

GROUP FOR CONTACT AND WELCOME: A PROGRESS REPORT TO THE PARISH

Last January our missionary, Brother Jim Cranswick, began the hard work of personal visits to members of the parish to explain the function of a group for "Contact and Welcome". It would be foolish to pretend that our welcome to Brother Jim was unreserved. Many of us, myself included, were unsure of the purpose of the proposed group, suspicious of its methods, and worried about its integration with the many excellent existing formal and informal groups within the parish. Many of us attended the first meeting on January 28 with uneasiness. The fear of a naive evangelism was clear; perhaps only our great trust in the guidance of our vicar persuaded us to come. That first meeting did not do a great deal to settle misgivings. In retrospect it is a little easier to see why. As with learning to drive a car or to swim, verbal explanation has only a limited introductory function. Those of us who went to the second introductory meeting began to see more clearly how the group might work, and began to talk to each other as perhaps we had very rarely talked before.

Every Christian believes that God can become effective in his or her life, and that perhaps He wishes to change it altogether. It is normally impossibly embarrassing to say this, and even more embarrassing to try to find out together how to let Him change us. It is in fact also rather a frightening enquiry in several ways. For one thing we have no wish to be labelled "pious". For another, how do we know that what we feel to be the urge of the Spirit is not some odd quirk of our awkward subconscious? Even worse, suppose we find out quite surely what we have to do, and it is something very painful?

These problems probably face every one of us; perhaps it was the real starting point of the group to admit to one another that we all faced them, that we all needed to learn how to pray properly, and that having been guided some way to the answers we wanted to know how to share any discoveries we might make effectively with others. This admission of sincere seeking was a breakthrough. "Contact and Welcome" began to be understandable as an objective if not yet a practice. Many of us know very troubled people, and while realising our own immaturity in faith we are desperately anxious to help them: to give them contact with the Christian community and welcome them to it. We know that this cannot be done without guidance; as a group we are beginning to have faith that together we can find this guidance.

A group meeting is structured into periods of prayer, gospel inquiry and discussion. Within this framework we are beginning to find that not only can we share our individual fragmented knowledge, but that as a group our knowledge increases. I am personally wary of talking of "insights", but I know that certain matters have become much clearer to me over the past few months, including many minor but rather painful alterations which I should make in my life.

Looking outward, the group can see that it has a necessity to link its work as closely as possible with all the life and work of the parish; we have much to learn from others. We are already in close contact with the Prayer Circle. The quiet but immensely powerful work of the Circle has been of very great value and guidance to us. Some of the YPF leaders have also joined our group, and their experiences have also been valuable instruction. We shall perhaps really feel we have found our feet and be fulfilling our proper role when any member of the parish will feel at ease to use our group freely; to ask us for assistance with someone in difficulty,

or perhaps when in need to join us at a meeting, or in ways which we do not know about yet.

Over a period of six months and ten "introductory" meetings we have found about eighteen people keenly interested in the group. Of these nine have become firmly committed to regular membership. When the group recommences its meetings in September, we hope in humility and sincerity that we can add our work to that of all the others in the parish.

R.W. Wilde

THE HAPPENING

It happened as forecast on Sunday July 22 at 4.30 p.m. at St. James's and was, in fact, the Patronal Festival.

The order of service was in place of the traditional Evensong. A triumphal body of Christian Soldiers marched loudly singing right round the church via the Churchyard and Park Road - to find they were only a little ahead of the organ and still in the same key on re-entering the porch!

There followed singing, by the young children, Y.P.F., young choir and congregation, of hymns and folk songs, with readings illustrating and high-lighting periods of St. James's life until his martyrdom.

After the service a delicious light tea was organised by the liturgical committee and in view of the unpredictable weather it was served inside the church. An anonymous member of the social committee remarked that it was nice to have a tea which the latter had not had to slave over a hot stove to prepare!

About 130 people attended the service and everyone said that they enjoyed the service and tea and thought that St. James's Happening was a great success.

D.P.

GIVING THE PEACE

For centuries this was an important part of the Christian Assembly, and Series 3 has restored it to its rightful place. The president first gives a general greeting to the congregation and they reply. Then each one gives it to his neighbours: the president to those standing round the altar, and they give it to one another; the people in the pews turn to their neighbours on either side, and those in front and behind. The Peace is not given in word only, but by action as well - most commonly amongst us by warmly grasping one another with both hands.

