when the laity of the Church recover this idea of corporate communion that they will be able to achieve the same evangelistic triumphs that the first centuries witnessed.

The Reverend Jim Wilson put similar ideas before us too, and of course we are already partly working along these lines. We have an incipient Parish Communion once a month, and there is no reason why in time every Sunday Communion should not have something of this nature—with a cross-section of the whole parish there, including the children, who are an important part of the Church family and must not be excluded from its worship. We are already gradually restoring such things as the presentation of the bread and wine by members of the congregation (the order of the laity), and the preaching of a sermon (very short!—but it is interesting to note that the only service at which the Prayer Book prescribes a sermon to be preached is the Communion, and in the place proposed it can provide thoughts that may move us to pray). Then, as time goes on, we shall try to work out together the purpose of Matins and Evensong, so that they become as real and meaningful, as inspiring and worshipful, for the members of the order of the laity as they ought to be—so that even strangers coming in will not be able to help feeling "These people really know what they are doing. Here indeed is the Church at prayer."

With regard to the order of the laity's function of evangelism, we have now, as a result of Sister

Simpson's visit, started a News-Team Fellowship, the members of which, when they have grown in fellowship and received training, will begin to undertake various kinds of active work.

But one team is, of course, not enough. Within the large Parish Team we also need smaller teams, learning to pray and work and plan together. I am especially keen to form another team having as its main concern the building of "To-Morrow's Church" (to borrow the title of a stimulating book.) We do need to consider very carefully the whole field of our work amongst young people, and its proper planning and co-ordination. I am asking all who have a concern about this, whether already engaged in active youth or children's work or not, to come to an informal meeting at the vicarage on Monday, May 12th.

#### MONEY FOR PAPER

I am wondering whether we could not do something more to organize the collection of waste paper and cardboard from members of the congregation and parish. The choir and scouts have raised money by making occasional collections, but if

we could organize on a parish scale we might raise a great deal. I have heard of churches that have raised as much as £70 in a few months. Others have a steady income of 10/- a week by this means. I estimate that a normal household has at least nearly one shilling's worth of waste a month. If we could get all the waste from 200 households, we should receive a sum of £100 a year from this source alone. The prices given by different dealers vary considerably and some, after promising to collect periodically, soon lose interest—but if we could find the right dealer, and the right people to organize the drive, we might achieve great things. Any offers?

In the meantime, don't forget the summer fete. A list of stalls and stallholders will be given in next month's magazine, and they would all welcome gifts for sale.

#### THANK YOU

I am most grateful to all who combined to make the Easter Offering this year such a generous one. I appreciate very much the kind thoughts behind it. It is a great encouragement, and, in these days of financial stringency, of great practical help.

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## AROUND THE SPIRE

being notes and news about  
people, activities & organisations

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#### FROM HERE AND THERE

By the time this magazine appears, the Scout Troop will have celebrated their third birthday with a special party in the Parish Hall. They are building up an excellent reputation and we send them our congratulations and all good wishes for the future. But we sometimes wonder if people realise how much more could be done if there were adequate help. Both our Scoutmaster and Cubmaster are shouldering far heavier burdens than they should, and it would be a great encouragement if we could hear of suitable people able and willing to help. The Guide Company is even more hard-pressed: there the situation is almost desperate, and Miss Campbell is in urgent need of Guiders to work with her. There is also a similar need of helpers in the Sunday School. Apart from the difficulties of accommodation, some

of the teachers there have classes far too large for them to cope with properly, and as a result some of the children lose interest and drop off. This kind of work is not for everybody, but there surely must be some people in the parish who have the gift for it, or who would find that they could do it efficiently and well after proper training.

Mr. and Mrs. Chown wish to thank all friends in the parish and outside for the cards, letters, telegrams and presents which they received on the occasion of their golden wedding. They very much appreciate the affectionate kindness shown to them.

Many people in Hampton Hill will have had personal experience of the sympathy and skill of the late Matron of the Cottage Hospital at Hampton.

She made it a very happy and homely place to be ill in. It is intended that there should be a memorial to her. The form which this shall take has not yet been finally decided, but it is suggested that a plaque might be put up in the hospital, and a seat provided for patients and visitors waiting at the bus stop, and that any balance should be used for the benefit of patients at Christmas. The hon. treasurer of the memorial fund is Mr. A. G. Benstead, 41, Ormond Avenue, and he would be glad to receive any contributions, large or small.

Last month we recorded the names of a number of people who were leaving the parish to go overseas, temporarily or permanently. This month it is good to record a movement in the reverse direction, and to welcome to our church and parish Mr. and Mrs. Brown from New Zealand, who have come to live in St. James's Avenue. Mr. Brown has a scholarship in psychology, and hopes to do research work in that subject at University College for three years. They are both keen church people, and were joint leaders of a Bible Class in their parish near Wellington. We hope that they will soon feel very much at home amongst us.

We are very sorry that Mr. Harry Beckett feels that owing to increase of work he can no longer be a distributor of this magazine. We want to take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the very hard work Mr. Beckett has always put into the magazine distribution: he has interested many people in taking the magazine and his loss as a pioneer worker will leave a sad gap. We are appealing for distributors to take on Mr. Beckett's considerable round: please come forward. We hope that in the future, if Mr. Beckett's work gets lighter, he will again be able to help us as he and Mrs. Beckett have done so very nobly in the past.

John Greig, who took part in the Nativity Play, and has been one of our servers since Christmas, has now been called up for national service, and is at Aldershot. We send him our good wishes, and look forward to

seeing him when he comes home on leave.

