

VICAR'S NOTES

None of us wants the Centenary Year just to be a time of jollity and festivity, leaving us at the end much as we were at the beginning—except perhaps rather more jaded! There will, of course, naturally be festivity, but there will be a serious side to it as well. We want to use the impetus and inspiration of the year to make changes for the better in our whole way of life, work and worship. Much thought and prayer are already being given to these matters, and will increase as the year draws closer.

With regard to worship, a commission was set up by the Church Council last autumn to examine all aspects of the present forms of worship, and to consider possible alternatives and improvements. The commission recently presented its report—a substantial document—to the Council, who endorsed it in principle, though further discussion and consideration will be needed before its proposals can be implemented. We have already printed in this magazine a section of the report—“Music in Church” (July); this month we publish another section—“The Parish Communion.” Though I attended meetings of the commission whenever possible, a number were held without me, and I had no hand at all in the drafting of the final report.

The members of the commission became convinced that, to make our worship real and strong, and attractive to larger numbers of people, certain changes and modifications were necessary, and they seriously ask us to consider the establishment of a Parish Communion at 9.30 a.m. or 10 a.m. as our main corporate act of Sunday worship. They do not ask us to make this change without proper thought or understanding; it is not something to be rushed into because a few keen people advocate it, but it should wait upon the forming of a common mind amongst us that this is the right thing to do. To help us to come to unanimity about it, we may need to hold several parish meetings where the whole matter can be thoroughly gone into and explained.

This form of service is now firmly established in many churches, including a number in our own district and deanery. Members of the commission visited some of these. They were most impressed by the service as it is held Sunday by Sunday at 10 a.m. in St. Augustine's, Whitton. They suggest that other members of the congregation should

follow their example and attend St. Augustine's so that, when we come to discuss the matter in detail, we will really know what we are talking about. At the Harvest Supper on October 3, we hope to put their suggestion to practical effect by inviting names for a coach party which will go to Whitton on a Sunday towards the end of the month. If anyone who would like to go cannot take advantage of this, please let me or any member of the P.C.C. know, because we may well have to repeat this coach trip several times. We could not in any case all go at once, because with their own large regular congregation there just would not be room at St. Augustine's!

A week after the Harvest Supper there will be another event in the Hall which I hope will be equally well supported. This will be the showing of a film about Coventry Cathedral. Some of our parishioners who have visited the Cathedral saw this film shown in the crypt there, and they say it is very striking. It covers the entire construction of the Cathedral, and also deals fully with ceremonies, such as the laying of the foundation stone and the dedication service. As a result of seeing this film, we may feel we ought to ask the Social Committee to organise a visit to Coventry for us!

THE PARISH COMMUNION

There are many references to the communion in the New Testament. At the institution, Jesus says "Do this in remembrance of me," and in the Acts, it is plain that the early church obeyed his command, as it is stated that "they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, prayer, and the breaking of bread." The Mass in the Middle Ages was the most frequently attended service, although the laity normally followed their own private devotions while it was being said. At the Reformation, Morning and Evening prayer were compiled as vehicles for lengthy scripture readings, and the regular recitation of the psalms, and in course of time, the Communion came to be said quarterly, sometimes monthly, and only in a few cases, weekly. Gradually throughout England during the nineteenth century, weekly, and sometimes daily communion was restored.

The Parish Communion movement is one originating in the present century. Cutting across divisions in churchmanship, it is advocated by High and Low Churchmen alike, and is rapidly gaining ground. It aims at:—

Encouraging more frequent communion by all churchmen,
not only the extra pious.

Restoring the Communion to its rightful place of priority,
rather than as an optional extra.

Giving all the worshippers a full sense of taking part.
Bringing the family to church as a unit.

Most of our neighbouring parishes already have well attended parish communions. We visited St. Augustine's, Whitton, and recommend anyone else to do the same before expressing an opinion, if they have no experience of this type of thing. The service is at 10.00 a.m. and is the main act of the day. The structure of the service is such that we are made to feel that here is something relevant to our needs, in which we are not mere spectators, but actually taking part. On entering the church, we were faced by a large offertory table, which we could not possibly avoid. On this were two plaques stating that our offerings should go into the box now, as there would be no collection, and that if making our communion, we must place a wafer in the vessel provided. These were presented at the offertory as at St. James'. The congregation joined in the "Collect for Purity," the "Prayer of Humble Access," and the "Prayer of Thanksgiving," thus reducing the number of parts said by the priest alone, and maintaining their attention. The service was mainly sung, but the Creed was said, presumably with the intention of bringing even the most unmusical members of the congregation into this important part. We were impressed by the fact that the whole congregation joined in, and actually seemed to be enjoying themselves throughout the entire service. The sermon lasted no longer than 10 minutes. The "Prayer for the Church" was interrupted at various points for matters of parochial, local, and national interest to be mentioned.

This form of service is capable of being adapted to the needs of St. James'. There is no reason why all the main points mentioned above should not be adopted here. Obviously a time of education will be required, and for a time the Vicar could say e.g. "We will stand and say together the Prayer of Thanksgiving" or this could even be said by someone at the back of the church. If parts of the service are sung, we should restrict ourselves to about three settings, and everyone should have a copy of the music. The offertory table should be in a more prominent position, where it cannot be missed, with instructions provided. Do we really need to use spoons? They are fiddly and cause congestion at the table.