The word inadequately translated 'Peace' is an interpretation of the old Hebrew greeting 'Shalom', which the Jews still use. It is a term rich in depth and overtones, and Christian usage has greatly enriched what was already packed with great significance. On the occasion of our Patronal Festival we remembered how St. James gave the Peace to his penitent accuser as both were being led to the place of execution. As James used it, and as we use it now, the Peace stands for all the goodness, love and joy that characterise the New Era of the Messiah - all the power

and virtue and glory of the Kingdom of God, and the abundance of life and good neighbourliness that flourish wherever that Kingdom establishes itself. As we give and receive the Peace, it is this we invoke upon one another, this we pray may penetrate and fill one another; this is what we want to bind us together in the rich brotherhood of the Sons of God, and flow out to the whole community around.

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The National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child is in the process of changing its name to the National Council for One-Parent Families.

The change of title emphasises the development of the Council throughout the years. It has been tireless in its pursuit of trying to ensure that both for children born out of wedlock, and for the mothers who choose to bring up their children by themselves, rather than have them adopted, the best possible chances are available to avoid social and legal handicaps. Every effort is made to ensure that the children may have the chance to grow up into secure, happy and useful citizens.

The Council encourages the provision of varied and flexible social services for children and parents; works for improvement in legal status; provides support, information and practical help; contributes towards educating the public about the implications of illegitimacy, and conducts seminars, conferences, discussion groups and training courses.

The work is expanding, and in November 1971 a resolution passed at an Extraordinary General Meeting made it possible for N.C.U.M.C. to extend its work to all one-parent families, thus including the families of separated wives and separated husbands, and widows and widowers.

We are proud that the Director of the National Council is Mrs. Margaret Bramall O.B.E., who lives locally, in Twickenham, and whose mother, Mrs. Taylor, lived in Teddington and was known to many of us.

The National Council has many activities and a large staff. Money to carry on its work is urgently needed. With this in view, Mrs. Patricia James and I are organising a Bring & Buy Sale at 63 Park Road, Hampton Hill, on Friday September 21 and will be very grateful for everybody's support. We plan for:-

10.30	-	12 noon	Coffee
3.30	-	5 p.m.	Tea
6.00	-	8 p.m.	Drinks

We hope for a fine day, and if friends would like to bring things for the stall in advance we should be delighted. In addition to the Bring & Buy Stall there will be raffles and games for everyone.

Hannah Stanton.

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AUTUMN HIGHLIGHTS

Harvest is early this year, so soon after the summer holidays we can look forward to the Harvest Supper. On the Thursday after the Harvest Festival there will be a delicious supper followed, if we may judge by past experience, by a lively and enjoyable entertainment produced by the Drama Group. Tickets for this very popular annual event are limited by the available accommodation, so we

suggest making early enquiries from the Social Committee. Date: September 27.
Time: 7.30 for 8 p.m. Place: St. James's Church Hall. Cost: 35p.

What's your game? If it's Whist or Beetle Game we have plans for you:
on Wednesday October 24 there will be a Whist Drive (for all players, no matter how
inexperienced - we're not very good at it either!); on Tuesday November 27 there
will be a Beetle Drive. Both at Wayside, at 7.45 - 10 p.m., with an interval for
light refreshments; tickets 10p each. We'll see you there!

A.P.

Y.P.F. ACTIVITIES

The position of Press Officer in Y.P.F. has lain dormant for some time, but
now all can be revealed of what we have been up to in the past few months.

The meetings take place at 25 St. James's Road (Wayside) every Friday and
Sunday evenings at 8 p.m. Friday is the social evening while Sunday is given
over to religious discussion. The fellowship is open to everybody, particularly
to those over the age of 13. During most Fridays in the summer we go down to the
park to play football or rounders, or clean up an old person's garden. Our other
activities include snooker, table tennis, messy evenings, barbecues, musical and
folk evenings. The last folk evening held about a month ago was a great success
mainly owing to the admirable playing of "Buck" Whittaker and "Rodeo" Severn,
ably supported by Mr. Stobes. Future Y.P.F. activities will be published later.

Ian Fisher.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

August

- 13 10.30 a.m. Editorial Board (63 Park Road).
- 15 7.30 a.m. Holy Communion; 8.00 p.m. Stewardship Subcommittee
(17 King's Road).
- 24 SAINT BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY: Holy Communion 7.30 a.m.

September

- 5 2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union Service.

N.B. The Sunday Schools are closed for the summer holidays, and
re-open in September: the Infants' Department and Rectory on
September 9, the Junior Department a week later. Choir
Practices, also suspended during August, begin again on September 7.

MARRIAGES

July

21

Gerald Francis Robert Willmott to Sarah Leah Winter

Christopher James Legg to Christine Edith Collins

James Henry Edgson to Lily Elsie Manly

CREMATION

July

18

William John Porter, 5 Myrtle Road, aged 68 years
(at South-West Middlesex Crematorium)