We are all very thankful to hear that Lady Stanton is now greatly improved after the very trying time which she has experienced during the past month, and we hope that she will soon be well enough to take her accustomed place in church. It was very nice to have Mrs. Richens, with us again after her weeks of illness, and we hope that Mr. Harper will soon be recovered and able to resume his sidesman's duties. We are sorry to learn that Miss Lush is having to undergo another spell in hospital.

#### THE DRAMA GROUP

Members of the Group are going to see Mrs. Whitton's production of "Lady Precious Stream" at Hampton Wick, on May 1st. A coach-outing has also been planned to see "Much Ado About Nothing" at the Phoenix Theatre on May 27th. Members of the group and of the junior section must have first claim on tickets: if there are any vacancies it will be given out at the Sunday Services.

We are glad to see that the film "Cry the Beloved Country" has come to London, and is very well reviewed. We hope it will come to our local cinema, but if it does not we shall be getting up a party to see this very moving film describing the tension between the white and coloured peoples in South Africa.

#### THE CLOCK

Leslie Sargeant has kindly volunteered to take over the responsibility of winding the clock, and we are very grateful to him for this, as for the other odd jobs he finds time to do inside the tower and spire. This year it is hoped to keep them immune from the pigeons, who like them immensely as a nesting and roosting-place. One nest was already established at the end of February, but the mother-bird has been persuaded to leave, and further attempts made to keep such intruders out.

#### SOME DATES TO NOTE

May 5th.—7.30 p.m. Ruri-Decanal Conference at Twickenham.

May 6th.—8.0 p.m. News-Team Fellowship Meeting at the Vicarage.

May 7th.—3.0 p.m. Mothers' Union Enrolment Service.

7.0 p.m. Mothers' Union Diocesan Festival Service, St. Paul's Cathedral. Preacher: The Bishop of Willesden.

May 8th.—7.30 p.m. Drama Group.

May 10th.—3.0 p.m. Scouts' Jumble Sale.

May 12th.—8.0 p.m. Meeting for Church Youth and Children's Workers at the Vicarage.

May 15th.—8.0 p.m. The Men's Society. Address on the work of the Missions to Seamen, with films. (In Parish Hall).

May 15th.—Young Wives' Group-leaders' day at Mary Sumner House.

May 20th.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union Deanery Quiet Afternoon in St. James's Church.

8.0 p.m. Meeting for all helpers at Summer Fete in Parish Hall.

May 21st.—2.30 p.m. Working-Party at the Vicarage.

May 22nd.—Ascension Day.  
7.0 and 10.30 a.m., Holy Communion.

7.45 p.m. Evening Service.

8.30 p.m. Social Committee.

May 26th.—3.0 p.m. Church of England Children's Society; Meeting at St. Alban's Hall, Teddington. Speaker: Mr. C. Helder, Chief Administrative Officer.

8.0 p.m. Young Wives' Group in Club-Room. Speaker: Miss Hunter, Borough Youth Officer.

May 27th.—6.30 p.m. Coach-Party to 'Much Ado about Nothing.'

May 30th.—St. James's prayed for at all Services in St. Paul's Cathedral on this day.

7.30 p.m. Magazine Distributors' Meeting.

May 31st.—11.30 a.m. Adult Confirmation in St. Paul's Cathedral.

June 1st.—Whitsunday. 7.0, 8.0, 9.45 a.m., 12.15 p.m., Holy Communion.

#### BAPTISMS

Mar. 9th.—Linda Jeanne Morris, 73, Longford Close.

Mar. 9th.—Jacqueline Dorothy Bridgstock, 5, Lindsay Road.

April 6th.—Rosalind Ann Needs, 25, Winchendon Road.

April 13th.—Terance Alan Deer, 56, Windmill Road.

April 13th.—Douglas Brian House, 24, Rectory Grove.

April 27th.—Janet Caroline Cook, 20, Longford Close.

April 27th.—Peter Lancaster, 31, Wolsey Road.

April 27th.—David Leonard Humphrey, 7, Albert Road.

#### MARRIAGE

April 26th.—John Michael Lock-year to Alice Edith Tubb.

#### BURIALS

Mar. 3rd.—Albert Lewcock, 4c, Windmill Road, aged 71 years.

Mar. 3rd.—Ernest Charles Stanley, 37, Wellesley Road, aged 69 yrs.

Mar. 5th.—Edward Horace Charles Turner, 24, Longford Close, aged 59 years.

Mar. 6th.—Florence Maria Rogers, 20, Whitton Road, Twickenham, aged 86 years.

Mar. 13th.—Phoebe Cowley, 8, Jubilee Almshouses, aged 90 years.

Mar. 15th.—Harry Norman Painter, 70, Windmill Road, aged 63 yrs. (at Hampton.)

Mar. 20th.—Honor Prosser Bridson, 105, Burton's Road, aged 72 yrs. (Cremation at Mortlake)

Mar. 22nd.—Robert Fraser, 110, Uxbridge Road, aged 62 years.

Mar. 22nd.—Florence Hodge, 38, King Edward's Gardens, Acton, aged 75 years. (Interment of Ashes after Cremation.)

April 1st.—Mary Ann Rogers, 46, Park Road, aged 82 years. (At Twickenham Cemetery.)

April 2nd.—Ellen Emily Crockford, 153, Uxbridge Road, aged 70 years. (At Teddington Cemetery.)

April 12th.—William Henry Horslen, 43, High Street, aged 44 yrs.

April 16th.—Arthur George Craker, 56, High Street, aged 74 yrs.