Some of these ideas may seem revolutionary, but they should be considered and then something put into practice. We have nothing to lose, and everything to gain, as it is only by returning to the Lord's command that we can hope to make any lasting spiritual gains in the parish. We should DO this now, not merely THINK about it, and while conceding that it may be a good idea, say that it would never work here. It can work if you want it to.

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL

It is hoped that it may be possible to organise a coach party to visit the new Cathedral at Coventry early next Spring. As a "curtain-raiser" a film of the construction and dedication of the Cathedral will be shown in the Hall on Thursday, October 10, (doors open 8 p.m.). Light refreshments will be served later in the evening, and there will be an admission charge of 1/- to cover this and projection expenses.

This most impressive documentary film, in full colour, is in only limited circulation, and you are urged not to miss this unique opportunity of seeing it.

THE MOTHERS' UNION

Summer holidays now being a thing of the past, we hope of happy memories, we look forward to our winter session. Mrs. Nancy Warner, who addressed the Deanery meeting last November, and whom some of you heard and enjoyed, is to be our first speaker on October 4.

Our next meeting is to be on a Thursday, October 17, when Mrs. Pullenayegan will talk about "Life in Ceylon." As she hails from that lovely country, although she is now resident in Richmond, we can look forward to an interesting afternoon, which should appeal to others besides our own members—try to bring a friend with you. It is so disheartening when a speaker travels some distance to find only a handful of people in the audience.

We are glad that all our invalids are improving. Mrs. Aird and Mrs. Brunt are slowly convalescing, Mrs. West hopes for future benefit from her operation. Mrs. Futter had an unfortunate fall which severely incapacitated her for a time. Our members do seem to have been "in the wars." Was this because the branch secretary was gallivanting in the "Wild West," hobnobbing with cowboys and Indians?

Congratulations to Mrs. Hillier who celebrated her 89th birthday in August. Mrs. Wilcox has made great progress, but will no longer be able to act as Catering Officer. We would like her to know how much her faithful service "behind the scenes" has been appreciated. Who will volunteer to take her place? No offer refused!

BONFIRE PARTY

November 5 — at Laurel Dene.

Please make a note of this in your diaries. The Social Committee is planning to make this even a BIGGER and BETTER party than last year. Further details will be given on the church notice board.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- Oct. 2.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union. Speaker: Mrs. Nancy Warner (W).
8 p.m. Scout Group Committee (Hall).
- „ 3.—7.15 p.m. Harvest Thanksgiving Service in Church: 8.30 p.m. Harvest Supper and Entertainment in Hall (Tickets 4/-).
- „ 6.—Continuation of Harvest Festival. 11 a.m. Family Service (other services as usual).
- „ 7.—11 p.m. Editorial Board (52, Park Road) N.B. All matter for the November issue of the magazine should be sent in before this meeting.
- „ 8.—8.30 p.m. Magazine Committee (52, Park Road).
- „ 9.—8 p.m. Prayer and Study Group (Vestry).
- „ 10.—8 p.m. Film of Coventry Cathedral (Hall). Admission (including refreshments) 1/-.
- „ 11.—8 p.m. Service for Men, Preacher: The Bishop of Reading (St. Mary's Twickenham).
- „ 15.—8 p.m. Centenary Committee, (30 St. James's Road).
- „ 17.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union "Christian Family Life in Ceylon" (W).
8 p.m. B.P. Guild Social Evening. Speaker: Mr. Sullivan, "Anecdotes from the life of a reporter." (Hall).
- „ 21.—8 p.m. Hampton Council of Churches (St. Mary's, Hampton).
- „ 24.—8 p.m. Church Council (W).
- „ 28.—8 p.m. Welcare: Annual Open Meeting at Holy Trinity Hall, Hounslow. Speaker: Miss Evelyn Home (of "Woman" magazine).
- „ 30.—10.30 a.m.—6.30 p.m. C.M.S. Autumn Fair (6, Salisbury Square, E.C.4.).
8 p.m. Young Wives' Group: Film "The Faroe Islands" (W).
- „ 31.—8 p.m. Scout Group Committee "Tramps" Supper (Hall).
- Nov. 5.—6.30 p.m. Bonfire Party (Laurel Dene).
„ 6.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union (W).

The Scout Group are holding a Jumble Sale in the Hall on Saturday, October 5, and the Mothers' Union and Young Wives' Group either on the following Saturday or October 19.

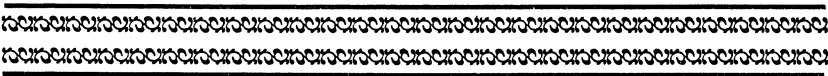
A "Mass Attack" on the Churchyard is arranged for September 21, and another is projected for late October.

BAPTISM

Aug. 25.—Karen Joy Keogh, 11, Windmill Road.

MARRIAGE

Sept. 7.—Michael Warwick Broomfield to Susan Kathleen Clarke.



**APPEAL FOR FLOWERS FOR
THE HARVEST FESTIVAL**

It will be very much appreciated if as many of our readers as possible will bring flowers and berried foliage from their gardens to the church on Thursday morning, October 3 — so that we can decorate our church for this festival — helpers will also be welcome. Any enquiries in this connection should be made to Mrs. Mills—Molesey 6626.

